GUIDE TO DISSERTATION PREPARATION

Graduate School
EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY
LAST UPDATED JULY 2025

The dissertation demonstrates a candidate's ability to conduct scholarly work and to generate new knowledge. It is with the dissertation that the candidate demonstrates the ability to conduct independent investigations. The dissertation is a major step in the journey of scholarly life, presenting credentials and establishing a research agenda. As such, it is the object of intense work and scrutiny. The effort and scrutiny are the arena of the candidate and dissertation committee. The *Guide to Dissertation Preparation* is intended to facilitate the mechanics of construction of the dissertation documents and to make the dissertation appropriate for presentation to the broader academic community.

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

The student, in conjunction with the doctoral program director, will choose a dissertation committee chair or co-chairs (one co-chair may be selected from the concentration area) after passing the qualifying examinations. The student has the responsibility to identify a preferred committee chair or co-chairs who will agree to be appointed. The committee chair or co-chairs will be officially appointed by the Dean of SLIM. The student and committee chair(s) will select one other SLIM faculty member and a competent member from outside SLIM whose education (PhD required), interests, and competencies strengthen the dissertation writing and defense process. If the student has a subject concentration, the third member of the committee will be from the concentration discipline. The Dean of SLIM and the doctoral program director approve the membership of all dissertation committees and are responsible for officially recording the appointments. A student has the right to change the composition of the committee at any point of the process after consulting with the committee chair, the doctoral program coordinator, and the Dean of SLIM. (from *Guide to SLIM Dissertation Studies*)

Dissertation Committee Membership Guidelines are outlined in *Guide to SLIM Doctoral Studies*, Appendix B. This document is useful when communicating with committee members.

Students are required to complete and submit the ESU Thesis and Dissertation Committee Declaration Form the semester prior to completing the dissertation or in conjunction with their dissertation proposal. This form is located on the ESU, Graduate School, Forms website.

As the Doctor of Philosophy degree is awarded by the University, the Dean of the Graduate School represents the University and takes an active role in the dissertation process. The dissertation committee gives primary guidance and approval to the concepts and presentation of the research in conjunction with the Director of the doctoral program and the Dean of the School of Library and Information Management. Upon recommendation of the dissertation committee and approval of the Dean of the School of Library and Information Management, the Dean of the Graduate School formalizes the University's approval to the written presentation of the dissertation.

ENROLLMENT IN DISSERTATION CREDITS

Doctoral students must complete 12 hours of dissertation credit, then enroll in at least 3 credits each semester until the dissertation research is completed or until 8 years after admission to the doctoral program have expired. A grade of "IP" (incomplete) will be issued each semester until the dissertation is complete and approved. Dissertations are expected to contribute new knowledge to the field through original research. (from *Guide to SLIM Doctoral Studies*

APPROVALS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

The Doctoral Program Director will assist candidates and their committee chair with obtaining approvals to conduct research.

To ensure the quality of the dissertation and to be in compliance with appropriate regulations, the candidate must receive prior approval for research components which use human or other vertebrate animals as research subjects. Application materials are available from the Research and Grants Office online at https://sites.google.com/g.emporia.edu/emporiastateuniversity/hornet-sites/departments/research-grants/forms

The Application for Approval to Use Human Subjects should be submitted, along with the Informed Consent Document and supplemental material, to the Institutional Review Board for Treatment of Human Subjects, Research and Grants Center by emailing jbones17@emporia.edu

Before approval can be given to use human subjects, one must register with the CITI Program and successfully complete the Human Subject Research Course applicable to your discipline. Information and instructions are available at the CITI Training Instructions website.

Students (and their committee chair) should consult with the Doctoral Program Director about obtaining the required clearances from the following boards or committees:

   a) Institutional Review Board for Treatment of Human Subjects. This board was established to enforce federal regulations enacted by the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare in 1976. It is the responsibility of the Board to determine whether those individuals serving as subjects are not placed "at risk due to their involvement in research projects." An individual is considered to be "at risk" if exposed to the possibility of injury, including physical, psychological or social injury as a consequence of participation as a subject in any research, development, or related activity. A Human Subjects Training Module must be completed and a quiz taken and passed at 80% to receive approval from the Institutional Review Board. Please contact the Research and Grants Office at 341-5351 should you have questions concerning this module and quiz.
   b) Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. To assure compliance with the Public Health Service Policy (PHS) on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, the University has formed an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. It is the responsibility of the Committee to insure that all individuals involved in testing, research, and training with animals act in accordance with principles outlined by the PHS. Please contact Dr. Jerald Spotswood jspotswo@emporia.edu .

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

Students are expected to conduct significant research that contributes to the theory base of library and information science and to present proposals as well as their research results to the SLIM community in public sessions in Emporia. The student must present the dissertation proposal in a technology-assisted

(Zoom) public presentation to the ESU community. The presentation may be electronically mediated so all interested parties have an opportunity to hear, read, and see the presentation.

After a student has successfully completed the qualifying examinations and LI 946 Directed Reading, the next step is to enroll in LI 947 Dissertation Proposal. The dissertation committee chair will guide the development of the dissertation proposal, which will serve as a basis for the student's research. The dissertation committee chair, acting on written reactions to the proposal by other committee members, will determine when the proposal is sufficiently developed to submit it for approval by the Dean of SLIM. The proposal must be accepted for presentation by the dissertation committee, the Dean of SLIM, and the Doctoral Program Director before the public presentation date is set. In consultation with the student, the Doctoral Program Director, committee chair, the Dean of SLIM, and the Dean of the ESU Graduate School will select a date for the presentation of the dissertation proposal.

The public presentation will be scheduled to occur at least two weeks before the end of the fall or spring semester and announced in advance to the ESU community. There will be no presentations made during the summer semester or inter-sessions. Online access to the draft proposal will be provided at the time of the announcement of the presentation. The proposal will be made available electronically upon request to the Doctoral Program Director.

The proposal will contain the following chapters.
- Introduction—describes the problem being addressed and the purpose of the study in order to frame research questions
- Literature Review—provides the background and the context for the research problem by describing the relevant literature on the topic
- Methods—research design including the reason the specific methodology was selected
- Proposed Timeline — established schedule from start to time for final presentation of research
- References—lists all works cited in the dissertation proposal

At the public presentation of a research proposal, the Director or the dissertation chair will introduce the student and the members of the dissertation committee. The student will then present the proposal, describing the research question, theoretical framework, literature review, research design and timeline. At the conclusion of the presentation, the dissertation chair will first invite the committee, the Deans and other SLIM faculty to make comments and pose questions and then extend the invitation to others attending the session. After the community's questions have been addressed, the public portion of the presentation is over. The committee will then meet in private to appraise the proposal and vote on acceptance.

A student completing a dissertation proposal must submit to the ESU Graduate School the Thesis and Dissertation Committee Declaration Form. This form is available on the ESU Graduate School website. This form signed by each member of the dissertation committee affirms that the candidate has proposed an acceptable research topic and has the academic and professional background to address the topic. The Doctoral Program Director will facilitate the signing of this required form at the time of the dissertation proposal approval process and submit it to the Graduate School. At this point, the student will advance to degree candidate.

PROPOSAL ACCEPTANCE FORM

Name of Student _____

Title of Dissertation _____

Signatures:

_____
Dean of the School of Library and Information Management

_____
Committee Member (Chair)

_____
Committee Member

_____
Committee Member

_____
Doctoral Candidate

DISSERTATION DEFENSE

Upon completion of the dissertation, all students defend their research during an oral examination conducted and evaluated by dissertation committee. The oral examination is open to the public. The dissertation defense is a traditional forum in which the candidate presents the research for public scrutiny. The actual format and timing of the defense will be decided by each individual dissertation committee in conjunction with the Director of the Ph.D. program.

The dissertation (Chapter 1-5) must be prepared in compliance with this *ESU Guide to Dissertation Presentation* (see also the *Guide to SLIM Dissertation Studies*) and the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (latest edition).

