

Dissertation Seminar I: Introduction to Dissertation Development
3 credits

EDL 860

Course Description

This course will guide the EdD student through the initial stages of dissertation development, including topic/project exploration, and planning, and question/subquestions development and methodology determination. Students will review and evaluate research methodologies in order to identify an appropriate research design. In addition, they will dissect a number of dissertations in order to discover and pursue a strategy appropriate for undertaking the research process. Students will be part of a community of researchers, willing and able to support each other in the development of research plans as the group moves through the degree program.

Course Structure

Designed in a seminar format, this course will guide students through the formative stages of proposal development in which constant, critical thinking is required. Interaction among the instructor and students will be important. A part of the class meetings will focus on specific approaches to managing the process with most of the time devoted to substantive ideas, methods and projects to guide each participant's progress.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will refine analytical and critical skills/abilities by reviewing, synthesizing and critiquing educational research.
- Students will develop a research topic to construct new knowledge that is appropriate for doctoral study, including a problem statement, research questions, significance of the problem and a conceptual framework.
- Students will be able to discuss research and other topics with academics in their field.
- Students will develop a realistic research design with specific research strategies.
- Students will communicate research ideas and their appropriate theoretical and methodological rigor and reality.
- Students will gain an understanding of the process of dissertation development, including stress, time, project management, committee formation, dissertation proposal and defense and IRB requirements.
- Students will submit a completed IRB.

Course Requirements

1. Participation – 20%

Active participation is at the center of this course. In each class meeting, students will update the group on their progress and present their ideas and plans. These will be discussed, commented

on, and critiqued by the entire class. Getting constant feedback on the work and plans will assist all members of the research community to progress in the development of the dissertation.

2. **Concept Proposal – 20%**

Students will submit a concept proposal of their research idea. This concise model will serve as the outline of the full dissertation proposal due at the end of the semester.

3. **Dissertation Proposal – 60%**

Students will submit a formal written documentation of the research plan in the designated format. This paper will be a preliminary proposal that details the problem, questions, concepts, design and format of the proposed research.

General Criteria for Assessment

1. **Construction of Knowledge:** Students successfully interpret, analyze, evaluate, or synthesize information.

2. **Depth of Understanding:** Student understanding of course content is relatively complex and deep, and they demonstrate that understanding through elaborated communication.

3. **Connection to Practice and Policy:** Students successfully connect course content to educational practice and/or policy. They explore implications that create value and significance for knowledge.

4. **Clarity of Expression:** Students demonstrate quality work through well-organized, grammatically correct, precise and accurate writing. They reflect thoughtfulness in word choice, sentence construction and composition.

Course Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage Points
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
F	73 or below

Guidelines for Written Assignments

Advanced graduate academic work requires competence in written communication to express your ideas clearly and accurately. Therefore, it is expected that students will be able to articulate their positions, reasoning, and queries with clarity, accuracy, and precision in grammatical construction and language use. Students must demonstrate critical thinking in all of their written work. Further, it is imperative that doctoral students draw upon the work of other scholars and appropriately give credit to others through in-text citations.

Format Requirements for Papers

- Use APA (most recent edition) to format course papers.
- Use inclusive language (do not use masculine pronouns when referring to men and women).
- All papers should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins. Times New Roman font (12 point) is standard.
- Number the pages.
- Writing should be appropriately referenced, giving credit to others for their work by providing accurate citations.
- Where appropriate and possible, draw connections between course concepts/readings and specific examples/experiences. The capacity to relate theory with practice is an important component of the course.
- Writing must be grammatically correct and without spelling, punctuation, or typographical errors.
- Include a list of references at the end of the paper. This list should include all references cited in the paper, and only those cited in the paper.

Guidelines for Online Discussions

There are three very important rules for using online discussion boards:

1. Remember that the culture of mutual respect that is part of our face-to-face time extends into the virtual classroom environment.
2. Participation is required.
3. Participation alone is not enough. Posts require a thoughtful and meaningful approach. Quality does count. Also important is timing. If you wait until the end of the discussion window time, you are not engaging in the type of discussion required.

See “Guidelines and Rubrics for Online Discussions” (D2L Course Content) for further details.

Guidelines for Communication in a Respectful Learning Environment

- Listen receptively. Seek first to understand, then to be understood.
- Attend to the person who has the floor. No sidebar conversations, gestures, or extraneous activity while another person is talking.
- Communicate honestly. If you have a concern or if you are puzzled – explain how you are feeling and why.
- Disagree thoughtfully. Respectful questioning and disagreement is not wrong. Scholarly discourse involves and encourages exploration of different perspectives.
- Derogatory comments based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, or nationality are not acceptable.

