



**Advancement to Candidacy Manual
Department of Leadership Studies**

**School of Leadership and Education Sciences
University of San Diego**

2013-2014

SELECTING A DISSERTATION TOPIC

Ideally, doctoral students should try to focus their research interests after taking 2-4 semesters of coursework. Choosing a dissertation topic can be difficult if a student waits until the completion of coursework to begin this process. In an effort to help promote dissertation research, the faculty has listed the following suggestions for “finding” a topic:

1. Begin by selecting one or more broad, general areas of interest.
2. Develop a systematic reading program for these areas as follows:
 - a. Sign up for course work in these areas.
 - b. Read textbooks and journals in these areas.
 - c. Use paper assignments and bibliography assignments in current classes to begin a review of the literature related to topics of interest.
 - d. Read research journals to learn of topics currently of interest to researchers and to study the techniques of doing and reporting research.
3. Begin an idea notebook. Jot down ideas discussed in class, book titles and journal articles mentioned as important in the area of interest.
4. Discuss dissertation ideas with fellow students and faculty members. Input and support from others keeps an idea alive.
5. Attend professional conferences and seminars related to possible topics.
6. Be attuned to the problems and concerns of personnel in one’s work setting. Sometimes, the best research ideas come from an expressed need.
7. Become knowledgeable about a particular methodology appropriate for investigating the identified area of interest.

LINKING DISSERTATION WORK WITH CAREER GOALS

In addition to following the guidelines on the previous page, the faculty encourages students to try to align dissertation work with their career goals and to do the sorts of dissertations, which will develop the substantive and methodological expertise, which will be useful “on the job.” Students preparing for leadership positions, for instance, should consider doing a more application-oriented dissertation focused on problem solving in a particular organizational or policy context. This sort of dissertation would likely take the form of an action research project, a program evaluation, or a policy analysis. By contrast, students planning careers as researchers should plan on doing a more or less conventional dissertation.

The distinction here is one of focus rather than rigor. Both traditional and application-oriented dissertations must be done carefully and thoughtfully and both must exhibit excellence in conducting inquiry. Our students, however, will play different sorts of roles when they complete our program, and these different roles will require somewhat different approaches to inquiry. Consequently, the faculty expects these differences to be reflected in the dissertation focus and the type of topic selected.

REQUIREMENTS FOR INITIATING THE ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY PROCESS

To advance to candidacy, students must complete a two-part process: Part A: Qualifying Paper and Part B: Oral Defense of the Dissertation Proposal. The following are prerequisites for initiating the advancement to candidacy process:

1. Completion of all required core courses and research and evaluation courses of the doctoral program.
2. Completion of at least 12 specialization elective units.
3. Selection of the Dissertation Committee Chair and one committee member.

THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

The dissertation committee assesses the Qualifying Paper (Part A of the Advancement to Candidacy Process), guides the work of the doctoral student during the process of developing an acceptable proposal and dissertation, and formally approves both the proposal and the dissertation after successful defenses of each.

COMPOSITION OF DISSERTATION COMMITTEE:

The committee shall include a minimum of three (3) persons including the dissertation chair. The dissertation chair will be a faculty member from the Department of Leadership Studies. The chair must have served as a committee member on a minimum of two doctoral committees where the student successfully completed the dissertation defense. The second member must also be from the Department of Leadership Studies. The third member may be a SOLES or USD faculty member/administrator or from outside the University. Outside members must be approved by the dissertation chair, and a form indicating such approval must be filed in the Leadership Studies office, before anyone from outside of USD can be considered a member of the committee. Occasionally, students will include a fourth committee member. All dissertation committee members must have a doctorate from an accredited university. For members from outside USD, students need to complete the Outside Member - Dissertation Committee form, and include the prospective member's curriculum vitae. To complete the entire committee formation process, the student is responsible for getting all committee members signatures on the **Doctoral Dissertation**

Committee / Part A form.

Note: the Doctoral Dissertation Committee /Part A form will sometimes be filed with only 2 committee member signatures, when turning in the Part A paper. Students must have the form signed by the additional committee member(s) at a later date but prior to scheduling a proposal defense.

