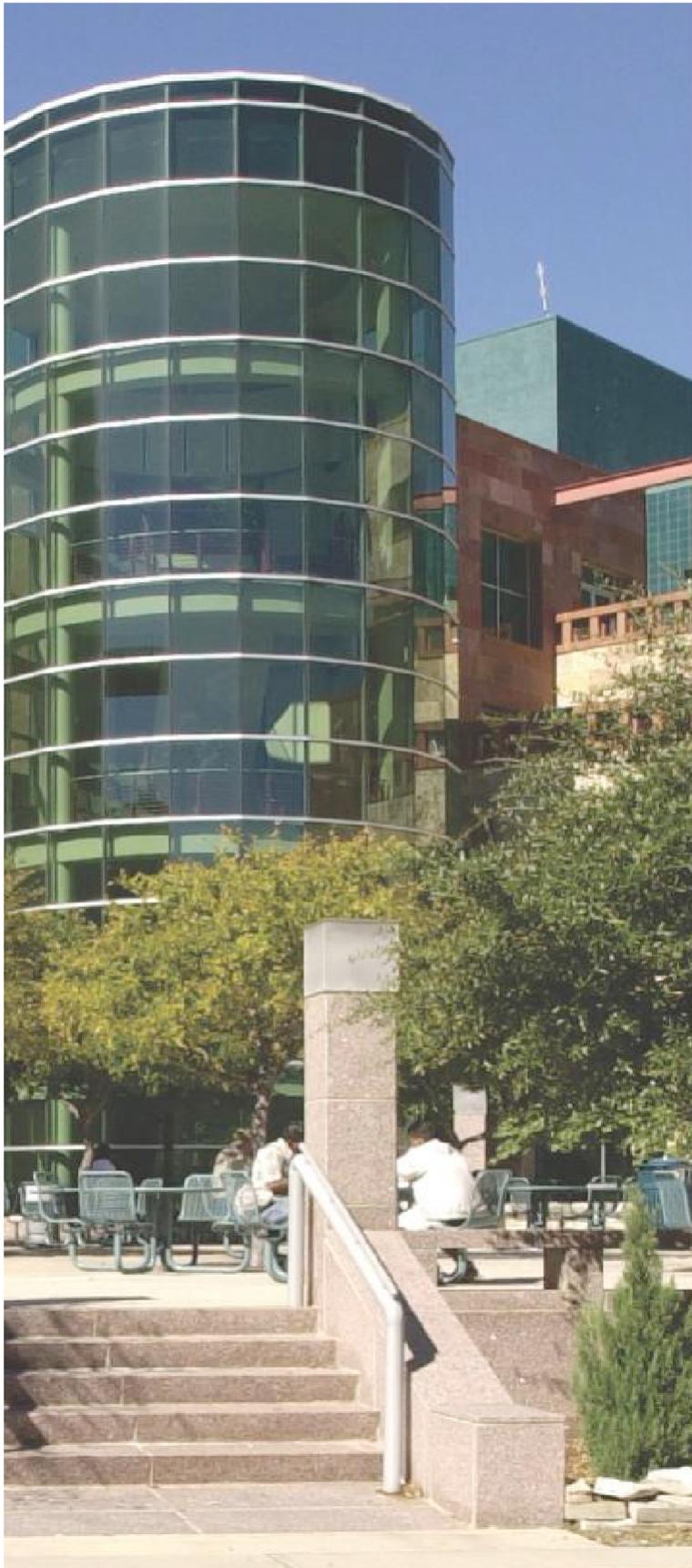


The University of Texas at San Antonio



Doctor of Philosophy in Counselor Education and Supervision

Dissertation Manual

2016 - 2017

Department of Counseling

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Revised 8.30.2014

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Welcome and Introduction

The dissertation is the capstone experience of your doctoral studies and establishes the foundation for your future scholarly work. Completion of your dissertation is a major academic achievement and includes much time, investment, and interaction with your Dissertation Chairperson and Dissertation Committee. Congratulations on reaching this stage of your academic career!

With the guidance of your Dissertation Chairperson and Doctoral Committee, you will make a unique contribution to counseling research literature while developing important professional skills. The dissertation requires focus, persistence, effort, as well as thoughtful responses to committee feedback. The dissertation typically requires multiple revisions until your Dissertation Chairperson and Dissertation Committee approve your work. The conceptualization and writing process is intensive and requires your full commitment. Your Dissertation Chairperson and Dissertation Committee will provide feedback and guidance to help you author an exceptional dissertation. However, the product is yours, as is a significant investment of your time and energy. This is your dissertation and establishes your expertise as an independent researcher and scholar.

We wish you well in this process. As a faculty, we want your dissertation to be a positive learning experience that will establish your foundation as a researcher in the counseling profession. We are committed to providing you a strong academic foundation and the necessary structure and support for you to complete an outstanding dissertation. This Handbook provides specific details and resources to guide you through in the dissertation process.

Best Wishes,

The Department of Counseling Faculty

Dissertation Process Overview

The dissertation process consists of [several stages](#). Details specific to each stage are overviewed in the relevant sections of this Handbook. The outline below provides a general overview of the process with hyperlinks to relevant [Graduate School forms](#):

1. Select a Doctoral Advisor and Dissertation Chair early in your Program of Study.
2. Complete the Interim Program of Study Form.
 - a. [Interim Program of Study Form](#)
3. Complete all core and required coursework with a grade of B or better.
4. Successfully pass the Qualifying Examination.
 - a. [Completion of Qualifying Examination Form](#)
5. Apply for candidacy for the Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision.
 - a. [Admission to Candidacy Form](#)
6. Establish your Dissertation Committee.
 - a. [Appointment of Doctoral Dissertation Committee Form](#)
7. Organize and complete Pre-Proposal meeting
8. Prepare your Dissertation Proposal.
 - a. [Formatting Requirements](#)
 - b. [Dissertation Preparation Guidelines](#)
 - c. [Dissertation Template](#)
9. Present and pass your Dissertation Proposal Defense.
 - a. [Dissertation Proposal Approval Form](#)
 - b. [IRB Website](#)
10. Collect your Dissertation data.
11. Prepare your Dissertation document.
 - a. [Formatting Requirements](#)
 - b. [Dissertation Preparation Guidelines](#)
 - c. [Dissertation Template](#)
12. Successfully defend your Dissertation and file the Final Program of Study Form.
 - a. [Final Program of Study Form](#)
 - b. [Certification of Completion Form](#)
13. Submit final copies of the Dissertation to the Graduate School
 - a. [Final Submission Requirements](#)

Faculty and Staff Roles in the Dissertation Process

The Doctoral Program Advisor

When you entered the program, the Doctoral Program Director was assigned as your temporary Doctoral Program Advisor. By the second year of the program, you should select a Doctoral Program Advisor based on: (a) your review of faculty research interests, (b) interviews with faculty members, (c) faculty member availability, and (d) work with faculty on mutual areas of interest. Your Doctoral Program Advisor must be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member in the Department of Counseling at UTSA. There is no form associated with selecting a Doctoral Program Advisor. Please inform the Student Development Specialist after the faculty member has agreed to serve in this role. Each year, your Doctoral Program Advisor will evaluate your progress and professional fitness and provide a report to the Department, College, and University. Thus, it is essential to regularly communicate with your Doctoral Program Advisor about your progress and work. Please note that your Doctoral Program Advisor will also serve as your Dissertation Chairperson and supervise your dissertation process.

