



The University of Vermont

COLLEGE OF NURSING
AND HEALTH SCIENCES

DOCTORAL PROGRAM OF STUDY
IN HUMAN FUNCTIONING AND REHABILITATION SCIENCES

DISSERTATION CONCEPT PAPER PROTOCOL

The student must do a “three-paper” dissertation as outlined in the table below.

Three-Paper Dissertation
Ch 1. Introduction Ch 2. Paper one Ch 3. Paper two Ch 4. Paper three Ch 5. Integrative Discussion

The purpose of the concept paper is to lay out the basic concepts and methods for the dissertation research for review, discussion, and tentative approval of the student’s dissertation committee. The meeting to discuss these comments is informal and interactive. The outcome of the meeting is approval of the concept paper or requests for modifications prior to approval. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are valued in this program and can be used for dissertation research, pending approval of the student’s dissertation committee.

FORMAT

The student should describe similar concepts for each of the three component papers in a concise form. Concept papers are approximately 5-10 pages in length.

Statement of the Problem

The statement of the problem is a rational and reasoned argument that posits the problem and indicates the necessity for the research. This should be supported by a literature review of critical studies that provide sufficient information to identify the "gap" in the current research that will be addressed by the proposed study. This will set the stage for how your research will contribute to attempts to address the problem. This section also will incorporate definitions of key concepts.

Significance of the Research

Significance should be established by presenting an integrative review of key sources that establish the need for the study or studies. The far-reaching implications of the project findings should be addressed as well. This should include a brief review of the literature with relevant citations and may also include an outline of additional topics to be included in the review of the literature conducted while in the dissertation phase for the main study or collection of studies.

Research Question(s)

The research questions should be presented and show how the methods will be designed to answer those questions. Bear in mind that any questions should be answerable within the timeline and framework of dissertation research. Consider the nature of the data that will be gathered and analysis techniques that will be used to answer each question or set of questions. One way to do this is by providing a table that will show the independent and dependent variables and analysis tools that will be used for each study.

Method(s)

The methods description(s) should include data sources, instruments, procedures, and analysis methods to be used in each study. It will be important to gather the committee's input and tentative approval of the methods, which the student will tighten and elaborate for the formal proposal.

Concept Paper Approval

The concept paper must be discussed in a face-to-face meeting with the student's approved dissertation committee. Distance technology may be used as needed. Concept Paper approval must be obtained from all committee members before preparing the dissertation proposal for formal defense.



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Dissertation Concept Paper Approval Form

WORKING TITLE:

STUDENT'S NAME:

The committee agrees with the concepts put forward in this paper and that the student is ready to prepare a dissertation proposal based on these concepts. The committee recommends this student be allowed to register for dissertation credit. The full proposal still must be presented in a formal meeting with the committee for approval. Only at that point can the student apply for Doctoral Candidate status.

Signed

Committee Chair _____ Date _____

Committee member 1 _____ Date _____

Committee member 2 _____ Date _____

Committee member 3 _____ Date _____

Committee member 4 _____ Date _____