SELECTING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

The process for selecting a dissertation committee is as follows:

1. Select a chair based on your chosen area of interest. If this is not the student's current advisor, the chair will then become the student's program advisor for the remainder of his or her program and therefore, a **Change of Advisor** form must be completed.
2. The student meets with his/her advisor/chair to discuss the appropriateness of the topic for the candidate and the composition of the committee in terms of both substantive and methodological expertise.
3. The student then meets with potential committee members who will serve as associate advisors on the dissertation committee. The student explains his/her chosen area of interest and gives the potential committee members a brief abstract of the proposed research. When a professor or outside member accepts the invitation to serve on the committee, he/she indicates agreement by signing the **Doctoral Dissertation Committee / Part A** form. When an outside member is to be included on the committee, the outside member should not sign the form until both the dissertation chair and the department have officially approved including the outside member on the student's committee and appropriate paperwork has been submitted.

After students develop the Part A - Qualifying Paper, changes to the committee may be made to better reflect either the substantive or the methodological components of the student's project that have emerged during Part A of the process. The committee initially selected, however, will serve through Part A of the Advancement to Candidacy Process. Changes in committee membership can be made only after a student has successfully completed Part A of the Advancement to Candidacy Process. Changes in committee membership should be noted on the original form in most cases.

PART A - QUALIFYING PAPER:

The Qualifying Paper, usually written on a topic closely associated with the student's intended dissertation topic, is a scholarly analysis of a particular problem or idea. The paper may be a report on a pilot project, a critical review of the literature, or an exploration of some idea or concept. A student should review both the intended content and the planned form of the paper with his or her dissertation chair before undertaking Part A of the Qualifying Examination. It is recommended that what is agreed to, be written down and signed by both the student and the chair.

Once agreement about the form and content of the Qualifying Paper is reached, the student will work **independently** on the project. The Qual A paper is treated as an exam and therefore the student will receive minimal support from the professors who read the final paper. This support

could include offering some advice as to literature to consult, possible suggestions for organization and a review and critique of an outline. The project, which should be no less than 20 and no more than 40 pages, is an opportunity to assess a student's ability to think critically, conceptualize significant issues, follow standard APA guidelines (or the guidelines in another style manual that has been approved by the chair), and write an understandable, well-organized, and grammatically correct text. All of these skills are necessary to successfully complete a dissertation, and students must clearly demonstrate that they possess the above skills before they can move on to the dissertation phase of their programs.

Submission Deadline

Part A is a prerequisite for LEAD 610 which is offered each spring semester. Students must submit their Part A form and an electronic copy of their paper **no later than 3 weeks (15 business days) prior to the start of the semester in which the student will be enrolling in LEAD 610.**

Assessment of Qualifying Paper

The following guidelines apply to assessing the Qualifying Paper and to determining whether or not a student has passed Part A of the Advancement to Candidacy Process:

1. Students must complete and submit the **Dissertation Committee / Part A** form, along with an electronic copy of their Qualifying Paper, to the Leadership Studies office. (Re-submissions do not require a new form, but should include a cover sheet indicating that the paper is a resubmission.) Students should also give copies of their Qualifying Paper to their committee.
NOTE: Students are permitted to submit the Dissertation Committee form with only a chair and 1 member. Additional members can be added at a later time.
2. The student's Qualifying Paper will be reviewed by the Dissertation Chair and one other committee member, determined by the chair. Selection normally will be based on expertise. Committee members who are not from the department normally will not be asked to serve as a second reader, unless there is a compelling reason to do so.
3. If both committee members grade the student's Qualifying Paper as PASS, the student's Qualifying Paper passes, and he/she is finished with that stage of the Advancement to Candidacy Process.
4. If both the committee members give the paper a failing grade, the student fails. Papers that are not judged acceptable must be revised and/or re-written based on the recommendations made by the reviewers, and resubmitted within 60 days of the "No Pass" notification. Students may re-submit the Qualifying Paper no more than once. Students who do not receive a grade of "Pass" after the second submission will not advance to candidacy and will be dropped from the doctoral program.
5. If one of the two readers grades the student's Qualifying Paper as PASS and the other as NO PASS, the readers shall ask a/the third member of the dissertation committee, or a mutually agreed upon faculty member (if the committee is not fully formed) to review and grade the student's Qualifying Paper. If the third reviewer grades the paper as PASS, the student's Qualifying Paper passes. Conversely, if the third reviewer grades the paper

as NO PASS, then the student's Qualifying Paper fails, and he/she needs to follow the procedures outlined above.