The Dissertation Chairperson

The Dissertation Chairperson must be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member in the Department of Counseling at UTSA. Your Dissertation Chairperson will provide guidance, mentoring, and feedback. Your responsibilities in this professional relationship include being receptive to feedback, interacting professionally and responsibly in all communication and meetings, and keeping your Dissertation Chairperson informed of your progress. You and your Dissertation Chairperson will work to ensure that your proposal and dissertation drafts are of exceptional quality before the manuscript is sent to the Doctoral Committee for formal review. Your Dissertation Chairperson will also facilitate your proposal and dissertation defense meetings, and provide suggestions for presenting delivering effective academic presentations. Although, you may decide to conduct a dissertation directly related to your Dissertation Chairperson's line of research, this is not necessary.

The Doctoral Dissertation Committee

Your Doctoral Dissertation Committee is formally established after you pass your Qualifying Examination. All members of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee must be members of the UTSA graduate faculty. Typically, members of the committee are tenured or tenure-track departmental faculty, and may include UTSA adjunct professors approved as Special Faculty by the UTSA Graduate Council. Only one adjunct faculty member may

participate as a Dissertation Committee member. Per the Graduate School, an individual outside of the university may serve on the dissertation committee, but only after receiving Special Faculty status (See p. 35 of the UTSA 2013-2015 Graduate Catalog). Approval of a Special Faculty appointment to your committee requires your Dissertation Chairperson's approval as well as approval from the Department Chairperson.

You may select committee members based on their research interests, methodological skills, and shared interests. The *majority* of the committee must be tenured or tenure track faculty from the Department of Counseling. The recommended committee size is between three to five members. Keep in mind committee members may not be available to serve on your committee for various reasons. Committee members provide consultation and feedback related to your methodological approaches, writing skills, presentation style, and professional interactions. As representatives of the department, college, and university, committee members are committed to ensuring high quality dissertations. The following are links related to establishing your Dissertation Committee:

1. [Appointment of Doctoral Dissertation Committee Form](#)
2. [Application for Graduate Faculty Special Membership Form](#)

Changes to the Doctoral Committee or Dissertation Chairperson

Doctoral students in good standing who choose to change their Dissertation Chairperson must: (a) inform their current Dissertation Chairperson of intent to change, (b) write a letter documenting the reason(s) for the desired change, and (c) submit the letter to the Dissertation Chairperson, the Dissertation Committee, and Department Chairperson. Please remember to discuss your intent to change your Dissertation Chairperson with your current Chairperson before submitting the formal request. If there is a need to change members of the committee, please consult with your Dissertation Chairperson and all committee members before making a formal change.

The Student Development Specialist

The Student Development Specialist (SDS) in the Department of Counseling is available for consultation about required forms for the dissertation and graduation. The SDS will assist you in disseminating your announcement to students, staff, and faculty, and scheduling meeting rooms for your dissertation proposal and dissertation defense. The SDS will also audit your academic file to make sure you have completed all required forms for the dissertation and graduation. Please be in contact with the SDS if you change your

contact information or need information about forms and procedures used in the dissertation process.

Selecting Dissertation-Related Elective Courses

You and your Dissertation Chairperson will select nine hours of elective courses to enhance your methodological skills and deepen your knowledge of your area of study. Elective coursework may be chosen from other departments and disciplines. Whenever you wish to take an elective course outside the Department of Counseling, please secure your Dissertation Chairperson's approval first. The elective courses applied to the Ph.D. degree plan need to have relevance to counselor education or your dissertation. Electives may be taken at any time. However, a suggested sequence of courses is outlined in the current Doctoral Handbook. Please note that regular tuition costs and fees will be applied to elective courses.

The Qualifying Examination and Admission to Candidacy

You cannot begin formal dissertation work until you pass your Qualifying Examination and are formally admitted to candidacy. The Ph.D. Program Handbook outlines the process for completing the Qualifying Examination. After you pass the Qualifying Examination, you will make formal application to the Graduate School for admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. Please consult with the Student Development Specialist, who will verify you have completed the academic requirements to move on to the Qualifying Examination, and inform you of any additional information needed at this stage. The following forms will need to be completed at the time of your admission to candidacy:

1. [Completion of Qualifying Examination Form](#)
2. [Admission to Candidacy Form](#)

Registering for Dissertation Credit

After you are admitted to candidacy, you may enroll in dissertation credit in the next available semester. During all phases of your dissertation, you will register for COU 7993 or COU 7996. You may enroll in 3 to 6 dissertation credits each semester. If you enroll in 3 semester hours, you will register for COU 7993. If you enroll in 6 semester hours, you will enroll in COU 7996. Once you have completed the required nine credit hours of dissertation, you may register for COU 7991 and enroll for one credit each semester until you graduate. You must be enrolled continuously while working on your dissertation, and you must be enrolled during the semester in which you graduate. Please see the UTSA information bulletin and the fiscal services website for current tuition and fees schedule. Be aware that

there are costs involved in conducting your research, writing your dissertation, and fulfilling graduation requirements.

The Dissertation Proposal and Defense

Overview of the Dissertation Proposal Process

The Ph.D. program offers several research courses focused on developing and refining your potential dissertation study. While these courses provide a foundation for your proposal, the proposal process will require close work with your Dissertation Chairperson and Committee. Once you and your Dissertation Chairperson agree on a topic area, you may move forward in the dissertation proposal process. The following steps outline the minimum expectations related to the dissertation proposal:

1. Register for dissertation credit through [ASAP](#). You will enroll under your Dissertation Chairperson's section.
2. Meet with your Dissertation Chairperson to discuss your topic, timelines, and strategies to complete your work. Dissertation proposal meetings and formal meetings with your Chairperson are held during the fall and spring semesters.
3. **Pass the Pre-Proposal Meeting:** After you have developed a clear plan for the dissertation proposal, you will schedule a pre-proposal meeting with your Dissertation Committee. In this meeting, you will present your ideas and plan for the dissertation proposal. The following steps outline the pre-proposal meeting process:
 - a. Schedule a 1-hour meeting with your Dissertation Committee. Please allow your committee 5 business days to respond to the scheduling request. Requests for a pre-proposal meeting are made during the fall and spring semesters.
 - b. Pre-Proposal Meetings are held only during the fall and spring semesters. Please contact the Student Development Specialist to reserve a room.
 - c. All members of your Dissertation Committee must attend the pre-proposal.
 - d. You will present a brief presentation of your topic, research questions, hypotheses (in quantitative studies), proposed methodology, participant recruitment plan, and data analysis strategies.