After the dissertation committee, the SLIM Dean, the Doctoral Program Director, and the Dean of ESU Graduate Studies have accepted the student's dissertation as ready for presentation, the student is required to present the results publicly. There will be no presentations scheduled for summer semester or inter-sessions.

After the committee chair notifies the Doctoral Program Director that the dissertation committee, the SLIM Dean, and the Dean of Graduate School have found the student's dissertation ready for presentation, the Doctoral Program Director will set a date for the presentation in conjunction with the committee chair and/or co-chairs and the Deans.

The dissertation must be approved for presentation before announcement of day and time for the public presentation of the dissertation to take place. The public presentation of a dissertation must be electronically announced to the ESU community at least two (2) weeks in advance. Public presentation of a dissertation must be held on or before November 4 (fall semester) or April 4 (spring semester) allowing time for the student to complete the final dissertation document and get it to the graduate school on or before the graduate school's due date, i.e., three weeks before the date of graduations, approximately November 18 (fall semester); approximately April 18 (spring semester). There will be no dissertation presentations made during the summer semester or inter-sessions. Online access to the finished dissertation will be provided at the time of the announcement of the presentation.

At the presentation, the dissertator and the committee members will be introduced by the dissertation chair, who also acts as facilitator for the question-and-answer period following the formal presentation and for the committee meeting that follows. During this portion of the session, the dissertator presents their research, including a statement of the research question, the theory and literature that frame the work, the research design, the study, the research results and interpretation, implications, and suggestions for future research.

At the conclusion of the formal presentation, the chair asks the committee to pose questions the members may still have, after which time the community is invited to make comments and pose questions. Following the public portion of the session, the chair will call a closed meeting of the dissertation committee for the purpose of providing any additional remarks and suggestions and determining whether or not there is agreement for approval (with signatures). Official acceptance is indicated with completion of the ESU Final Exam Unity Form (in OnBase), which is filed at the end (begun by the committee Chair) and routed to the committee members to approve the final manuscript.

The student is required to submit the approved finished work with all corrections made to the ESU Graduate School by sending a copy as an attachment to email to jspotswo@emporia.edu There should not be departmental signatures in the copy submitted to the Graduate School.

With assistance of the ESU Graduate School, final dissertations are published in the ESU William Allen White Repository and in ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis.

DISSERTATION REQUIREMENTS

Dissertations must follow APA 7th (most current) style.

Verb tense is covered in the 7th edition APA Style manual in the Publication Manual Section 4.12 and the Concise Guide Section 2.12. This is a useful Verb Tense table. Please use the verb tenses in the table to report information in your APA style dissertation.
https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/grammar/verb-tense

University of Kansas (KU) Thesis and Dissertation Formatting: Templates are available online. Please use the ALA 7th style thesis/dissertation template for APA 7th. https://guides.lib.ku.edu/etd/templates

At SLIM we require dissertation in 12 pt. font.

All pages must be submitted with the dissertation when submitted for approvals.

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION
FOR THE DEGREE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE
SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

_____
(Name of student)

presented on _____

Title: _____

_____

Abstract approved: _____(Chair)

(A succinct summary of the dissertation not to exceed 350 words.)

Keywords

Example of Title Page
(Center top to bottom)
Equal margins top & bottom

MULTIMEDIA: ITS EFFECT ON INFORMATION TRANSFER

by

Leslie B. Dixson (1)

Emporia, Kansas

May 1997

A Dissertation

Presented to

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

The School of Library and Information Management

(1)   Please use full name as you normally use it on official documents.

Example of Permission to Copy Statement

With my typed signature below, I, (name of student), herby submit this thesis/dissertation to Emporia State University as partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree. I agree that the Library of the University may make it available to use in accordance with its regulation governing materials of this type. I further agree that quoting, photocopying, digitizing or other reproduction of this document is allowed with proper attribution for private study, scholarship (including teaching) and research purposes of a nonprofit nature. No copying which involves potential financial gain will be allowed without written permission of the author. I also agree to permit the Graduate School at Emporia State University to digitize and place this thesis in the ESU institutional repository, ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis database and in ProQuest's Dissertation Abstracts International.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My deepest thanks to my dissertation chair, Dr. Bud Gardner, for all the help he gave me in completing this dissertation. I also thank the other members of my committee, Dr. Thelma Smith, Dr. Sam Jones, and Dr. Pat White, for their continued support.