6. The Chair is responsible for completing the form and submitting it to the Leadership Studies office. The form is kept in the student's master file. If the paper is judged unacceptable, the same form is used to record assessments of the re-submission.
7. Students will be notified in writing upon successful completion of Part A.
8. Upon successful completion, students will be eligible to enroll in LEAD 610. Consult the Leadership Studies office for registration procedures.

PART B - ORAL DEFENSE OF DISSERTATION PROPOSAL:

The purpose of the proposal defense is to assess the merits of the proposed research and the ability of the doctoral candidate to conduct the proposed research. The proposal must be defended in a formal meeting, attended by all members of the student's committee.

To complete Part B, all members of the student's committee must accept and sign off on the **Qualifying Exam - Part B: Dissertation Proposal Approval** form. If a student fails the proposal defense twice, he/she will not advance to candidacy and will be dropped from the doctoral program.

THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL:

Once a student has successfully passed Part A of the Requirements for Advancement to Candidacy, he/she may formally begin the dissertation process. Before a student begins collecting data, however, he/she must successfully complete Part B of the Requirements for Advancement to Candidacy: Oral Defense of the Dissertation Proposal and submit his/her study to be approved by the USD Institutional Review Board (IRB). Additionally, depending on the study, it may be necessary to obtain approval of the IRB of the organization in which the student is conducting his/her study.

Drafting The Proposal

During the writing of the proposal (which is generally 20-30 pages in length), the candidate will work with the dissertation chair and other members of the committee to refine the proposal. The chair will review successive versions of the proposal, giving critiques of them, until he or she judges that the candidate has a proposal that is ready for approval. The proposal will then be reviewed by other committee members. Committee members with relevant expertise (e.g. in the area of research methodology) may also be consulted during the proposal writing process.

Working Session

The student and chair may arrange a working session with the entire committee several weeks before the proposal defense. This informal meeting allows the student to question the committee members as to their opinions regarding the proposal. A working session well in advance of the proposal defense may avoid confusion at the defense, especially when suggestions by the committee members

appear to conflict. The working session provides an opportunity to resolve apparent conflicts among committee members and makes clear to the student the “rules of the game” which will be operative during the proposal defense.

Scheduling the Defense Date

After the chair and all committee members agree that the proposal can be defended, the candidate arranges a formal meeting with his/her committee to obtain formal approval for the proposal. The approval meeting is open to current USD faculty and graduate students only.

Petitioning to Defend Proposal

A completed **Request for Date of Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Defense** form must be turned into the Executive Assistant in the Leadership Studies office *at least two weeks prior to the defense*. By signing the **Request for Date of Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Defense** form, the dissertation chair and committee members indicate that a) they agree to the date and time for the defense as requested by the student on the form; and b) they have received a copy of, reviewed and approved of the student's dissertation proposal in the form it will be defended. It is the student's responsibility; not the Executive Assistant's to secure all of the necessary signatures on the form and to further ensure that the committee members are aware of the implications of their signature.

Keeping the sometimes time-consuming process of obtaining the chair's approval of the dissertation abstract in mind, we ask the candidate to start this process four to six weeks prior to the scheduled defense in order to meet the one-week deadline for distribution of the announcement. The announcement cannot be distributed unless the abstract has been approved of accordingly.

Composing the Abstract and Announcement

At this time, the student prepares the Dissertation Proposal Abstract (maximum of 350 words) and the Dissertation Proposal Defense Announcement. The abstract must be approved by the dissertation chair prior to submission to the Leadership Studies office. Samples of both documents can be found on the website with the department forms. The abstract needs to be typed in the type setting Times New Roman with a Font of 12 pt and 1 ½ line spacing. Students should download the template for the announcement from the website.

Distance Defenses

In rare cases (such as someone living in another country or outside the San Diego area), students will be permitted to defend dissertation proposals and final dissertations via distance. Such cases need to be approved by the Department Chair in advance of scheduling the defense with the Leadership Studies office. A student must complete the **Request to Defend Via Distance** form and submit it to the Department Chair *30 days prior to date of defense*, indicating the extenuating circumstances which would prevent personal attendance at the defense. Upon approval from the Department Chair, the student will communicate with the Leadership Studies office to schedule the room and arrange the a/v and conference calling or video conferencing equipment. All other deadlines for filing abstracts and announcements will apply.