Academic Integrity

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is committed to a standard of academic integrity for all students. The System guidelines state: “Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others’ academic endeavors.” (UWS 14.01, Wisconsin Administrative Code)

Students are subject to disciplinary action for academic misconduct, which is defined in UWS 14.03, Wisconsin Administrative Code. Students are encouraged to review the procedures related to violations of academic honesty as outlined in Chapter UWS 14, Wisconsin Administrative Code. The System guidelines and local procedures are printed in the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Student Discipline Code 2007-2008 and can be found on the Dean of Students website at www.uwosh.edu/dean/conduct.htm. Specific questions regarding the provisions of Chapter UWS 14 (and institutional procedures approved to implement Chapter UWS 14) should be directed to the Dean of Students Office.

Accessibility Statement

We would like to fully include persons with disabilities in this course. Please let us know if you need any special accommodations. Information will be kept confidential whenever possible. For questions regarding UW Oshkosh policy and available services for students with disabilities, please contact John Palmer, Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities in the Dean of Students Office in Dempsey Hall. palmerj@uwosh.edu or 424-3100.

The Writing Center

All UW Oshkosh students are eligible for one-on-one conferencing at the Writing Center. Their free, confidential tutoring is designed to help writers work through assignments and gain additional writing skills. Trained peer consultants can assist writers at any stage of the composition process, from brainstorming for topics to fine-tuning a final draft. They help writers with issues like grammar and mechanics by helping them identify their own patterns of error and learning how to avoid those errors. Check their website for more information about services. (<http://www.uwosh.edu/wcenter>). The Writing Center is located in Suite 102 of the Student Success Center, across from Reeve and Polk on Elmwood Ave.

Communication

Email. Your UW Oshkosh email account is used by the University and by your instructors to communicate University and course information. Please check your UW Oshkosh email frequently.

Weather Concerns. If you are unable to attend class due to hazardous conditions, please notify me via email prior to the scheduled class meeting. In the event that I cannot meet with the class, or most members of the class cannot attend, we will schedule an alternative discussion/learning activity using D2L. Please check your UW Oshkosh email prior to class if you have any questions about the class meeting. I will send an email notice to you no later than 3:30 p.m. if there is an alternative plan for that evening's session.

UW Oshkosh College of Education and Human Services

EdD in Superintendency

The **mission** of the EdD in Educational Leadership program leading to licensure as a District Administration is to develop educators to assume formal leadership roles in their organization.

The **goals** of the program are to develop the capacity to:

1. envision and guide organizational change;
2. communicate effectively, engage constituents, develop people and build community;
3. advocate equity for diverse populations, and respect individuals;
4. integrate theory, data, research and ethical standards into the context of one’s practice through continuous learning.

The Educator as a Caring Intellectual



Program Dispositions

Throughout this program students will be expected to demonstrate the following dispositions:

- Value change as the source of the opportunity for improvement
- Display the ability to understand people and relationships and be receptive to the ideas of others
- Show a willingness to implement non-discriminatory access, accommodations and assessments.
- Demonstrate empathic understanding of diversity in all domains.
- Reflect regularly upon the philosophical assumptions, ethical principles and rationales that guide one’s practice
- Understand oneself as a learner and value learning as a core capacity.

Wisconsin Administrator Standards for Superintendent (03) Licensure

Teacher Standards, Vision, Instructional Program, Management, Family/Community Relations, Ethics, and Context Affecting Schools

(Full documentation available at: <http://tepd.dpi.wi.gov/epp/licensure-program-guidelines>)

Tentative Schedule of Topics

Meeting Session	Topics	Activities and Assignments
Seminar Session #1:	Review Educational Research Types Examine doctoral dissertations. Analyze the structural framework of a variety of studies; review methodologies to identify an appropriate research design	Find and read award winning dissertations

	Explore potential research topics	
Seminar Session #2:	Review the purpose and strategy of award winning dissertations Choose a research topic and research design Overview of the Review of Related Literature Research Strategies Developing the Concept Proposal	
Seminar Session #3	Forming a dissertation committee Developing a data collecting plan	Concept Proposal Due Date:
Seminar Session #4	CITI and the IRB Process Individual and small group work time	
Seminar Session #5	Discussions of questions/problems/concerns Proposal Feedback	
Seminar Session #6	Discussions of questions/problems/concerns Proposal Feedback	Final Proposal Due Date: