A drawing of a person

Description automatically generated

**Doctoral Research Handbook**

St. Thomas University

[www.stu.edu](http://www.rockies.edu/)

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Table of Contents

[1.0 THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH PROGRAM DESCRIPTION 4](#_Toc53690001)

[1.1 THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES 4](#_Toc53690002)

[1.2 THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT 4](#_Toc53690003)

[1.3 THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH COMMON LANGUAGE 5](#_Toc53690004)

[2.0 ETHICS OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION, AND ACTION RESEARCH. 6](#_Toc53690005)

[3.0 COURSE IN PROGRESS (CP) POLICY 6](#_Toc53690006)

[4.0 LEAVE OF ABSENCE 7](#_Toc53690007)

[5.0 RECENCY OF ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY CREDITS 7](#_Toc53690008)

[6.0 CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION FOR DOCTORAL RESEARCH STUDENTS 8](#_Toc53690009)

[7.0 DOCTORAL CANDIDACY & RESEARCH PROCESS 8](#_Toc53690010)

[8.0 ACCCEPTABLE TYPES OF RESEARCH 9](#_Toc53690011)

[11.0 DOCTORAL DISSERTATION OPTIONS 10](#_Toc53690012)

[9.0 THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH ED.D. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND STRUCTURE 11](#_Toc53690013)

[10.0 TIMING OF THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH DISSERTATION, AND ACTION RESEARCH 13](#_Toc53690014)

[11.0 THE FIRST DOCTORAL RESEARCH MEETING 14](#_Toc53690015)

[12.0 DEVELOPING A TIMELINE 14](#_Toc53690016)

[13.0 THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION PROCESSES 15](#_Toc53690017)

[14.0 DOCTORAL RESEARCH COMMITTEE 16](#_Toc53690018)

[15.0 THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTION RESEARCH REPORT AND PROJECT/DELIVERABLE 19](#_Toc53690019)

[16.0 INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) PROCESS 20](#_Toc53690020)

[17.0 FINAL ORAL DEFENSE PROCESS 22](#_Toc53690021)

[17.1 BEFORE THE DEFENSE 23](#_Toc53690022)

[17.2 DURING THE FINAL ORAL DEFENSE 23](#_Toc53690023)

[18.0 DEVELOPMENT OF DOCTORAL RESEARCH MANUSCRIPT 24](#_Toc53690024)

[19.0 STYLE, PROOFREADING AND TYPING SERVICES 25](#_Toc53690025)

[20.0 USE OF EDITORS 26](#_Toc53690026)

[21.0 PUBLISHING THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH DISSERTATION, AND ACTION RESEARCH REPORT AND PROJECT 26](#_Toc53690027)

[22.0 AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (APA), QUALITY CONTROL AND FINAL STYLE REVIEW REQUIREMENTS: 26](#_Toc53690028)

[23.0 COMMENCEMENT 27](#_Toc53690029)

[APPENDIX A – Action Research Project Processes Matrix 28](#_Toc53690030)

[ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT REPORT AND PROJECT PROCESSES MATRIX 28](#_Toc53690031)

[**ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT OVERALL PROCESSES** 28](#_Toc53690032)

[Part 1: Action Research Project Report 29](#_Toc53690033)

[Part 2: The Action Research Project Report 29](#_Toc53690034)

[APPENDIX B – Dissertation Final Defense Procedures 32](#_Toc53690035)

## **1.0 THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Doctorate of Education in Leadership and Innovation allows individuals who have completed a Master’s degree to deepen their vision as organizational leaders and enhance their skills in strategic leadership, planning, research, global change, social media, ethics, digital instruction and distance learning, sports administration, administration, consulting and public policy applied to a variety of organizational settings.

## **1.1 THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The Ed.D in Leadership and Innovation is designed to prepare graduates who can:

1. Respond to the changing needs of diverse organizations.
2. Participate in managing and leading private corporations, public organizations, educational institutions and systems and nonprofit agencies.
3. Develop leadership and innovation skills and effective team-oriented approaches and maximize the performance achievements of all learners.
4. Demonstrate scholarly behaviors such as reflection and problem solving with skills for designing, critiquing, and implementing research relevant to effective practice.

## **1.2 THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT**

These outcomes are assessed by the writing of the Doctoral Research Dissertation or Action Research using the Dissertation Sections Rubric, and the oral defense of the doctoral research. The Dissertation Sections Rubric is available at the below location: https://www.stu.edu/biscayne/programs/ed-d-information-dissertation-resources/

## **1.3 THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH COMMON LANGUAGE**

***Research Courses*** – These research courses include RES 819, 820, and 821.  These courses prepare students with the knowledge, values, and behaviors associated with quality research.

***Doctoral Research Options*:**

Research can be defined as a systematic and persistent approach to answering research questions (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Doctoral Candidates are required to prepare and present an original doctoral research project that demonstrates their ability to conduct ethical and methodologically sound research advancing the diverse fields of Ethical Leadership, Leadership Development, and Leadership Education. The doctoral research products demonstrate the candidate’s capacity for independent thought and application of the tools and methods of research to organizational issues and problems.