Once the student has submitted the signed **Request for Date of Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Defense** form to the Leadership Studies Executive Assistant, the latter will schedule a room, mark the room reservation on the form, and distribute copies of the completed form to the student and his/her dissertation chair. The proposal defense must be held on the University of San Diego

campus. On the request form, the student must indicate any a/v or media equipment he or she wishes to have available for the Dissertation Proposal Defense.

Content and Format of the Proposal

For specific information about the contents and format of the dissertation proposal abstract, the student needs to consult with his or her dissertation chair. However, generally speaking, the student needs to address the following items in his or her proposal abstract:

- the purpose of the study
- a historical outline of highlights in the previous literature (if any)
- the methodology of the study
- the research questions that will guide the study

Students must follow the APA guidelines for both the dissertation proposal abstract and the dissertation proposal.

Abstract Preparation

The student must submit the abstract to his or her dissertation chair and after the chair has edited the abstract (if necessary), he or she will return the edits to the student. The student then makes the revisions and submits the abstract to the chair for final review. The dissertation chair will electronically submit the final revised version of the abstract and announcement to the Leadership Studies Executive Assistant no later than one week prior to the defense.

Distribution of the Announcement and Abstract

The candidate must prepare the content of the formal announcement at least one week prior to the scheduled dissertation defense and forward it to the Executive Assistant for distribution. The Assistant will distribute the announcement and abstract to the following:

1. The USD School of Leadership and Education Sciences full-time faculty, administrators and staff via email.
2. School of Leadership and Education Sciences bulletin boards.
3. All doctoral students in SOLES and master's students in the Leadership Studies program via the program listservs.
4. Submit to the university myposting system so that it appears on the SOLES and department webpage event listings.

Copies of the Proposal

By submitting the **Request for Date of Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Defense** form, the candidate has already indicated that he or she has already provided a copy of the dissertation proposal to each committee member. If, at that time, the candidate was asked by his or her committee to incorporate minor changes, the candidate then needs to re-submit the revised version to each member of his or her committee *at least one week prior to the defense*. An electronic copy of the revised proposal also needs to be submitted to the Leadership Studies Executive

Assistant in the event other faculty members and/or students wish to read the proposal prior to the defense.

It is important that the student adhere to the deadlines outlined above. Failure to comply with any one or all of the deadlines in connection with the Dissertation Proposal Defense will result in the student having to reschedule the defense to a later date!

PROPOSAL DEFENSE

Prior to the Dissertation Proposal Defense, the student needs to obtain a **Qualifying Exam: Part B - Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Approval** form and bring it to the defense to be signed by the committee immediately following the proposal defense. The meeting is facilitated by the dissertation chair and open to current faculty members and current USD graduate students only. The Dissertation Proposal Defense will follow these guidelines:

1. The dissertation chair introduces the candidate and committee members to the guests.
2. The chair states the procedures to be followed during the meeting.
3. The candidate gives a personal background statement and tells why he/she is interested in the topic.
4. The chair asks the candidate to summarize the proposal (objectives and design) in an approximately 20 minute statement.
5. The chair invites the committee members to question the candidate.
 - a. Committee members may be requested to take turns.
 - b. Committee members may address particular sections of the proposal.
 - c. Committee members may follow up on their original questions.
6. Either during the committee question-answer period or at the end of the committee questions, the chair invites questions from the faculty. After the opportunity for asking questions is extended to other faculty present, questions from others are solicited.
7. At a prearranged time or when the questioning is finished, the chair closes the meeting. The committee then meets privately to decide whether to approve the proposal at this point in the existing form, approve it with specified modifications, or require the student to radically rewrite the proposal and/or defend the rewritten proposal at a second public meeting. The candidate is then informed of the committee's decision. Note: If a candidate should fail to have his or her proposal accepted at a second proposal approval meeting, the candidate will have failed the candidacy exam and be dropped from the program.

If the student successfully defends his or her proposal, the **Qualifying Exam: Part B - Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Approval** form will be signed by all committee members after the proposal defense. Upon completion of Part B of the Advancement to Candidacy Process, the student needs to secure the Institutional Review Board's approval of the proposal by following the procedures outlined by the Provost Office.