- e. In this meeting, be prepared to discuss a range of research methodologies, counseling theories, and literature related to your topic. Be prepared to have a thorough and deep understanding of your topic.
 - f. The Dissertation Committee will provide feedback and input to help guide you in your proposal development process. Please draft the proposal as recommended by the committee, and provide a written response documenting your revisions. If you are unprepared in the meeting, or the committee deems your plan is not acceptable, you will need to make the necessary revisions to your proposal and reschedule another pre-proposal meeting. After you have received approval to proceed in your proposal you will begin writing and revising the document in accordance with the Committee's suggestions.
4. Write the first three chapters of your dissertation following all [Graduate School](#), [College](#), and [Departmental guidelines](#). The first three chapters and related appendices will be your dissertation proposal. You and your Dissertation Chairperson may elect to review one chapter at a time. If this is the case, your Dissertation Chairperson will have 10 business days to provide feedback on each chapter you submit.
 5. Seek initial and ongoing consultation from the Writing Center, your Dissertation Chairperson, colleagues, and peers about your study and written presentation.
 6. Submit a well written and methodologically sound dissertation proposal to your Dissertation Chairperson. The proposal will include:
 - a. The first three chapters of your dissertation with Chapter III written in the future tense.
 - b. All appendices, interview guides, permission forms, IRB forms, instruments, letters of support, manuals, etc. that you will use in your study.
 7. Your Dissertation Chairperson will provide feedback on your proposal in 10 business days.
 8. Meet with your Dissertation Chairperson to discuss major and minor revisions.
-

9. Revise your document in accordance with your Dissertation Chairperson's recommendations. Provide a written summary of the changes and revisions you made.
10. If revisions were required, resubmit your Dissertation Proposal and summary of changes to your Dissertation Chairperson.
11. Your Dissertation Chairperson will provide feedback on your revisions in 10 business days.
12. Meet with your Dissertation Chairperson to discuss your revisions. If ongoing revisions are needed, you will need to resubmit your proposal and allow your Dissertation Chairperson 10 business days to respond to your revisions until the proposal is deemed ready for formal committee review.
13. With your Dissertation Chairperson's approval, you will submit your dissertation proposal to the members of your committee.
14. Your Doctoral Committee will provide you feedback on your proposal in 10 business days.
15. Meet with your Dissertation Chairperson and committee members as needed to discuss revisions to the proposal.
16. Revise and resubmit your proposal, allowing 10 business days for Committee review and feedback for each revision. There may be multiple cycles of revisions and resubmissions. Provide a written summary of the changes and revisions you made to the Committee.
17. Once the Committee approves your proposal, you may schedule your Dissertation Proposal Defense.
 - a. Please note that Dissertation Proposal Defenses are only scheduled during the fall and spring semesters.
 - b. Consult with the Student Development Specialist, your Dissertation Chairperson, and your Doctoral Committee to determine the date for your defense.

- c. Complete the IRB training requirements before your Dissertation Proposal Defense date and provide of completion and current IRB compliance to your Dissertation Committee.

Scheduling the Dissertation Proposal Defense

Plan accordingly for the Dissertation Proposal Defense. Dissertation Proposal Defenses are not offered during the summer, or before the first day of classes in the fall and spring semesters. In consultation with your Dissertation Chairperson and Dissertation Committee, you will schedule your Dissertation Proposal Defense on a mutually acceptable date. For this meeting, schedule two hours for the presentation, deliberation, and follow-up committee meeting. The following are guidelines to use when scheduling your Dissertation Proposal Defense:

1. You will need to secure a meeting room. The Student Development Specialist in the Department of Counseling can assist you with scheduling the room.
2. All members of your Doctoral Committee must attend the Dissertation Proposal Defense. All members of the Department of Counseling faculty are invited, but it is not necessary that all attend.
3. The approved proposal should be distributed to the Dissertation Chairperson and Dissertation Committee at least 2 business days before the Dissertation Proposal Defense.
4. A formal announcement of your Dissertation Proposal Defense should be typed in memo form to include: (a) the title of the dissertation proposal, (b) your name, (c) the time and place of Proposal Defense, (d) names of your committee members, and (e) a 150-350 word abstract of the study.
5. At least 5 business days before the Proposal Defense, disseminate announcements inviting faculty and doctoral students to the meeting and post notice of the defense on the Department of Counseling website and departmental calendar. Provide an electronic copy of your proposal and announcement to the Student Development Specialist who will distribute the announcement to the faculty and student body. *Note:* the meeting is open to the public and may be attended by other students, program faculty, and individuals who are interested in the topic as well as your colleagues, friends, and family.

6. Participate in the Dissertation Proposal Defense meeting.

The Dissertation Proposal Defense Meeting

The Dissertation Proposal Defense is a formal meeting where you present your proposed study to the academic community. Your Dissertation Chairperson will facilitate the Dissertation Proposal Defense and will introduce you and the Dissertation Committee to the audience. Next, you will present your proposal to the audience and committee. Your presentation should be no longer than 30 minutes. After your presentation, your Chairperson will ask for questions or comments from the audience and Committee. After you have answered questions from the audience, they will be asked to leave and you will meet with your Committee. In this meeting, you and your Committee will discuss any revisions needed for the study. Following is the Dissertation Proposal Defense structure:

1. The Dissertation Chairperson introduces the student and Dissertation Committee.
2. The student presents the proposed study.
3. The audience asks questions of the student.
4. The Dissertation Committee asks questions of the student.
5. The audience is thanked for their participation and is excused from the room.
6. The Dissertation Committee asks additional questions of the student.
7. The student is excused from the room.
8. The Dissertation Committee deliberates and evaluates whether the student passes or fails the proposal.
9. The Dissertation Chairperson invites the student back into the room and notifies the student of the Committee's decision.

If your proposal needs major revisions, you will make the changes recommended by the Committee and provide a written summary of your revisions to your Dissertation Committee. The Committee is then allowed 10 business days to respond to your revisions. If you do not pass the Proposal Defense, you must work with your Dissertation Chairperson to determine whether to continue with the same project or to begin a new study. If your Committee deems your study acceptable, then you are eligible to begin the data collection phase of your dissertation. The following form must be completed after your Committee formally approves your proposal and you pass your Dissertation Proposal Defense:

1. Dissertation Proposal Approval Form
-

Research Involving Human Subjects

Following a successful Dissertation Proposal Meeting and completion of the Dissertation Approval Form, your next step is to secure UTSA Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the study. All students planning to conduct research involving human subjects must submit an application to the IRB. Students planning to submit an IRB proposal will need to complete the IRB training before their proposals will be reviewed. In addition, you must complete all forms and documentation required by the IRB.

All IRB applications must be approved and signed by your Dissertation Chairperson, then submitted to the IRB which will review the application before forwarding it to the Office of Research Development for final approval. It is important to allow sufficient time for the review process. No research can begin and no data can be collected until you receive written notification of final approval by the IRB. You must use the stamped IRB approved forms in your study, and you must follow all IRB guidelines for the protection of human subjects and ethics in research.