All doctoral research options focus on answering a critical question. However, each option provides the candidate culminates in a distinctly different outcome.

***Option 1 – Traditional Dissertation*** – The dissertation process asks and answers research questions that are generalizable to a given population or transferable to like contexts. It provides a traditional approach to developing a five-chapter document explaining the context for the study, the theoretical and conceptual foundations, methodology, findings, and conclusions/recommendations.

***Option 2 – Action Research*** – The action research project is specifically applicable to a tangible means for advancing a given organization. Action Research Projects can include but are not limited to analytic reports, white papers, design, facilitation, and evaluations of curriculum, training, etc., ROI (Return on Investment) metric development and application, strategic planning and strategic implementation framework, comprehensive marketing plans, large-scale assessments, evaluation plans, processes, and metrics, and diffusion/adoption strategies. Candidates will work closely with their doctoral research chair and committee to choose which option can maximize benefit for the candidate and align with career aspirations. Approval will be granted based on accessibility, impact, and scope of the project.

## **2.0 ETHICS OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION, AND ACTION RESEARCH.**

The primary responsibility for ensuring ethical conduct throughout the dissertation process, and ethical treatment of subjects, lies with the doctoral candidate and the dissertation chair. Studies involving human subjects must meet all the requirements of St. Thomas University policy on human subjects and must be approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB approval must follow a successful Dissertation Proposal as determined by the dissertation chair in collaboration with the dissertation committee members. The candidate should adhere to the IRB's Guidelines and get approval prior to proceeding with data collection efforts and subsequent portions of the dissertation or Action Research.

## **3.0 COURSE IN PROGRESS (CP) POLICY**

If the doctoral student is unable to complete all the assigned work for a particular class due to significant and extenuating circumstance, it may be necessary to request a Course in Progress (CP) for a course. In this case, the student is asked to communicate and identify parameters for completion of the required course materials. Additionally, students and chairs are asked to complete the necessary paperwork to request a CP.

A student could be given a CP grade at the end of the course providing additional time for the submission of assignments / benchmark tasks in progress. This designation must be accompanied by a required end date for completion and/or acceptance of the assignment / Benchmarks. The CP must be completed within 45 days from the beginning of the following term. In order to give a CP grade:

1. The student has completed the majority of the Benchmarks.
2. Significant or exceptional circumstances have occurred preventing the student from completing all of the course requirements. Examples of circumstances beyond the control of the student may include, but are not limited to sudden illness, death in the immediate family, significant job change, etc.
3. The student has requested additional time from the instructor and presented a reasonable written plan to complete the required benchmarks prior to the completion deadline

## **4.0 LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

A student or candidate may apply in writing to the Program Director for leave from doctoral studies for up to one year. Students who have not been granted a leave of absence in writing by the Program Director will be deemed to have withdrawn after one academic year of absence.

## **5.0 RECENCY OF ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY CREDITS**

All program requirements, including the successful defense of the dissertation, must be completed within seven (7) years of first enrollment in the doctoral program. If a student becomes inactive for one year or more, that student must reapply for admission to the doctoral program. At that time, the student must meet all current program and catalog requirements and will be given five (5) years (from the date of the readmission) to complete all program requirements, including the successful defense of the dissertation/completion of the Action Research project.

St. Thomas University credits taken within seven (7) years may be accepted toward degree requirements with the approval of the Dean or designee. No St. Thomas University credits older than seven (7) years will be applied toward degree requirements (see “Recency of St. Thomas University Credit” in the Graduate Catalog

## **6.0 CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION FOR DOCTORAL RESEARCH STUDENTS**

Ed.D. Candidates (those who have fulfilled all the requirements for the degree, the 5 Chapter dissertation, or Action Research) are expected to continuously enroll for the DIS 904 Doctoral Research: Continuation in semesters preceding and including the graduation semester. Registration for this continuous credit course will allow doctoral students to maintain student services and continue their research processes while maintaining communication with their respective Doctoral Research Chair.

A candidate who does not register for 1 academic year will be required to re-apply to the program in order to complete the program. Readmission is based on the evaluation of reapplication materials and the discretion of the program coordinator and Academic Dean.

**NOTE: A doctoral candidate cannot access the University’s services and consult with a Chair or Committee member regarding the dissertation without being registered (and in active student status) during that same period.**

## 7.0 DOCTORAL CANDIDACY & RESEARCH PROCESS

Doctoral research processes should reflect an original and scholarly research contribution applicable to the candidate's chosen area of specialization. Processes and products should demonstrate competent application of appropriate research methodologies and ethical guidelines in the investigation of a significant problem or issue. After completing the doctoral research process, students are strongly encouraged to apply for appropriate awards and opportunities to present and publish their work through scholarly outlets.

Doctoral students officially become candidates for the doctoral degree upon successful completion of their requisite non-doctoral research coursework. In addition, doctoral candidacy is contingent upon maintaining at least a 3.25 cumulative GPA for the doctoral program coursework.

All doctoral candidates are required to work with their doctoral research chair and submit a complete Institutional Review Board (IRB) application packet prior to collecting data to ensure ethical data collection, treatment, and analyses.