After the student receives all approvals, he/she must submit the **Qualifying Exam: Part B Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Approval** form and a corrected revision of the proposal (via email) to the Leadership Studies Programs Office. Once all course requirements are completed and the Part B form, along with the final revised proposal, is submitted to the Leadership Studies office, the student is advanced to candidacy and will be notified in writing.

If a student does not successfully defend his or her dissertation proposal, and the committee consequently withholds its signatures on the **Qualifying Exam: Part B Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Approval** form, the student is entitled to repeat Part B of the Advancement to Candidacy Process once. Although the student is encouraged to repeat his or her second and last attempt to pass Part B of the Advancement to Candidacy Process within 60 days of having failed the first defense, he or she, in consultation with the dissertation committee, may schedule his or her second defense within an agreed upon time frame.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB):

Students must obtain approval from the USD Institutional Review Board. **Approval must be obtained before any research is done.** Students must file the required documents and follow the established guidelines set forth by the Institutional Review Board.

It is recommended for the student to begin the process of obtaining the IRB approval *at least one month prior to the expected start date of data collection*. Keep in mind that the IRB meets only once per month to review proposals requiring **full review**. Submissions for full review (after approval of the SOLES IRB representative and Associate Dean) must be made two weeks prior to the IRB meeting that month.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) meets monthly, except in August, in order to administer oversight of proposals meeting the criteria for full review. The IRB full review meeting schedule is listed on the provost's website along with a list of IRB committee members. Doctoral students and/or principal investigators (PIs) should note that both **exempt review** and **expedited review** proposals are handled on an on-going basis *without submission deadlines* by the IRB Administrator.

All Instructions for submitting IRB proposals are on the provost's website:
<http://www.sandiego.edu/irb>.

Obtaining Signatures for the IRB Proposal

After preparing the complete proposal, the students should sign the cover sheet and submit it to their chair, along with the proposal, for final approval. Once approved and signed, the dissertation chair will then forward the proposal to Associate Dean's Executive Assistant who will then facilitate and track the progress of the remaining approvals needed, first by the School of Leadership and Education Sciences' IRB Representative and then by the Associate Dean. Finally, the proposal will be delivered to the incumbent Chair of the IRB for expedited review.

Note: If the proposal requires Full Review, the Executive Assistant will notify the student to pick up the proposal and make sixteen (16) copies to be submitted along with the original to the IRB committee.

Project Action Summary Form (PAS)

When the IRB returns the student's IRB proposal to the dissertation chair, it includes a **Project Action Summary Form** signed by the Provost. It is the student's responsibility and **extremely important for him or her to obtain a copy of this form** from his or her dissertation chair. A copy of this form will eventually be included in the student's dissertation and needs to be readily available at the time of the copying and binding of the dissertation. The Dissertation Format manual includes direction as to order and pagination of these pages in the dissertation. The original IRB forms will be kept in the student's file in the Leadership Studies Executive Assistant's office.

Research Project Report Form

Students must also obtain the **Research Project Report Form (Summary/Continuation Form)** from their advisor. By default, each student is granted one year to complete his or her data collection. If, after one year, the student was unable to collect all of his or her data needed for the successful completion of his or her study, he or she needs to fill out the **Research Project Report Form (Summary/Continuation Form)**, checkmark "Continuation", have it signed by his or her dissertation chair and forward it to the Dean's office for final routing. If the student has successfully collected all of the data needed for the successful completion of his or her study within one year, he or she needs to fill out the **Research Project Report Form (Summary/Continuation Form)**, checkmark "Summary", have it signed by his or her dissertation chair and also forward it to the Dean's office for final routing.

FORMAT FOR DISSERTATION PROPOSALS:

What follows is the standard format for organizing a dissertation proposal. In research, however, as in life, form should follow function. Consequently, students can deviate from the following format if they have compelling reasons to do so and they can convince their committee of the legitimacy of these reasons.

1. Title Page
2. Abstract
3. Background to the Study/Statement of the Problem

This section - which is often presented as two separate but related sections - situates the proposed study within the context of a practical problem, an existing policy debate and/or a current theoretical controversy. It identifies a general problem and briefly describes the uncertainty and dissatisfaction with the present knowledge in the field for addressing the identified problem. This section should end with a clear statement about the sort of information and understanding, which is needed to begin to address the problem which has been identified.