I will be ever grateful for the love of my parents, my children, and especially my spouse. Without you all being there, this dissertation would never have been completed.

These samples are offered as a guideline. **Dissertations may have different components.**

Sample #1 - without detail

<div align="center">

TABLE OF CONTENTS

</div>

<p align="right"><u>Page</u></p>

<u>CHAPTER</u>

Sample #2 - with detail

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Example of Table of Contents (continued)

Dissertation Checklist

This checklist format is designed for use by the student in consultation with their dissertation committee members when preparing the final submission of a dissertation document to the ESU Graduate School. The style guide used for formatting purposes should be the *APA Formatting and Style Guide (7th Edition (*American Psychological Association) or current edition.

Verb tense is covered in the 7th edition APA Style manual in the Publication Manual Section 4.12 and the Concise Guide Section 2.12. This is a useful Verb Tense table. Please use the verb tenses in the table to report information in your APA style dissertation.
https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/grammar/verb-tense

University of Kansas (KU) Thesis and Dissertation Formatting: Templates are available online. Please see the ALA 7th style thesis/dissertation template for APA 7th. https://guides.lib.ku.edu/etd/templates

Margins Requirement
_____ 1.00" left, top, right, and bottom margins for all pages.

Organization of Dissertation
_____1. Blank Page
_____2. Abstract with keywords (350 words maximum)*
_____3. Title Page
_____4. Copyright
_____4. Dedication page (optional)
_____5. Acknowledgements (optional)
_____6. Table of Contents
_____8.   List of Tables (only used for 5 or more), Roman numerals for page #
_____9.   List of Figures (only used for 5 or more), Roman numerals for page #
_____10. List of Symbols and/or Abbreviations with pages (only if needed)
_____12. Body of Dissertation
_____13. References (works cited)
_____12. Appendix or Appendices
_____13. Permission letter(s) for any copyrighted materials used in text
_____14. IRB Approval
_____15. Blank Page

Note: Unless otherwise noted, all pages must be submitted with the dissertation for approval by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Font Size
_____ 12 point (SLIM preferred)

Font Type
_____ Times New Roman

Spacing

_____ Double spacing should be the default for the entire document including before and after all centered headings and subheadings.

Pagination
_____ Every page must be assigned a number, except blank or copyright page (counted but not numbered) and page numbers should stand alone without any form of punctuation. Lower-case Roman numerals are use in preliminary pages, while Arabic numerals are used in the remainder of the manuscript.
_____ The student is responsible for ensuring that the pages of the manuscript are in correct numerical order. Make sure all pages are included.
_____ Check for errors in the Table of Contents and check lists of tables, figures, etc., for incorrect page numbers, titles that do not exactly match the headings used in the manuscript (capitalization, punctuation, wording); or incorrectly indicated subdivision. Make sure you are consistent.
_____ All page numbers must be centered 1/2" from the bottom of the page (The last line of text must be 1" from bottom."
_____ The title page is assumed to be numbered lowercase Roman numeral "i." The actual number should NOT be displayed on this page. (Use a section break to solve this issue.)
_____ All other preliminary pages (e.g., copyright, dedication, acknowledgement, abstract, table of contents, etc.) must be numbered in lowercase Roman numerals beginning with "ii."
_____ Pages in the body of the text are to be numbered using Arabic numerals beginning with "1".
_____ All page numbers in the Table of Content and the List of Tables and List of Figures must correspond with actual page numbers in the text.

Running Headers, Footnotes and Endnotes
_____ If footnotes are used, they must conform to margin requirements and must begin on the page they are cited.
_____ Footnotes must be two font sizes smaller than document text (12 point)
_____ Single space footnotes entries and double space between each.
_____ Footnotes should be renumbered beginning with Arabic number "1" for each chapter or section.
_____ Running headers and endnotes are NOT preferred.