The Doctoral Research Proposal (DRP) (*old Dissertation Plan*) is a substantial document in which the student develops their thought process as it relates to their plans for conducting research. The DRP focuses on the primary topic, research questions and research the student is planning to study.

The DRP is completed when the student is enrolled in DIS 900 Doctoral Research Proposal and represents the beginning stage of the dissertation/action research process. In DIS 900, each student will be assigned a Doctoral Research Chair to assist, and mentor them throughout the entire doctoral research process. After the Doctoral Research Chair has been assigned, the student will begin working with the Doctoral Research Chair in a mentor/mentee capacity. The dissertation/action research process is intended to be completed over a 36-week course (Doctoral Research Coursework) process.

All topics must be approved by the Candidate’s Doctoral Research Chair and communication should be maintained with the Doctoral Research committee throughout the approval and development process. All options are structured to explain the purpose, provide context for the study through the identification and summary of previously published scholarly literature, share the research methods utilized and the resulting findings, and report the implications and recommendations for advancing organizations for the diverse fields.

## **8.0 ACCCEPTABLE TYPES OF RESEARCH**

The following examples are types of projects that could be carried out in alignment with the doctoral research standards at St. Thomas University. This list is intended to be illustrative and not exhaustive; students are permitted to propose creative ideas for research that adhere to quality standards:

* An experimental or correlational study that involves traditional research design, data collection, and statistical analysis.
* A field study that examines theoretical predictions.
* A survey study examining opinions, attitudes, or practices within a field or discipline.
* A program evaluation.
* The development of a novel intervention, training program, instructional manual, or other programmatic guide that is grounded in solid research literature, accompanied by an implementation and evaluation plan.
* An Action Research or Participatory Action Research project.
* Delphi studies.
* A review and integrated analysis of the literature within a topic area of the profession (articles published in Psychological Bulletin may be used as a guide).
* Descriptive qualitative studies exploring or describing a uniquely situated phenomenon.
* A case study that exemplifies a particular theoretical prediction, or a novel or rare phenomenon.
* A single subject study that evaluates a new or innovative intervention; or
* A meta-analysis of an intervention within the field.
* Students are discouraged from using Grounded Theory design, and Mixed Methods studies.

As these examples indicate, all project topics that require an extensive knowledge of the literature pertaining to the particular subject area, a synthesis and application of this knowledge, and sophistication on how a project is developed and presented. Conducting these projects provides students with experiences that create expertise in their focused areas and prepares them to be effective practitioner-scholars. Candidates are strongly encouraged to seek out sample dissertations for review as they develop various sections of the dissertations.

## **11.0 DOCTORAL DISSERTATION OPTIONS**

All doctoral research options focus on answering a critical research question. However, each option culminates in a distinctly different outcome. A Doctoral Dissertation is generalizable to a given population or transferable to like contexts, while the Action Research Project is specifically applicable to a tangible means for advancing a given organization. Candidates will work closely with their chair to choose which option can maximize benefit for the candidate and align best with career aspirations.

All topics must be approved by the Candidate’s Doctoral Research Chair. Communication should be maintained with the candidate’s committee throughout the approval and development process. All options are structured to explain the purpose, provide context for the study through the identification and summary of previously published scholarly literature, share the research methods utilized and the resulting findings, and the report the implications and recommendations for advancing organizations or diverse fields.

***Option 1 – Traditional Dissertation*** – The dissertation process is generalizable to a given population or transferable to like contexts. It provides a traditional approach developing a five-chapter document explaining the context for the study, the theoretical and conceptual foundations, methodology, findings, and conclusions/recommendations.

***Option 2 – Action Research*** ***Project*** – The action research project is specifically applicable to a tangible means for advancing and improving a given organization. Action Research Projects can include but are not limited to analytic reports, white papers, design, facilitation, and evaluation of curriculum, training, etc., ROI (Return on Investment) metric development and application, strategic planning and strategic implementation framework, comprehensive marketing plans, large-scale assessments, evaluation plans, processes, and metrics, and diffusion/adoption strategies. Each AR Project will include a Deliverable to the organization for which it is carried out. The nature of the Deliverable will be determined by the kind of the institutional improvement being carried out. The AR Project will also include a Report describing its Purpose, Process, and Outcome Assessment. Candidates will work closely with their doctoral research chair and committee to choose which option can maximize benefit for the candidate and align with career aspirations. Approval will be granted based on accessibility, impact, and scope of the project.

## **9.0 THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH ED.D. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND STRUCTURE**

The Ed.D. program requires 60 credits of doctoral work beyond the master’s degree, including 39 credits of core and specialization courses, 9 credits of research courses and 12 credits of doctoral research benchmarks.