4. Purpose of the Study

In this section, the student must clearly and precisely identify the purpose of the study and indicate how the study will begin to respond to the needs identified at the end of the previous section.

5. Research Questions and/or Hypotheses

In this section, the student restates the purpose(s) identified in the previous section in interrogative form. Specifically, the student states the objectives of the study in the form of clearly stated research questions and/or hypotheses. Research questions/hypotheses should flow logically from the discussion of the background of the study and should be consistent with the statement of the problem.

6. Review of the Literature

This section of the proposal demonstrates the student's familiarity with the major literature relevant to his or her research. Familiarity with the methods, measures and approaches used in previous research studies of the proposed topic should be demonstrated. The student also includes a detailed summary of the theoretical frameworks, which are pertinent to the study in this section of the proposal. It is important to show how the proposed research will build on previous research and conceptual frameworks. This review must be a critical analysis of the research literature.

7. Research Design and Methodology

This section summarizes how the student plans to answer the research questions articulated in the proposal and meet the articulated purpose. The student may cite research design literature to support the methodological decisions made in the design, but citations and quotations should never substitute for providing readers a clear understanding of what the researcher plans to do and why it will be done.

8. Delimitations and Limitations

This section should delimit the focus of the study and articulate whatever limitations the study may have.

9. Significance of the Study

This section clearly articulates who is likely to benefit from the study and why these benefits are important. Much of what is included here should have been implicit in the Background to the Study/Statement of the Problem and the Purpose of the Research sections. Here the ideas are made explicit.

10. References

The candidate is to list alphabetically the references used in the proposal. The list should include only those references cited in the proposal.

11. Appendices

The candidate may include any materials in this section that do not properly belong in the body of the proposal. For example, a copy of the instrument or interview protocol may be included here.

STYLE AND FORM OF THE PROPOSAL:

Dissertation proposals and dissertations must conform to the Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association, latest edition, unless approved by the dean's office prior to the defense.

The proposal is to be constructed in the style that will be used in the dissertation. The proposal should be typed, double-spaced, and approximately 20-30 pages long.

ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY:

The Department Chair will notify students of advancement to candidacy when they have successfully completed Part A and Part B and all required coursework, including the 18 units in the area of specialization. A copy of this letter is placed in the student's file.

NOTE: Students who have advanced to candidacy must enroll for dissertation credit (695) each Spring and Fall semester and are not eligible for a leave of absence during this time.

WRITING THE DISSERTATION

After a student has successfully completed Part B of the Requirements for Advancement to Candidacy and has received approval from the IRB (if appropriate), he/she can begin the research process. Students are advised to work closely with their chair during the research process and the writing of the dissertation. Committee members with specialized expertise --e.g. in the area of research methodology-- also should be consulted during the research process when appropriate. Depending on the type of research conducted, completing a dissertation can take anywhere from one to two years. As the time of completion gets closer, students often revisit the doctoral handbook, Graduate Bulletin and the Leadership Studies website to ensure timelines are followed in executing the proper paperwork and accuracy in following established procedures. At this point, it is also important that students closely follow the deadlines for submitting the Petition for Graduation (as outlined in the SOLES Graduate Student Policies).

As students begin preparing their dissertation, they should download and review the USD School of Leadership and Education Sciences Doctoral Dissertation Format Manual from the SOLES Website. After the defense and prior to binding, students must have the format approved by the Leadership Studies office (using the checklist from the above listed manual).

DISSERTATION DEFENSE

When the dissertation chair and committee members determine that the dissertation is ready to be defended, the candidate needs to obtain a **Petition for Defense of Dissertation** form and file the completed form with the Leadership Studies office at least two weeks prior to the defense. By signing the **Petition for Defense of Dissertation** form, the dissertation chair and committee

members indicate that a) they agree to the date and time for the dissertation defense as requested by the candidate on the form; and b) they have received a copy of, reviewed and approved of the candidate's dissertation in the form it will be defended by the candidate on the day given on the form. It is the candidate's responsibility and not the Leadership Studies Executive Assistant's to secure all of the necessary signatures on the form and to further ensure that the committee members are aware of the implications of their signatures.