Dissertation Data Collection and Preparation of the Dissertation

Dissertation Data Collection

Once you have passed your Dissertation Proposal Defense and have received written approval from the Institutional Review Board, the Graduate School, and your Dissertation Committee, you may begin the data collection phase of your dissertation. You must adhere exactly to the recruitment, data collection, and data analysis plans as outlined in your proposal and IRB documentation. Any variation from previously approved data recruitment, collection, and analysis plans will require written approval from your Dissertation Committee and the IRB. Significant changes to your study will require another Proposal Defense Meeting.

Overview of the Dissertation Preparation Process

Once you have collected and analyzed your data, you will write the final chapters of your dissertation and edit the entire document. Please follow the [Departmental Guidelines for Writing a Dissertation](#) for specific guidelines to help you write your dissertation. The following steps outline the minimum expectations related to the dissertation preparation process:

1. Register for dissertation credit under your Dissertation Chairperson's section until you successfully defend your dissertation and graduate.
2. Meet with your Dissertation Chairperson and Dissertation Committee members to:
 - (a) discuss your research progress, (b) seek methodological consultation, and (c) address any other issues that may arise during this stage of the dissertation.
3. Write the final two chapters of your dissertation following all Graduate School, College, and Departmental guidelines. Edit the entire document for grammar, clarity, and overall readability. Edit the first three chapters of your dissertation to ensure that all are written in past tense.
4. Seek consultation from the [UTSA Writing Center](#), [the Graduate School](#), your Dissertation Chairperson, your colleagues, and your peers as needed about the quality and clarity of your dissertation.
5. Submit a well written and methodologically sound dissertation to your Dissertation Chairperson. At a minimum, the dissertation will include:
 - a. All chapters of your dissertation written in the appropriate tense. The document must conform to all Graduate School, Departmental, and APA guidelines and standards.
 - b. All appendices, interview guides, permission forms, IRB forms, instruments, letters of support, and manuals used in your study.
6. Your Dissertation Chairperson will provide you with feedback on your dissertation in 10 business days.
7. Meet with your Dissertation Chairperson to discuss major and minor revisions.
8. Revise your document in accordance with your Chairperson's recommendations. Provide a written summary of the changes and revisions you made.
9. Resubmit your document to your Dissertation Chairperson.
10. Your Dissertation Chairperson will provide you with feedback on your revised dissertation in 10 business days.

11. Meet with your Dissertation Chairperson to discuss your revisions. If ongoing revisions are needed, you will need to resubmit your dissertation and allow your Dissertation Chairperson 10 business days to respond to your revisions until the dissertation is deemed ready for formal Committee review.
12. With your Dissertation Chairperson's approval, formally submit your dissertation to the other members of your Dissertation Committee.
13. Your Dissertation Committee will provide you with feedback on your dissertation in 10 business days.
14. Meet with your Chairperson to discuss revisions to the dissertation.
15. Revise and resubmit your dissertation allowing 10 business days for Committee review and feedback for each revision. Provide a written summary to the Committee of the changes and revisions you have made.
16. Once the Dissertation Committee fully approves your dissertation and you have satisfactorily made all revisions, you may schedule your Dissertation Defense.
 - a. Please note that Dissertation Defenses are only scheduled during the fall and spring semesters.
 - b. Consult with the Student Development Specialist, your Dissertation Chairperson, and your Dissertation Committee to determine the date for your Dissertation Defense. Please note that a Dissertation Defense cannot be scheduled until your Dissertation Committee approves your work.
17. At this stage, your dissertation is expected to be a document of exceptional quality, reflecting the highest level of scholarship, written presentation, and research in the counseling profession.

Scheduling the Dissertation Defense Meeting

Plan well in advance for your Dissertation Defense. Dissertation Defenses are not offered during the summer. In consultation with your Dissertation Chairperson and Dissertation Committee, you will schedule your Dissertation Defense on a mutually acceptable date. For the Dissertation Defense, schedule three hours for the research

presentation, committee deliberation, and follow-up committee meeting. The following are guidelines for scheduling your Dissertation Defense:

1. The oral defense must be scheduled at least six weeks before the due date for the final draft. You are responsible for knowing about and adhering to the Graduate School timelines related to dissertations. The Graduate School provides information about dissertation submission dates.
2. It is **highly recommended** that you submit a preliminary draft of your dissertation to the Graduate School. If you do not submit a preliminary draft, and the Graduate School deems that your final draft does not meet the formatting guidelines, you will **not** be able to graduate in the semester you defend.
3. Please note the date and time of your defense on the calendar in the Department of Counseling office. You will need to secure a meeting room. The Student Development Specialist in the Department of Counseling can assist you with scheduling the room.
4. The Dissertation Defense must be scheduled during regular business hours in a fall or spring semester.
5. All members of your Dissertation Committee must be able to attend the Dissertation Defense. All other members of the Department of Counseling faculty are invited, but it is not necessary that all attend. Department of Counseling graduate students should be invited as well.
6. The Dean of the Graduate School, your Dissertation Committee, your Dissertation Chairperson, and the Chair of the Department of Counseling should be notified within 5 business days before a Dissertation Defense date or time change. If an unexpected change occurs in the date or time of the defense, the Dean of the Graduate School, your Dissertation Committee, your Dissertation Chairperson, and the Chair of the Department of Counseling should be notified within 1 business day of the change.
7. Failure to notify the Dean of the Graduate school of any change in the Dissertation Defense schedule will automatically result in nullification of the Dissertation Defense as scheduled.

8. A formal announcement of your Dissertation Defense should be typed in memo form and include: (a) the title of the dissertation study, (b) your name, (c) the time and place of Dissertation Defense, (d) the names of your Committee members, and (e) a 150-350 word abstract of the study.
9. Hardcopies of your approved dissertation (or e-copies if requested by faculty) should be distributed to the Dissertation Chairperson, Committee members, and the appropriate College of Education and Human Development and Graduate School personnel at least 2 business days before the Dissertation Defense.
7. At least 5 business days before the Dissertation Defense, disseminate announcements inviting faculty and doctoral students to the meeting and post notice of the defense on the Department of Counseling website and departmental calendar. Provide electronic copies and hard copies of your proposal and announcement to the Student Development Specialist who will distribute the announcement to the faculty and student body. *Note:* the meeting is open to the public and may be attended by other students, university faculty, and individuals who are interested in the topic as well as your colleagues, friends, and family.
8. Prepare the dissertation title pages to be signed by the Dissertation Committee and Dissertation Chairperson in accordance with the Graduate School guidelines related to the type of paper used for the title pages.
10. Participate in the Dissertation Defense Meeting as outlined below.

The Dissertation Defense Meeting

The Dissertation Defense is a formal meeting and oral examination where you present your full study to your Dissertation Committee, the academic community, and the public. The process of the Dissertation is similar to the Dissertation Proposal Defense. Your Dissertation Chairperson will facilitate the Dissertation Defense and will introduce you and the Dissertation Committee members to the audience. Next, you will present your study in its entirety to the audience and Dissertation Committee. Your presentation should be no longer than 45 minutes. After your presentation, your Dissertation Chairperson will ask for questions or comments from the audience and Dissertation Committee. After you have answered questions about your study, guests will be excused from the room and you will meet with your Dissertation Committee. In this meeting, your Dissertation Committee will provide you with additional feedback, ask clarifying questions, and recommend any

revisions needed for the study. Your responses to the audience and Dissertation Committee demonstrate your command of the literature, research methodology, data analyses, and implications of your study for the counseling profession. After you answer all questions from the Dissertation Committee, you will be asked to leave the room and the Committee will deliberate in private to evaluate your performance. Your Dissertation Chairperson will then invite you into the room and provide you with specific feedback about the Dissertation Committee's evaluation. The following provides an overview of the Dissertation Defense process:

1. The Dissertation Chairperson introduces the student and Committee.
2. The candidate presents the full dissertation study.
3. The audience and Committee ask questions of the candidate.
4. Guests who are not a part of the Dissertation Committee are excused and the Committee provides feedback and asks any additional questions of the candidate.
5. The candidate is excused from the room.
6. The Dissertation Committee deliberates and evaluates whether the candidate passes or fails the defense.
7. The Dissertation Chairperson invites the student back into the room and notifies the student of the Dissertation Committee's decision.
8. If the candidate passes the defense with little or no revisions recommended, the Dissertation Committee may sign the dissertation title pages and other required paperwork at their discretion. The candidate also may be asked to make minor revisions and earn Committee approval before formal paperwork is signed. If the Committee determines that more significant revisions are needed, then the Committee and the candidate negotiate the details, nature, and timeline for necessary changes. If the Committee determines that the candidate has failed the dissertation defense, then the candidate must start anew. These three possible outcomes are described more fully below.

The Dissertation Committee's Decision

Following your Dissertation Defense, your Dissertation Committee will render a decision on whether you passed the Dissertation Defense and will provide you with feedback about your dissertation grade. There are three outcomes to the Dissertation Defense. You

may fully pass your Defense and be required to complete little to no revisions. You may pass the Dissertation Defense but need to complete revisions before the Dissertation Committee formally approves your work. The committee may take 10 business days to respond to your revisions. Each Committee member may then approve the revisions or request additional revisions. The process of revision and modification may take several attempts before all members are fully satisfied with the revisions. Once the Committee has formally approved the dissertation, you will follow the final submission requirements as outlined by the Graduate School.

The Graduate School may require additional formatting revisions. You must complete all Graduate School requirements before your dissertation is complete. Please remember, if you did not submit a preliminary draft to the Graduate School and your final draft does not meet the Graduate School formatting requirements, you will not graduate in the semester you defended the dissertation. Finally, it is customary to give each Committee member a copy of the final dissertation.

A Dissertation Defense also may earn a failing evaluation. A failure of the Dissertation Defense, while uncommon, indicates that the study and/or presentation was flawed to such an extent that the dissertation and defense are unsalvageable. Examples of some reasons a student may fail the dissertation include:

1. Not adhering to the committee and IRB approved data collection and analysis plans.
2. Engaging in academic dishonesty as outlined by the UTSA Code of Conduct.
 - a. Academic dishonesty includes intentional and unintentional plagiarism, collusion, cheating, and falsifying academic records. Please review the UTSA Student Code of Conduct for detailed explanations of these behaviors.
3. Intentionally falsifying data, or engaging in ethical misconduct in research.
4. An inability to communicate findings in an acceptable way during the Dissertation Defense.
5. Failure to respond to committee revisions and guidance during the dissertation process.

The consequence of failing the Dissertation Defense is that you must start a new dissertation project. In cases of academic dishonesty, you will be referred to Student Judicial Affairs, and a Departmental Fitness to Practice Committee to evaluate your case. Our expectation is that you will be in contact with your Dissertation Committee throughout

the dissertation process to avoid problems that could lead to a failure.

General Guidelines for Writing the Dissertation

The following guidelines represent the **minimum** Departmental expectations related to the format, structure, and content of your dissertation. You are responsible for adhering to the Graduate School Guidelines in addition to the guidelines listed below. Your Dissertation Chairperson and Dissertation Committee may recommend additional requirements and sections. For dissertation proposals, you will follow the requirements for writing Chapters I through III. Much of a dissertation proposal is written in future tense, except for the literature review. The final dissertation will follow the guidelines for all the chapters, and will be written in the appropriate tenses (e.g., Chapter III written in the past tense). Qualitative and quantitative studies will differ some in rhetoric and methodology. Please see the [Guidelines for Writing a Qualitative Dissertation](#) and the [Guidelines for Writing a Quantitative Dissertation](#) for specific information. For multi- or mixed-method studies, you will need to meet the requirements and expectations for quantitative and qualitative studies, [mixed method studies](#), and other requirements recommended by your Dissertation Committee.

Developing your Writing Skills

It is essential that you develop and refine your writing skills. The University offers numerous opportunities and resources to sharpen your writing skills and help you prepare for your dissertation. We fully expect you to utilize the writing resources at UTSA. Formal submissions of written work to the Dissertation Chairperson and Dissertation Committee must be of exceptional quality. Submitting poorly written documents to the Dissertation Committee will slow your progress.

No defenses will be scheduled until the committee agrees that the proposal and dissertation are exceptionally written. To support your development as an academic writer, the University offers many workshops throughout the year and your courses may have embedded writing workshops. Additionally, attendance in scheduled writing workshops may be required in several of your core courses. Finally, your Dissertation Chairperson and Committee may request that you seek additional guidance for your writing.

Below are resources offered by UTSA to assist you with your writing:

1. The UTSA Writing Center
2. The Tomas Rivera Center
3. The Graduate School Dissertation Formatting Workshops

General Structure of the Dissertation:

1. Fly Page
2. Signature Page
3. Copyright Page
4. Dedication
5. Title Page
6. Acknowledgements
7. Abstract
8. List of Tables
9. List of Figures
10. Chapter I: The Problem and Justification of the Study
11. Chapter II: Review of the Literature
12. Chapter III: Method
13. Chapter IV: Results
14. Chapter V: Discussion and Conclusion
15. End Notes
16. Appendices
17. References
18. Vita