Centered Headings and Section Heads
_____ Chapter headings levels must follow APA 7th rules and be consistent throughout document.
_____ Preliminary page titles (e.g., Abstract, Table of Contents, etc.)
_____ If a subheading falls at the end of a page without any accompanying text, move subheading to the next page.
_____ Do not use a numbering system for title and subheading (e.g., 1.1, 1.1.1).
_____ Begin Chapter One (introduction) on a new page. Type the title in tile case, bold, centered and positioned at the top of the first page of text. Do not type the heading "Introduction." Title acts as de facto Level 1 heading.

Tables and Figures
_____ Format all Tables and Figures, including the caption, according to the current APA style manual.
_____ All Tables and Figures must conform to required margin requirements (1").
_____ There should be a line before and after column headers and at the end of each table as indicated in the APA style manual.

_____ When a Table is continued to another page(s), repeat table number and column headers; label table title as: Table 1 (Continued).

_____ Tables and figures must be identified in the text by a number (e.g., Table 1; do not label as Table 1.1, Table 2.1, etc.)

_____ Table numbers and titles must be typed above the table.

_____ Figure numbers and captions must be typed below the figure.

_____ Table and Figure captions must appear on the same page as the Table or Figure.

_____ If a Table or Figure is taken directly from another source, the entire source must be cited below the table/figure.

_____ All Tables and Figures should be in a separate appendix (unless otherwise instructed by the committee).

References

_____ All references must be listed in the reference section at the end of the manuscript. Names and dates appearing in the text must exactly match those in the references. Follow APA 7th rules for citing multiple authors.

Errors in Grammar and Punctuation

_____ Lack of subject-verb agreement, especially in sentences in which the subject is singular, but the object of a prepositional phrase is plural (e.g., A group of students was surveyed is correct).

_____ Misuse of comma and semicolon, e.g., omitting the comma in a series of three or more items connected with and or, using however as a conjunction and omitting the semicolon before, however.

_____ Ellipsis indicated incorrectly; an ellipsis is indicated by three spaced periods (plus sentence-ending punctuation, if applicable).

_____ Incorrect typing of the hyphen (one character strike) and the dash (two unspaced hyphens); no spaces should be used before or after these punctuation marks.

_____ Faulty parallelism in sentence construction.

_____Dangling or misplaced modifiers; other errors in noun modification.

_____ Misuse of commonly confused words, e.g., affect and effect, principal and principle, etc.

_____Misplacement of periods and commas in quoted material; periods and commas are always placed inside quotation marks; colons and semi-colons are placed outside.

_____Incorrect verb tense changes within sentences and paragraphs.

_____Appositive and other nonrestrictive phrases are always set off by commas.

_____ Restrictive clauses, those that cannot be left off without changing the sentence, may never be set off with commas.

_____Restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses are distinguished by the use of "that" and "which," respectively.

_____Misuse of the colon; colons follow only completed phrases, i.e., Jones (1991) explains it clearly:...Not Jones (1991) states:

_____Confusion of the interrogative form with the indicative, i.e., My research sought to find out whether ..., not if.

_____One-sentence paragraphs. A paragraph should contain a minimum of two sentences.

_____ Extra spacing or not enough spacing between words and sentences.

_____Inconsistent typing of headings for each chapter. Chapter headings and numbers must all be upper case or the first letters capitalized, followed by lower case.

_____Failure to arrange dissertation pages in the prescribed order.

_____ The "Permission to Copy" page must be completed and submitted with each copy of the dissertation.

_____Poor quality of duplicated materials-lines, shading, shadowing, etc. All photocopies must be of legible quality.

_____Each table or figure must have a heading and must be on its own separate page.

_____Partial/incomplete sentences.

_____Use of "who" and "that." "Who" refers to a person and "that" does not.

_____When deciding to use "which" or "that," "which" is used when it is with a phrase that can be set off by commas.

_____Overuse of the word "that." This makes for awkward reading. The correct format is "The man said he was going home," not "The man said that he was going home."

_____ Overview of the phrase "in order to."

Other

____ Left align text (full justification of the right-hand margin is not allowed; right margins must be jagged).

____ If mathematical equations are used within the text, double space between and after each equation.

____ Spell out a number if it begins a sentence or paragraph.

____ Check with your committee before using color figures, illustrations or charts.

____ Use standard English punctuation. Use commas to aid in clarity, to join two independent clauses with a conjunction, to set off introductory phrases, and to set off series.

_____ Use that (a defining clause) and which (a non-defining cause) correctly.

USE OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS

Candidates writing dissertations should note the following guidelines for the use of copyrighted materials. Generally, authors may make limited use of short passages from copyrighted materials if they give proper credit to the owner of the copyright. Extensive use of copyright materials, however, requires the permission of the copyright owner.

The use of tables, graphs, figures, or illustrations from a copyrighted work is not generally considered a limited use, and permission of the owner should be obtained before any of these are used in a thesis or dissertation. Usually, the publisher can grant permission to quote excerpts from a copyrighted work; if not, the publisher can refer you to the owner of the copyright.

Permission is often granted to use copyrighted material in scholarly works without any payment or compensation to the copyright owner. However, a copyright owner may charge for any permission granted. If permission is obtained, a letter or release from the copyright owner must be included in an appendix in the manuscript, and an acknowledgment of the copyright owner should be included in the acknowledgments preceding the dissertation.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism is copying entire passages, either verbatim or nearly verbatim, without directly acknowledging the source of these passages. Outright plagiarism needs no exemplification: researchers who copy know that they are liable to the severest academic penalties, and perhaps to civil penalties as well.

All scholars should keep in mind the following requirements:

1. When material is quoted, it is quoted exactly as it appears in the original, mistakes and all. Any additions, deletions, or alterations are clearly signaled by brackets or ellipses, as indicated in style manuals.
2. The acknowledgment of material quoted from or paraphrased from a single passage includes the page number(s) on which the passage appears in the original document.
3. Data not commonly available are never cited without a clear indication of their source.
4. Terminology or phraseology that is not common in literature is not used without proper acknowledgment.
5. Changing a few words in a source to avoid the necessity of quotation marks is at best amateurish scholarship, and at worst outright plagiarism.

Falsification of data. The national press, as well as academic publications, have reported cases in which researchers deliberately falsified their data or used data they knew were unreliable. Obviously, this practice is unethical; it erodes public confidence in scientific and scholarly investigation.

Researchers themselves must be the primary custodians of their own integrity in these matters, but faculty supervisors must be reasonably cautious about endorsing student work if they have any doubt of its authenticity. It is important, of course, for faculty members and students to establish mutual trust so that research can be conducted and reported frankly and freely. However, when violations of this trust are discovered by supervising faculty or by other knowledgeable persons, the violation will be regarded

as serious academic misconduct. Discovery of falsified data or plagiarism by any candidate will result in the degree not being granted and other appropriate measures.

Dissertation Due Dates

Summer 2025

July 15, 2025   Single copy of the dissertation approved by the department with departmental signatures due in the Graduate School, ready for review by the Graduate Dean of the Graduate School.

Fall 2025

November 14, 2025   Single copy of the dissertation approved by the department with departmental signatures due in the Graduate School, ready for review by the Graduate Dean of the Graduate School.

Spring 2026

April 10, 2026   Single copy of the dissertation approved by the department with departmental signatures due in the Graduate School, ready for review by the Graduate Dean of the Graduate School.

Summer 2026

July 10, 2026   Single copy of the dissertation approved by the department with departmental signatures due in the Graduate School, ready for review by the Graduate Dean of the Graduate School.

Fall 2026

November 13, 2026   Single copy of the dissertation approved by the department with departmental signatures due in the Graduate School, ready for review by the Graduate Dean of the Graduate School.

Spring 2027

April 9, 2027   Single copy of the dissertation approved by the department with departmental signatures due in the Graduate School, ready for review by the Graduate Dean of the Graduate School.

Summer 2027
July 16, 2027   Single copy of the dissertation approved by the department with departmental signatures due in the Graduate School, ready for review by the Graduate Dean of the Graduate School