Once the candidate has submitted the signed **Petition for Defense of Dissertation** form to the Executive Assistant, the latter will schedule a room, mark the room reservation on the form, and distribute copies of the completed form to the candidate and his/her dissertation chair. The dissertation defense must be held on the University of San Diego campus. On the request form, the student must indicate any a/v or media equipment he or she wishes to have available for the Dissertation Defense. For further information about procedural guidelines in regards to reservation of media equipment, please refer to page 22 of this handbook.

At this time, the candidate prepares information to be included in the Dissertation Defense Announcement. A sample of the announcement can be found online with the forms.

For specific information about the contents and format of the dissertation abstract, the candidate needs to consult with his or her dissertation chair. However, generally speaking, the candidate needs to address the following items in his or her abstract:

- the purpose of the study
- a historical outline of highlights in the previous literature (if any)
- the methodology of the study
- the research questions that guide the study

In addition, the candidate must abide by the following guidelines with regards to the dissertation abstract:

The word limit for the dissertation abstract is 350 words. The candidate needs to submit the abstract to his or her dissertation chair. After the chair has edited the abstract (if necessary), he or she will return the edits to the candidate. The candidate then makes the revisions and submits the abstract to the chair for final review. The dissertation chair will submit the final revised version of the abstract to the Leadership Studies Executive Assistant via email no later than one week prior to the scheduled defense.

The candidate must prepare the content of the formal announcement and submit it to the Leadership Studies office at least one week prior to the scheduled dissertation defense. The student should download the announcement template and email their announcement to the Executive Assistant for distribution. The Assistant will distribute the announcement and abstract to the following:

1. The USD School of Leadership and Education Sciences full-time faculty, administrators and staff via email.
2. School of Leadership and Education Sciences bulletin boards.

3. All doctoral students in SOLES and master's students in the Leadership Studies program via the program listservs.
4. Submit to the university myposting system so that it appears on the SOLES and department webpage event listings.

Keeping the sometimes time-consuming process of obtaining the chair's approval of the dissertation abstract in mind, we ask that the candidate start this process four to six weeks prior to the scheduled defense in order to meet the one-week deadline for distribution of the announcement. The announcement cannot be distributed unless the abstract has been approved of accordingly.

Petition for Defense of Dissertation

By submitting the **Petition for Defense of Dissertation** form, the candidate has already indicated that he or she has provided a copy of the dissertation to each committee member prior to submission of that form. If, at that time, the candidate was asked by his or her committee to incorporate minor changes; such as correcting punctuation, spelling errors or the like after the initial submission, the candidate needs to submit to his or her committee a copy of the dissertation reflecting those changes at least one week prior to the dissertation defense. Dissertation chairs and committee members often prefer to get the final draft more than one week in advance. Students should check with them along the way to allow adequate time for committee members to read and review the dissertation. An electronic copy also needs to be submitted to the Leadership Studies Executive Assistant in the event other faculty and students wish to read the proposal prior to the defense.

Dissertation Defense Approval Page

The student should prepare the **Dissertation Defense Approval** page (template available for download online) and print at least 7 copies to bring to the defense. These forms should be given to the chairperson *prior to the start* of the Dissertation Defense.

It is important that the candidate adhere to the deadlines outlined above. Failure to comply with any one or all of the deadlines in connection with the Dissertation Defense will result in the candidate having to reschedule the defense to a later date!

Candidates must follow the deadlines for completion of the dissertation defense that are listed in the USD Graduate Bulletin.

The meeting in which the dissertation is defended is conducted in the presence of scholars skilled in research methodology and knowledgeable about the area of specialization studied. The meeting is facilitated by the dissertation chair and open to faculty members, graduate students, and approved guests. The meeting should be scheduled at a time when the faculty and others may attend. Faculty members should announce the defense meeting in their classes so that students are aware of the meeting.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES FOR DISSERTATION DEFENSE:

1. The dissertation defense must be held on the USD campus.
 2. The meeting will be held in a room with appropriate facilities for the candidate's presentation.
 3. At the beginning of the meeting, the chair introduces the candidate and the members of the committee. Other people in attendance may be introduced at the chair's discretion.
 4. The chair states the procedures to be followed during the meeting.
 5. The candidate presents an overview of the dissertation: issue, procedure, conclusions, and recommendations. This usually takes approximately 20 minutes.
 6. The committee members ask questions of the candidate according to the announced procedure. The candidate answers the questions.
 7. After the committee members have had their questions answered, the chair invites questions from the guests.
 8. When all questions have been answered, the chair thanks those in attendance for coming and states that the committee will now meet in executive session (without the candidate). When the guests have left, the committee members discuss and evaluate the defense and make a decision to pass or fail the candidate. A unanimous vote is necessary to pass the candidate. Committee members may vote to pass the candidate contingent on the candidate making specified changes to the dissertation.
 9. The candidate then meets with the committee, and the chair explains the committee's decisions, including specifics regarding any needed changes or revisions.
 10. If approved, committee members sign at least seven copies of the **Dissertation Defense Approval** page. A copy of this form is kept in the student's file. The originals are placed after the title page in each bound copy of the dissertation to be distributed.
 11. If the dissertation is not approved, the committee must decide whether the candidate should be terminated from the program or be given an opportunity to redo the dissertation and defend a radically revised document. If the candidate should fail a second dissertation, they will be dropped from the doctoral program.
 12. Once the dissertation is approved, students must complete and submit the **Institutional Review Board Research Project Report** form --following the guidelines as outlined in the section on the IRB in this handbook-- to the administrative assistant in the Provost's office.
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AFTER THE DISSERTATION DEFENSE

After final, post-defense changes are made, the candidate brings the completed original dissertation to his/her dissertation chair for final approval of any recommended changes.

Format Check

The student should make an appointment with the Leadership Studies Executive Assistant to complete the final format check (see Doctoral Dissertation Format Manual for procedure and checklist). After the format check is completed and the Dissertation Format Submission Checklist is approved and filed in the Leadership Studies office, the candidate is responsible for printing at least five additional copies of the final dissertation and inserting original signed copies of the Dissertation Defense Approval form in these copies in the appropriate place. Copies must be made by an unblemished photocopying process. A sixth original approval form is inserted into the original copy of the dissertation. Ditto, mimeograph, and carbon copies are not acceptable. This copy will be sent to University Microfilms (UMI).

Submission of Dissertation and the Dissertation Packet

The dissertation packet includes complete and detailed instructions for the final processing of the dissertation. The dissertation packet is available from the Graduate Records office in Founders Hall Room 117. Information includes how to copy, bind, and distribute copies of the dissertation. "Procedures for Submission of the Doctoral Dissertation - Instructions to Candidates," a Dissertation Action Form and a Sign-Off Sheet for Distribution of Doctoral Dissertation can be found on the department website with the forms. Keep in mind; these are parts of a more comprehensive information package attainable at the Graduate Records office. Please make sure to pick up copies of all required forms and a pamphlet concerning microfilming and copyrighting and other post-defense dissertation-related items. Any and all questions and concerns regarding these dissertation-related issues need to be directed to the Graduate Records office. This includes many other items such as proper forms in connection with the distribution of the dissertation as well as fees and charges attached to the proper processing of the binding of the dissertation and other procedures. The Leadership Studies Executive Assistant is unable to furnish you with the most up-to-date and accurate information, as the Graduate Records office is the final stop for dissertation submission and graduation clearance.

All dissertations must be sent to University Microfilms for microfilming and copyrighting.

Copyrighting the dissertation is optional but recommended. Copyrighting is accomplished through University Microfilms and must be done at the time it is microfilmed, which is considered the time of publication of the dissertation. If the dissertation is copyrighted, that should be noted on the blank sheet following the title page.

PREPARING FOR GRADUATION:

Degree completion is posted on the transcript and a diploma is issued based on the date of completion (May, August or January). A commencement ceremony is held in May at the end of the

spring semester for all candidates who completed degree requirements since the previous summer semester.

Commencement Eligibility

Candidates who do not submit the dissertation and the fees and forms in regards to the dissertation-related issues to the Graduate Records office by the date posted in the Graduate Bulletin for May graduation, will not be eligible to complete the degree in spring nor participate in the May commencement. They may participate in the commencement ceremony held in May of the following year. August and January graduates may participate in the following May's commencement ceremony.

Candidates should visit the USD commencement website and stay informed of specifics related to the commencement ceremony itself. <http://www.sandiego.edu/commencement>