Guidelines for Writing a Qualitative Dissertation

Qualitative Study Guidelines for Chapter I – Introduction

In Chapter I, you introduce your study, establish a strong rationale for the dissertation, and provide an overview of the research design. For each section, you will follow the general Departmental Guidelines and Graduate School recommendations as previously outlined. The following guidelines represent the minimum expectations for developing, conducting, and writing a qualitative dissertation. In general, the overall rhetorical structure of the dissertation is engaging, uses first person language, and is rich with qualitative language (Creswell, 2013). Your purpose statement will include an explanation of how your chosen methodological approach will best answer the need established in your Need for the Study section. Your rationale and purpose will clearly and convincingly establish the need for qualitative investigation. The overview of your study will reflect an emergent design and inductive logic. Your research questions will be open-ended, methodologically coherent, and allow for in-depth investigation. Your methodological approach will be encoded (Creswell, 2013) in your purpose statement and research questions. Keep in mind that not every topic, group, or experience can be explored in the depth needed for a credible and trustworthy qualitative study. At a minimum, Chapter I should include the following elements organized by subheadings:

- 1. Introduction:** In the introduction, you provide relevant background information for the study. In this section, you summarize the literature and begin to build your rationale for conducting the dissertation.
- 2. Statement of the Problem:** You describe the specific focus of the problem, issue, or area of study in broad terms.
- 3. Need for the Study:** In this section, you cite the most current literature that specifically calls for further investigation into your area of study. You build a convincing rationale for the specific research study you plan, address how this study is relevant to the counseling profession, and highlight implications for the field.
- 4. Purpose of the Study:** You clearly articulate the specific purpose of the study. Your purpose statement flows logically from the need for the study. You also briefly discuss your methodology here by encoding it within your purpose statement.

- a. For example, the purpose statement might read, "The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the culture of a Juvenile Detention Center using ethnographic methods." In each case, you would expand more on the methodology and purpose in this section.

5. Research Questions: You list the research questions that will guide the study. The questions are logically tied to the rationale and purpose of the study. The research questions reflect your research methodology and clearly address the purpose of the study.

- a. For example, in a qualitative study, the research question might read, "What is the culture of a juvenile justice detention center?"

6. Researcher Position in the Study: For qualitative studies and mixed- or multi-method studies, you use this section to position yourself reflexively in the study by discussing your history with the topic, possible biases, expectations, and worldview.

7. Assumptions of Study: In this section, you discuss the assumptions guiding the study.

8. Limitations of the Study: You provide a comprehensive analysis of the limitations of your study, basing your discussion on the methodology used, research design, and limitations of the data analysis.

9. Organization of the Study: In this section you provide a summary of the five chapters of your dissertation.

10. Definition of Terms: You provide a definition of the terms and variables related to your study.

Qualitative Study Guidelines for Chapter II – Literature Review

In Chapter II, you present a review of the existing literature that is detailed in breadth and depth. Your literature review synthesizes research, theory, and practice related to your topic. In this section, you articulate a deep understanding of your topic, and communicate this understanding with clarity and organization. To write an excellent review of the literature, you:

1. Synthesize the full body of related literature. You may expand to other disciplines to communicate a full understanding of your topic in broader contexts.
2. Conduct a thorough search on your topic in the counseling literature, and present a comprehensive summary of the perspectives and research in the field of counseling to communicate a clear understanding of your topic.
3. Identify and discuss relationships, contradictions, gaps, and inconsistencies in the literature.
4. Organize the literature review thematically using headings and subheadings.
5. Write this section using clear, concise, and engaging language.

In the final section of Chapter II, you summarize the literature review and focus in on key issues. Present essential elements to be included in a qualitative investigation that were derived from the existing literature. This section communicates your grasp of the literature related to your topic and further establishes the rationale for qualitative investigation.

Qualitative Study Guidelines for Chapter III – Method

In a qualitative dissertation, your methods section will meet the following minimum requirements:

1. **Introduction:** You introduce the chapter and restate your purpose statement. The purpose statement is methodologically coherent and is clearly appropriate for qualitative study.
2. **Theoretical Lens or Framework:** You discuss your theoretical framework in depth, citing primary sources. This analysis addresses the varying methodologies and epistemic stances within broad qualitative methodologies and theories. Thus, you discuss the nuances in thought related to your approach and justify why you chose the particular approach. For example, in a grounded theory study, you describe why you followed the Charmaz social constructivist model as opposed to the traditional grounded theory approach. The theoretical framework makes clear and logical sense and is coherently reflected in your research questions, purpose, and analytic strategies. As Creswell (2013) noted, you also discuss any interpretive community guiding your work (e.g., critical race theory, feminism). Finally, you fully outline your rationale as to why this approach will best answer your research question(s). You

become an expert on these methods and cite primary sources and scholars of qualitative research and your selected methodology.

3. **Research Questions:** Your research questions are methodologically coherent and broad enough to provide flexibility. Typically, you have a central research question (Patton, 2002), and follow with additional sub-questions. The research questions will guide your work and will be answered in the data analysis section.
4. **Participants.** You describe the specific type of purposive sampling strategy you will use. You discuss your participants in detail and articulate why this group was strategically selected. You clearly describe the rationale for the sample size and the uniqueness of this sample for qualitative inquiry. You argue how this group is information rich, and why study of this group, in their natural environment, is warranted. You cite relevant studies and scholars to justify your sample selection and size.
5. **Instruments.** You outline any instruments you will use, including demographic forms, semi - structured interviews, field notes, etc. You discuss your rationale for using the forms and reasons for the questions included on your forms. You cite the literature related to the use of qualitative instruments. You include these forms in the appendices.
6. **Data Collection Procedures.** You discuss how you will collect the data. You provide a research- and theory-based rationale as to how many interviews you will conduct. You discuss in detail your data sources and endeavor to use multiple sources of data whenever possible. You provide detail about how you will use individual interviews, focus groups, observations, written texts, archives, etc. You discuss observation approaches, and fully describe all of your sources of data. Your rationale for data collection procedures is grounded in the literature and methodological theory. Your depth of engagement with the participants is more than sufficient to establish the credibility and trustworthiness of your study. Here you will also write about:
 - a. How your analysis will proceed during data collection.
 - b. How you will record and maintain field notes, journals, and theoretical memos and how they will inform your study.

- c. How you will incorporate emerging ideas into your design.
 - d. How ethics, culture, power, politics, and language will frame your study and how you anticipate any risks to the participants based on their participation.
 - e. Your plans to protect participant's privacy and safety.
7. **Data Analysis Plan.** In this section, you will discuss how you plan to analyze the data. Your analysis plan is written in sufficient depth and detail to enhance the credibility of your study. Specifically, you focus on:
- a. Any software you choose to use, and outline the specifics of the software use (e.g., using NVIVO to analyze the data from free nodes to tree nodes).
 - b. Triangulation strategies used to strengthen the credibility and trustworthiness of the study. You describe:
 - i. How you will triangulate your data with the literature.
 - ii. Member-checking procedures.
 - iii. The use of an external auditor, describing how this individual is qualified to review your study.
 - iv. The use of translators, if necessary, and how you will incorporate external auditors, reverse translation, or member checks.
 - v. Your coding strategies and code development process. This process must be methodologically coherent with your theoretical framework and interpretive community.
 - vi. Transparency and authenticity by describing how your worldview, experiences, and potential biases will inform the data analysis.

Qualitative Study Guidelines for Chapter IV- Results

To communicate transparency in your research design, you describe in detail how you analyzed the data. Specifically, you will:

1. Provide an overview of how you coded the data. You discuss any data that you chose not to include in the analysis and why.
2. Describe your process of initial data analysis and summary of initial findings.
3. Write a reflexive self-analysis that is coherent within your theoretical framework (e.g., bracketing strategies, heuristic analysis, self-reflections emerging during the constant comparative analysis).
4. Discuss how your theoretical memos and field notes contributed to your data analysis and examples of major themes from these documents.
5. Report how the feedback from external auditors, participants, and others involved in the study contributed to your development of the codes and themes.
6. Illustrate your process of refining the themes and developing increasingly complex and refined categories and themes.
7. Describe how you organized the themes and categories in Chapter IV.
8. Present your data in a way that is methodologically coherent with your theoretical framework. Theme descriptions are supported by thick quotes.
9. Present your codes in methodologically coherent manner. For example, a traditional Grounded Theory design will include data organized by open, axial, and selective codes. Phenomenological studies will describe bracketing, structural, and textural analyses.
10. Give participant quotes that are thick, logical, clear, and descriptive examples of your major themes. There should be no doubt to the reader that your themes emerged from the participant statements.
11. Write Chapter IV in a compelling and professional narrative style that communicates a complex and deep analysis of your data.

Qualitative Study Guidelines for Chapter V- Discussion and Conclusion

In Chapter V, you summarize the study, your findings, and link your results to the broader literature base. This section is written in an engaging style using the rhetorical structure of qualitative research.

This section will consist of the following sections:

1. **Discussion:** In this section you provide a summary of your study and a discussion of the major findings. This will usually require several subheadings. You describe how your results answered your research questions, fulfilled the purpose of the study, and contributed to gaps in the literature. You discuss your results from an inductive perspective, describing how they contribute to theory and research. You compare your results with other similar qualitative studies and discuss the transferability and uniqueness of your findings. You compare and contrast your findings with the related literature, discussing how your results deepen the knowledge related to your area of inquiry.
2. **Implications for the Counseling Profession:** In this section you discuss the specific implications and recommendations for the counseling profession. This should encompass several subsections, comparing and contrasting your findings with the related counseling literature. You elaborate on counseling practice, counselor education, and counseling supervision implications.
3. **Suggestions for Future Research:** Based on your results, you provide recommendations for future research. You especially highlight any unexpected or surprising findings.
4. **Conclusion:** You summarize the entirety of your study in an engaging and comprehensive manner.

Guidelines for Writing a Quantitative Dissertation

Quantitative Study Guidelines for Chapter I – Introduction

In Chapter I, you introduce your study, establish a strong rationale for the dissertation, and provide an overview of the research design. You provide a strong rationale as to the need for quantitative investigation of a population or intervention. Based on your rationale and purpose statement, you present research questions and propose hypotheses (or hypothesized relationships among variables) that are congruent with your purpose statement and address your rationale for the study. Your variables are clearly defined and can be adequately measured by your selected instruments. At a minimum, Chapter I should include the following elements organized by subheadings:

- 1. Introduction:** In the introduction, you provide relevant background information for the study. In this section, you summarize the literature and begin to build your rationale for conducting the dissertation.
- 2. Statement of the Problem:** You describe the specific focus of the problem, issue, or area of study in broad terms.
- 3. Need for the Study:** In this section, you cite the most current literature that specifically calls for further investigation into your area of study. You build a convincing rationale for the specific research study you plan, address how this study is relevant to the counseling profession, and highlight implications answers hold for the field.
- 4. Purpose of the Study:** You clearly articulate the specific purpose of the study. Your purpose statement flows logically from the need for the study. You also briefly discuss your methodology here, by encoding it within your purpose statement.
 - a. For example, in a quantitative study, the purpose statement might read, “The purpose of this study is to estimate the impact of marital counseling on relationship satisfaction” (for an experiment) or “The purpose of this study is to examine whether undergraduate and graduate students differ in achievement motivation” (for a descriptive study).

- 5. Hypotheses:** In quantitative studies, you present your hypotheses and articulate the reasoning behind the need to test the hypotheses and how your methodology will best answer these hypotheses. Hypotheses provide greater specificity regarding the independent and dependent (predictor and criterion) variables that do research questions or purpose statements (which are the most general).
- 6. Research Questions:** You list the research questions, and hypotheses that will guide the study. The questions are logically tied to the rationale and purpose of the study. The research questions are reflective of your research methodology and clearly address the purpose of the study.
- a. For example, the research question guiding an experiment might read, "This study tests whether participation in ten sessions of couples counseling yields statistical differences in marital satisfaction for participating couples compared with a control group." And, "Based on prior research, it was hypothesized that participation in ten sessions of marriage counseling would result in a moderate, positive improvement on indices of marital satisfaction relative to the scores of a control group."
- 7. Assumptions of Study:** In this section you discuss the assumptions of the study, researcher, or the sample.
- 8. Limitations of the Study:** You provide a comprehensive analysis of the limitations of your study, basing your discussion on the methodology used, research design, and limitations of the data analysis.
- 9. Organization of the Study:** In this section you provide a summary of the five chapters of your dissertation.
- 10. Definition of Terms:** You provide operational definitions of the terms and variables related to your study.

Quantitative Study Guidelines for Chapter II – Literature Review

In Chapter II, you present a review of the existing literature that is detailed in breadth and depth. Your literature review synthesizes research, theory, and practice related to your topic. In this section, you articulate a deep understanding of your topic, and communicate this understanding with clarity and organization. This section communicates

your grasp of the literature related to your topic, and further establishes the rationale for quantitative investigation. Both competing theoretical perspectives and evidence (prior studies) supporting all viable and relevant theoretical positions should be presented in a fair, balanced, and impartial manner. You introduce the rationale behind the specific research hypotheses you test in the study by revealing specific questions left untested in the wake of prior research. To write an excellent review of the literature, you:

6. Synthesize the full body of related literature. You may expand to other disciplines to communicate a full understanding of your topic in broader contexts.
7. Conduct a thorough search on your topic in the counseling literature, and present a comprehensive summary of the perspectives and research in the field of counseling to communicate a clear understanding of your topic.
8. Identify and discuss relationships, contradictions, gaps, and inconsistencies in the literature.
9. Organize the literature review thematically using headings and subheadings.
10. Write this section using clear, concise, and engaging language.

In the final section of Chapter II you summarize the literature review and focus in on key issues.

Quantitative Study Guidelines for Chapter III – Method

In a quantitative dissertation your methods section will meet the following minimum requirements:

1. **Introduction:** You introduce the chapter and restate your purpose statement.
2. **Research Questions and Hypotheses:** Your research questions and hypotheses are well developed, clearly stated, and are appropriate for the statistical analysis you plan to use. Your research questions can be clearly answered by statistical analysis. You provide a rationale for each hypothesis you plan to test. You also describe which statistical analyses will be used to answer specific research questions and hypotheses.
3. **Participants.** You conduct power analysis and sample size estimations. You describe the specific sampling strategies you will use and provide a rationale for their use (e.g., simple random sampling, convenience sampling, cluster sampling). You

delineate clear inclusion and exclusion criteria for participation in your study. You discuss how your sample is representative of the larger population under study.

4. **Instruments.** You outline any instruments you will use, including demographic forms, assessments, psychological tests, and surveys. It is essential that you describe the reliability and validity of your scales. State the nature of each type of validity by specifying the populations and criterion variables in each prior study. Evidence of validity of scales for use with populations similar to those in your study is critical. Once the data have been collected, you also include estimates of reliability (and validity if available) of the scales in the current sample.

You document that you have sought and provide evidence of permission to use previously published instruments. Each scale description should include the authors' names, date of publication, names of scales and subscales, number of items, method of computing (sum of scores, averages, cutoff scores).

If you are developing or modifying an instrument for use in your study, you describe how you will measure the psychometric properties of your scale including use of CFA, EFA, invariance testing, and other factor analytic and reliability measures as requested by your Dissertation Committee.

5. **Data Collection Procedures.** You discuss how you will collect the data. You describe the conditions of data collection and how you will maintain a consistent data collection environment to reduce error variance. You discuss any limitations to the data collection approach and setting
6. **Statistical Analyses:** You describe your methodological and statistical plan to test your hypotheses. You clearly describe the rationale for this approach.

You describe in detail (a) how you will enter, clean, and explore your data, (b) what tests you will conduct to ensure meeting necessary data analytic assumptions, and (c) what data analyses you will conduct, including the rationale and method for including any mediators, moderators, and covariates used.

You describe how you will address: (a) assumptions of normality, (b) Type I and Type II errors, (c) power, (d) external and internal validity, (e) attrition, (f)

treatment fidelity, (g) missing variables, (h) potential Hawthorne and halo effects, (i) counselor skill variables, etc.

Quantitative Study Guidelines for Chapter IV- Results

You present your data analyses and results. Your tables and statistical notation follow APA 6th Edition formatting guidelines. You write your results in narrative that conveys a solid grasp of the methodology and a sophisticated understand of your data. At a minimum, your Chapter IV Results includes:

1. An overview of your data analysis. This overview summarizes the research project, data collection, and data analyses you performed.
2. An evaluation of missing data. You evaluate if missing data revealed any consistent patterns.
3. How you addressed missing data by imputing missing data, such as using ML or using Full Information Maximum Likelihood procedures, or other analytic methods to address these issues. Deleting cases with missing data is not appropriate.
4. The final sample size of the study, and the post-hoc power estimations.
5. All participant demographic variables collected and reported.
6. Analysis of outliers. This analysis includes how you addressed outliers in the study.
7. Analysis of the normality of the distributions of your data by calculating and reviewing the values for skewness, kurtosis, and homogeneity tests.
8. Discussion of appropriate data transformation for variables that failed to meet the assumptions of normality.
9. Discussion of data-transformation procedures and the values for skewness and kurtosis for the transformed variables.
10. The final sample size after completing all relevant data screening procedures.
11. An evaluation of whether pre and post scores on the dependent variable(s) are different between demographic, treatment, or other key variables by using t tests, analysis of variance, regression analyses, or other analytic techniques.

12. Factor analyses and reliability measures of your dependent variables and independent variables. You describe evidence of construct validity. You provide reliability coefficients of the measures used and check whether the internal consistency estimates of the measures reach appropriate levels. You develop CFA, EFA, and other factor analytic models and results to test the structure of the variables.
13. A discussion of how your analysis met the criteria for the statistical methodology you chose.
14. Results of the hypotheses of the study. You present the results of each hypothesis, and demonstrate whether the hypotheses are supported.
15. Analysis of independence of the independent variables, discussing correlations among variables, and other measures of independence and correlation.
16. Provide measures of association (i.e., effect size) and their interpretation.
17. Any other analyses recommended by your Dissertation Committee, scholarly literature, or needs of your study.
18. A summary of the results section.

Quantitative Study Guidelines for Chapter V- Discussion and Conclusion

In Chapter V, you summarize the study, your findings, and link your results to the broader literature base. This section will consist of the following sections:

1. **Discussion:** In this section, you provide a summary of your study and a discussion of the major findings. This will usually require several subheadings. You describe how your results answered your research questions, fulfilled the purpose of the study, and contributed to gaps in the literature. You discuss whether your hypotheses were confirmed or not. You describe the implications of your statistical analysis in plain and clear language. You discuss the implications of your effect size, and discuss potential sources of the unexplained variance. You discuss how your results contribute to the population under study. You use language that is reflective of the effect size and measures of association obtained from your study. You compare your

results with other similar studies and discuss how your results generalize to your population of study.

2. **Implications for the Counseling Profession:** In this section you discuss the specific implications and recommendations for the counseling profession. This should encompass several subsections, comparing and contrasting your findings with the related counseling literature. You elaborate on counseling practice, counselor education, and counseling supervision implications. You compare and contrast your findings with quantitative literature, discussing how your results empirically support knowledge, practice, and theory related to your area of inquiry.
3. **Suggestions for Future Research:** Based on your results, you provide recommendations for future research. You especially highlight any unexpected or surprising findings.
4. **Conclusion:** You summarize the entirety of your study in an engaging and comprehensive manner. You discuss the limitations in the study design and that emerged during data collection and analysis.

Guidelines for Writing Mixed Method Dissertations

In addition to meeting the general dissertation requirements and requirements for both qualitative and quantitative studies, mixed-method studies will include additional elements. Mixed-method studies are inherently more complex and require high levels of sophistication and clarity in their design and presentation. Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2010) developed comprehensive guidelines for conducting mixed methods research in counseling. You will be expected to address each of their recommendations in your study. The following recommendations are summarized from Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2010), and represent minimum standards for mixed methods dissertations:

1. In Chapter I, you include the rationale and goals for using mixed methodology and how a mixed method approach is justified for your study. You address participant enrichment, instrument fidelity, treatment integrity, and significance enhancement.
2. In Chapter II, you provide a mixed research synthesis.
3. In Chapter III, you discuss sampling designs. You discuss whether your sample will be based on a parallel, nested, or multilevel methodology.
4. In Chapter III, you address the timing of the timing of sampling discussing if data collection is sequential or concurrent.
5. In Chapter III, You discuss the level of mixing in your data analysis plan.
6. In Chapter III, You discuss data collection strategies and instrumentation, interview, and process to collect data and how these data collections strategies are congruent with your sampling approach.
7. In Chapter III, you describe your data analysis strategies and discuss your plans to qualitize, quantitize, consolidate, compare, and integrate your data.
8. In Chapter III, you address all data preparation, trustworthiness, credibility, reliability, and validity expectations.
9. In Chapter IV, you follow your mixed data analysis plans, and present the data in a clear, logical manner. You use text, figures, statements, themes, tables, etc. that convey your mixed method results.

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