**Core Courses 24 credits**

ELI 801 Theory and Practice of Leadership

ELI 804 Management of Crisis and Change

ELI 805 Strategic Leadership and Global Change

ELI 806 Accountability in Leadership

ELI 807 Ethics and Governance

ELI 814 Cross-Cultural Relations

ELI 815 Public Policy Leadership

ELI 817 Managing Social Media in Organizations

**Doctoral Research Courses 9 credits**

RES 819 Research Methods

RES 820 Quantitative Research

RES 821 Qualitative Research

**Doctoral Research Benchmarks - 12 credits**

DIS 900 Doctoral Research Proposal (DRP) – 3 credits

DIS 901 Doctoral Research I - 3 credits

DIS 902 Doctoral Research II – 3 credits

DIS 903 Doctoral Research III – 3 credits

**Specialization in Administration 15 Credits**

ELI 803 Information Management

ELI 808 Human Resources Development

ELI 809 Innovation and Leadership

ELI 816 Consulting Practices

ELI 819 Managing Performance

**Specialization in Digital Instruction & Distance Learning 15 Credits**

EDT 610 – IDT Theories and Models

EDT 630 – Multimed Desgn & Dvlpmt

EDT 800 – Found Digit Educ & Inst

EDT 801 – Digital Literacy & Citizen.

ELI 813 - Leading a Learning Organization

**Specialization in Sports Administration 15 Credits**

SPO 522 – Governance and Intercollegiate Athletics

SPO 544 – Sports Marketing and Promotions

SPO 546 – Facilities and Event Management

SPO 719 – Legal Aspects of Sports Administration

SPO 755 – Special Topic in Sports Administration

NOTE: DIS 897 Dissertation Expérience (0 credit/non-tuition /non-fee Generating course shell which consists of all DIS 900-903 Benchmarks)

DIS 904 Doctoral Research Continuation (1-3 credit)

## **10.0 TIMING OF THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH DISSERTATION, AND ACTION RESEARCH**

Although the Dissertation process begins with DIS 900 Doctoral Research Proposal, students must successfully pass DIS 901 Doctoral Research I and complete Chapter One of the Dissertation before they are deemed to have officially matriculated to the Dissertation Phase.

Upon completion of Chapters 1-3, the student can then begin to work on the Institutional Review Board (IRB) proposal, which they submit when the Doctoral Research Chair deems appropriate. (Students in the Ed.D in Leadership and Management may choose to follow the submission procedures, under which the IRB is submitted when Chapter 1 has been approved) and the rest of the dissertation according to the University’s dissertation policy.

The Doctoral Research Proposal (DRP) (old dissertation plan) is a substantial document in which the student develops their thought process as it relates to their plans for conducting research. The Doctoral Research Proposal focuses on the primary topic, research questions and research the student is planning to study.

The DRP is completed in DIS 900 Doctoral Research Proposal (old dissertation plan) and represents the beginning stage of the Dissertation process. A Doctoral Research Committee Chair will be selected before starting this Benchmark and begin working with their respective Dissertation Committee Chairs while registered for this milestone. Students must register and participate in all Dissertation Benchmarks; each designed to engage the student in active and intensive research and in writing the doctoral dissertation. The course sequence for all Dissertation courses is outlined below. The DRP and the Dissertation Courses I-III combine for 12 credits and span over 36 months. The DRP is normally completed during the end of the first year of a student’s doctoral program.

**NOTE: A candidate for the doctoral degree must complete DIS 900 Doctoral Research Proposal Milestone. A student who cannot successfully complete DIS 900 Doctoral Research Proposal within 2 course attempts, will be placed in academic probation and must submit a letter to the Program Director to be reinstated with a proposed plan and timeline for completing their Benchmarks.**

## **11.0 THE FIRST DOCTORAL RESEARCH MEETING**

Soon after the candidate officially passes the Doctoral Research Proposal Template and advances to the dissertation writing phase, the Doctoral Research Committee Chair will schedule a meeting with the candidate to address all aspects of the proposed dissertation, based on the student’s Doctoral Research Proposal submitted while enrolled in DIS 900 Doctoral Research Proposal; and a preliminary review of the drafts of Chapter 1.

This meeting will be conducted via a virtual platform. A successful outcome of the first Doctoral Research meeting will be the approval by the Chair, indicating that the candidate can proceed to finalize work on Chapter One of the dissertation. Any subsequent changes to “dissertation focus” must also be approved by the Doctoral Research Chair. These meetings must be documented and uploaded into the DIS 897 Dissertation Experience Courseroom.

## 12.0 DEVELOPING A TIMELINE

It is extremely important for students to develop a realistic timeline for completing their doctoral research. Through the student should be responsible for their own timeline, it is the Doctoral Research Chair’s responsibility to advise, guide and mentor them through the timeline development.

Direct the student to come up with a preliminary schedule/plan, using the Dissertation Sections Rubric (found on the EdD Resources Website <https://www.stu.edu/biscayne/programs/ed-d-information-dissertation-resources/>) or as a guide for the steps involved in each doctoral research chapter.

The Timeline should include the following information:

* Discuss the steps in the process and time required for each step.
* Include time up to 10 business days for Doctoral Research Chair and Committee Member feedback on each draft.
* Include up to four weeks for an Expedited IRB Review and five weeks or more for a full IRB review.
* Include time to resubmit drafts (Iterative Process between Students and Chair and then committee member and students drafts).
* Discuss anticipated or desired completion date.
* Include possible obstacles to progress at each stage of the process (e.g., work/life, IRB, data collection, etc…) and a plan to mitigate the obstancles.

**NOTE: Ensure that all students are completing a journal entry in the respective DIS Courses on a weekly basis. This requirement is also for the purpose of required student attendance and is a mandatory requirement.**

## **13.0 THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION PROCESSES**

**A close up of a piece of paper

Description automatically generated**

## **14.0 DOCTORAL RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

The Doctoral Research Committee Chair is selected upon the student enrolling in DIS 900 Doctoral Research Proposal. The foundation of the relationship among the dissertation candidate and the Chair begins when enrolled in DIS 900 Doctoral Research Proposal. The other committee members are not appointed at this time. All collaboration with the Dissertation Committee takes place in DIS 897 – Dissertation Experience.

* + The student’s relationship with other members of the Committee begins during the time the student is enrolled in DIS 901 Doctoral Research I.
  + The Committee must have three members. A Chair, and two other committee members- one being a research matter expert and the other a subject matter expert.
  + The candidate's Doctoral Dissertation Committee is responsible for guiding the student in all steps of the dissertation process; e.g., shaping and refining: a) a topic for the dissertation, b) the completed dissertation and c) the oral defense. Chief responsibility for this guidance lies with the Doctoral Dissertation Chair.
  + The Doctoral Research Committee Chair must be a University faculty member with doctoral status - ideally a faculty member of the candidate’s area of interest. Non-University members will not be approved to serve as a Doctoral Committee Member. The student in conjunction with their Chair, select the other members of the Doctoral Committee, although the process may be undertaken in collaboration between the Dean or designee and the student. Chair and Committee members may come from current adjunct STU faculty, or selected from those listed on the Committee Member Approved list.
  + Any subsequent changes to the Dissertation Committee must be approved by the Program Director or designee.
  + All members of the committee have full voting privileges and all three must agree for the dissertation or any part, to move forward.
  + The Doctoral Dissertation Committee is charged with the approval of the Action Research Project / Deliverable or the Doctoral Research Dissertation topic, proposal, Chapters 1- 5, and the final product before submission for defense and final review.

#### 14.1 THE ROLE OF THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH CHAIR:

1. The Dissertation Chair provides general guidance, mentoring and support to the student during the entire Dissertation Phase.
2. The Chair works with the student, chapter by chapter and utilizes the Doctoral Sections Rubric to ensure that the students written material include all of the section’s requirements for each chapter.
3. The Doctoral Research Chair, Doctoral Research Committee and student are to ensure that the study meets, Content and the Style and Writing Quality, chapter by chapter.
4. When completed, draft chapters are submitted to all committee members. Students should wait at least 10 business days for the review of the candidate's work before expecting feedback. Additionally, the committee will have at least 14 business days to review Chapter 2 or a full doctoral research document.
5. When the Doctoral Research Chair is satisfied that the written material / chapter is of sufficient quality (style, content, methodologically aligned and structured) to be judged by peers as acceptable/ scholarly and publishable, the Doctoral Research Chair approves it in the DIS 897 Doctoral Experience – Draft Upload area and changes the grade to COMPLETED. This process will be followed through the entire doctoral research process.
6. The Doctoral Research Chair will require the student to upload a clean copy of the chapter using the appropriate Qualitative or Quantitative, or Action Research template in the Committee Review area for the committee members to review and provide feedback and/or approval.
7. When all members agree that a chapter is of sufficient quality to be considered scholarly and publishable, all three Committee Members provide their approval in the comments section of the DIS 897 Courseroom on the particular chapter. Once this process is completed, the candidate moves on to the next Benchmark in the sequence.
8. It is imperative that all study drafts, chapters for chair and committee review, and final versions are uploaded and stored in DIS 897 – Doctoral Experience.

**For example**, submitting Chapter 5 (final chapter) when all the committee members have not seen the previous work will not be accepted.

1. The Doctoral Research Chair and Committee members, along with the student have access to the DIS 897 Dissertation Experience courseroom throughout the dissertation process.
2. DIS 897 is available at all times and is **the site where all dissertation work takes place**. In this collaboration site, the student and/or Doctoral Research Chair / Committee members will upload drafts, reviewed drafts, and final versions of the respective chapters.
3. The student and the Doctoral Research Chair should interact in the Benchmark Modules only in the DIS 897- Dissertation Experience courseroom. All work and comments are to be contained in the DIS 897 Dissertation Experience Chapter Draft sections, in the Comments input boxes.
4. The Doctoral Research Chair, in conjunction with the student can petition the Program Director for replacement of Committee Members. The Lead Doctoral Research Chair will inform the respective Committee member of their replacement.

#### THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

1. The Doctoral Research Committee supports, guides and directs the dissertation experience.
2. The Committee's primary function is to provide written feedback on various drafts of the candidate's dissertation chapters using the Dissertation Sections Rubric. All reviews and feedback are to be included in the Committee Review Comments sections in the DIS 897 Chapter 1-5 Committee Review upload area.
3. Committee members provide invaluable time and effort to a candidate's dissertation experience. If a problem arises between a committee member and a candidate, that candidate should first try to resolve the problem with the committee member through the Chair. Should the problem persist, the candidate should seek guidance and assistance from the Program Director or designee.

## **15.0 THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTION RESEARCH REPORT AND PROJECT/DELIVERABLE**

The Action Research Report and Project is a formal, comprehensive document that details the purpose, background, project approach, project implementation, and conclusions of an applied practitioner-oriented project. Although preliminary work on a student’s Action Research Report and Project may begin while the student is still completing coursework, formal work on the Action Research Report and Project can be undertaken after completing the first year of academic coursework.

The Action Research Report and Project is intended to:

* + - Enhance your understanding of your field of study.
    - Provide experience conducting research in your field of study.
    - Develop your ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate data and conclusions in your field of study.
    - Make a significant contribution to your field of study;
    - Include a thorough review of associated professional literature.
    - Demonstrate your ability to design and carry out an individual research project.
    - Demonstrate a clear understanding of basic research principles, techniques, and ethics.
    - Demonstrate evidence of your ability to analyze and synthesize data, as well as draw and evaluate conclusions.
    - Develop skills in project planning, time management, organization, and implementation; and
    - Show evidence of a high level of professional competence.

**NOTE: It is important to keep in mind that the Action Research Report and Project is not simply another graduate school assignment. The Action Research Report and Project is intended to help you develop both personally and professionally. This document must be scholarly, succinct, and of sufficiently high quality to be published, in part, in a peer-reviewed journal. Reports may be cataloged and available to other researchers—seasoned professionals and academics, as well as future students—all over the world.**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## 16.0 INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) PROCESS

There are three categories of IRB Review. These categories are based on federal regulations and related to the degree of risk to the research participants/ human subjects.

* Exempt Review is reserved for studies that involve the use of anonymous existing data, or no risks greater than those involved in everyday life.
* Expedited Review is reserved for studies that:  
  + Present no more than minimal risk to human subjects/participants, and
  + Does not involve protected populations
* Most studies involving interviews or surveys fall in this category.
* Full Review is required for studies with increased levels of risk to human subjects/ participants and/or those involving protected populations. The IRB meets monthly to accommodate student Full Review applications so studies involving Full Review may take longer than other category of review.
* Students are highly encouraged to do studies utilizing adults and members who are in leadership positions.
* Students are strongly recommended to utilize secondary or archival data.
* Students must understand how risks to participants affect the IRB Review.
* Studies should be designed with minimal risk, and always with benefits that outweigh the risk to participants.

**Note: Students must not proceed with the data collection phase of their study until written IRB approval has been received. Absolutely no solicitation of human participants or data collection is allowed prior to receipt of IRB approval, including pilot studies.**

Become familiar with the resources in the St. Thomas University IRB Website (<https://www.stu.edu/about-stu/administration/office-of-institutional-research-effectiveness/irb/>).

* Become familiar with familiar with the above requirements to help the student submit for IRB Review.
* The Doctoral Research Chair and student must affix their signature (not typed names alone) to the IRB Protocol Application.
* The Doctoral Research Chair will always sign as the Principal Investigator.
* If a Full Review is required, the Chair may schedule (via phone) an IRB meeting with the student to explain the students’ study.
* If the study is not completed within 1 year from IRB approval, the Doctoral Research Chair and student must resubmit for IRB Approval.
* If the study requires changes affecting risks/benefit ratio, including a significant change in the study population or recruitment method, the Chair and student must make the required changes and resubmit on the email that denotes these changes affecting the approval of the IRB.

The following documents must be completed by the student and uploaded to the IRB Application and Attachments area for the Program Director to do a Quality Review and provide signatures prior to the Chair submitting the IRB Application package for IRB Approval. The Doctoral Research Chair is responsible to inform the Program Director that the IRB package is approved and ready for review.

A picture containing application

Description automatically generated

1. A valid CIT / NIH for both the Doctoral Research Chair and student.
2. The IRB Protocol Application that is downloaded from the IRB Website.
3. The Consent Form that is downloaded from the IRB Website.
4. Copies of Interview, Focus Group Observational protocols, instruments, Questionnaires, Surveys etc… to be utilized in collection of ALL data.
5. Copies of email examples to recruit participants.
6. If utilizing students (under age) provide the age that the state uses to determine if the students are adults for IRB purposes (with a link to the sourced)

**NOTE: The Doctoral Research Chair is responsible to ensure that the students compile all of the above IRB documents into the DIS 897 Dissertation Experience Courseroom under IRB . Then inform the Program Director that the IRB is ready for the Quality Review and all signatures are affixed by both the Doctoral Research Chair and student before the IRB documents are available in the IRB Upload area in the DIS 897 Courseroom.**

## 17.0 FINAL ORAL DEFENSE PROCESS

The Final Oral Defense is to be conducted according to the STU schedule once all Chapters of the Doctoral research have been approved by the Doctoral Research Chair and Committee members and then notify the Program Director for a Final Quality Review, prior to the Final Oral Defense.

The Final Oral Defense will be scheduled AFTER the manuscript is approved by both the Program Director, Chair and Committee members. The Final Manuscript Review will be accomplished for Form and Editing compliance by the STU Library.

The Doctoral Research Chair will be responsible to help the student prepare before the Final Oral Defense, act as the moderator during the Oral Defense, and follow up with the student after each Oral Defense. The Chair should explain to the student the process for the Defense and preparation of the PowerPoint slides. (see EdD Resources Website to download the Powerpoint Template –[https://www.stu.edu/biscayne/programs/Ed-D-Information-Doctoral research -Resources/](https://www.stu.edu/biscayne/programs/Ed-D-Information-Dissertation-Resources/)

* It is important that the Oral Defense takes place in the proper sequence. (See section 2.1)
* The Doctoral Research Chair is responsible to coordinate the scheduling of all oral defenses with the Lead Doctoral Chair and must provide the completed Powerpoint Presentation and a list of possible attendees that the student desires in attendance of the oral defense.
* All oral defenses must be completed by the required deadlines in accordance with the Academic Calendar.

## 17.1 BEFORE THE DEFENSE

• Students are encouraged to work on creating their Oral Defense PowerPoint slides while waiting for their Final Review feedback. Though it is unlikely that students will get a “No Pass” at the time of the Oral Defense, Oral Communication is a highly regarded skill that all doctoral students should possess. Encourage students to create PowerPoint presentations where the slides are informative but not too wordy. In order to present in the student’s own words and voice, students should not expect to read directly from the slides or read from a prepared script. It is usual for the student to be allowed to complete the presentation before questions and discussion commence.

• Have the Chair coordinate with each Committee Member and the student to find a date and time for the Oral Defense. Oral defense conference calls are typically scheduled for 60 minutes but may be scheduled for a timeframe determined by the Chair.

* + The students entire committee (Chair, SME and RME) must be present at the Oral Defense. Exceptions are granted by the Online Program Director.

• The student should communicate with the Chair as to the date/time agreed upon and will take place by Zoom.

• The Doctoral Research Chair should remind the committee a few days ahead of the scheduled date and send information regarding how to join the meeting. The PowerPoint presentation should also be sent to the committee at that time.

## 17.2 DURING THE FINAL ORAL DEFENSE

The following may be used as a guide in moderating students’ oral defenses:

1. The Chair will call and facilitate the meeting.
2. Make sure all committee members (SME and RME) are present.
3. Introduce the student and format for the defense.
4. Student will be asked to introduce themselves and then go directly into their doctoral research presentation.
5. Student will present research summary.
6. Present PowerPoints reflecting the final Doctoral research for the Final Oral Defense (~30-45 minutes).
7. When the student finishes their presentation, the student will answer questions provided by the Chair and committee members. Once the committee and Chair complete their questioning, the Chair will ask the guests to use the Chat function to ask further questions of the student.
8. The student will read the questions and comments in the Chat function and answer the questions as provided by the guests.
9. When the student finishes answering the questions from the Chat, the Chair will ask for any closing remarks. The Chair will them state “The Doctoral research Oral Defense is now concluded and all participants except the Chair, and committee members are now dismissed and can log off the Zoom call.
10. The Chair will excuse the student, informing him or her that you will text them to return for the Committee’s evaluation decision. It is recommended that this be done immediately after the decision is made.
11. Discuss with the committee members any issues or concerns, as well as the evaluation of the student’s oral defense with regard to “Pass, No Revisions,” “Pass, Minor Revisions,” or “No Pass, Major Revisions Needed.”
12. The Chair will then call or text the student and ask them to return to the Zoom meeting and inform them of the Committee’s Evaluation Decision and/or the steps to take to obtain a “Pass,” or to address minor revisions.

**Note: A consensus of the Oral Defense evaluation result is required from the Chair and Committee members.**

## **18.0 DEVELOPMENT OF DOCTORAL RESEARCH MANUSCRIPT**

The candidate may begin the dissertation, only after the satisfactory completion of DIS 900 Doctoral Research Proposal (old dissertation plan). In accordance with the plan embodied in the candidate's approved Doctoral Research Proposal, consistent with guidelines in the IRB documents and under the close guidance of the Doctoral Research Chair and committee, the candidate:

* Shall conduct the dissertation study, process and interpret the data, make conclusions, and recommendations for further research.
* Prepare (typically chapter by chapter), a dissertation manuscript that complies with all steps and guidelines detailed in the current versions of the University Dissertation Publication Manual and the Doctoral Research Handbook.
* The doctoral study must be successfully submitted, and approved by the Doctoral Research Committee and sent to the St. Thomas University Library for publication with ProQuest no later than the end of the semester following the end of the sixth year of enrollment in the program, the term limit allowed for such programs at the University (see Graduate Catalog).
* In the case where there is any change in Dissertation Committee membership, your new Dissertation Committee, at its discretion and upon review of samples of your earlier dissertation work (if applicable), will determine if you will continue with your current dissertation topic/work, modify it, or start a new one altogether.
* Starting with the Doctoral Research Proposal Template, and continuing with each subsequent doctoral research chapter process:
  1. The Doctoral Research Chair is responsible to ensure that the final manuscript is in the proper doctoral research template and is complete and ready for a Quality Review by the Program Director.
  2. The Doctoral Research Chair will communicate to the Program Director when the final manuscript is uploaded in the Chapter 5 Final upload area.
  3. After the Quality Review is approved by the Program Director the Doctoral Research Chair will then be cleared to schedule the oral defense.
  4. Student are highly encouraged to engage a professional editor to edit the manuscript for both content and APA writing mechanics.
  5. After your dissertation has been successfully defended, it must pass a final Style and Writing Quality Assessment administered by the St. Thomas University Library before it can be formally accepted by the Library for processing, binding and ProQuest admissibility. Doctoral Research that fails those requirements will be returned for review and rewrite. This process can jeopardize your expected graduation.
  6. After a successful oral defense, the student will ensure that they:
* The student must ensure that they sign all applicable sections of the doctoral research manuscript prior to sending to the Doctoral Research Chair for signatures in the Title Page.
* Send the Doctoral Research Chair the pages of the study to be signed
* The Doctoral Research Chair will coordinate with the Doctoral Research Committee members to sign the Title Page.
* Once the student has edited the entire manuscript, they will send to the STU Library for a) a style test and b) writing quality assessment. However, doctoral research writings (Doctoral Research Proposal and Chapters) that fail either, will be returned to the candidate for rewrite and review.

## **19.0 STYLE, PROOFREADING AND TYPING SERVICES**

It is the responsibility of the candidate to:

* Ensure that the final manuscript is completed according to the requirements of the current Doctoral Research Handbook, the University Dissertation Publication Manual, and the current APA Publication Manual.
* Sign the University Dissertation Publication Manual Checklist form and submit to the STU Library along with the manuscript.

## **20.0 USE OF EDITORS**

* Students will be responsible for demonstrating their own thorough understanding of all aspects of their dissertation.
* The use of outside consultants for **proposal or dissertation writing** is expressly prohibited.
* The use of outside editors exclusive of content is encouraged and acceptable at the students costs.

## **21.0 PUBLISHING THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH DISSERTATION, AND ACTION RESEARCH REPORT AND PROJECT**

All doctoral candidates must follow the St. Thomas University requirements that are provided in the Doctoral Research Handbook and the Dissertation Publications Manual. St. Thomas University requires that all dissertations be published in the St. Thomas University Library database and all students must submit their dissertations to ProQuest.

Instruction for the ProQuest’s Dissertation Abstracts may be found at http://il.proquest.com/dissertationagree. St. Thomas University does not allow dissertations to be approved with restrictions or embargos on their publication. All dissertations are to be considered public and published documents available from Dissertation Abstracts and the St. Thomas University Library. All students are strongly encouraged to choose the Open Access Publishing from ProQuest for their dissertations.

## **22.0 AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (APA), QUALITY CONTROL AND FINAL STYLE REVIEW REQUIREMENTS:**

When the dissertation has been successfully defended, it must pass an APA final Style and Writing Quality Assessment administered by the St. Thomas University Library before it can be formally accepted by the Library for processing, binding and ProQuest admissibility. Dissertations that fail to meet those requirements will be returned to students for revision and resubmission. The Dissertation Checklist must be strictly followed in the process of Final Review by the Chair and the Doctoral Candidate.

All St. Thomas University dissertations are subject to quality review by the Program Director to ensure a scholarly product. If a dissertation is found to contain quality issues in APA format, style, and/or presentation, the student will be required to provide a corrected copy before submission to the University Library. The Dissertation is not complete, and the student will not graduate, until the University Library officially approves the final document.

## 23**.0 COMMENCEMENT**

Participation in commencement is contingent upon a successful Oral Defense and all program course requirements and approval of the final digital copy submitted to the St. Thomas University Library. Be sure to follow the STU Library’s deadlines in the academic calendar for submission of the final Committee Approved version of the doctoral research. Doctoral research with mistakes, including Style and Writing, or those that do not follow the rules of the current University Dissertation Publication Manual will be RETURNED TO THE AUTHOR.

* + - Candidates with doctoral research that contain mistakes or do not follow the rules of the current University Dissertation Publication Manual will not be eligible for graduation until all corrections have been approved by the Library.
    - Conferral of degree is contingent upon the final approval by the University Library indicating that all requirements, including those of the University Dissertation Publication Manual have been met. The final determination is made by the Program Director in consultation with the Office of the Registrar.
    - Prior to the commencement date, the candidate should obtain instructions from the Office of Student Services about all particulars regarding where and when to meet, and precisely what to do during the hooding ceremony.
    - For any doctoral students in their last term and in the defense stage, who is unsure if they are graduating or not, please encourage them to order their graduation cap/gowns when they receive an email from [graduation@stu.edu](mailto:graduation@stu.edu).

# **APPENDIX A – Action Research Project Processes Matrix**

## ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT REPORT AND PROJECT PROCESSES MATRIX

|  |
| --- |
| Introduction:  Action Research Project are made up of two distinct elements, the Action Research Report and the Project or deliverable. Each element serves a separate and different function in the project, are reviewed both separately and in conjunction with each other. The Action Research Project/Deliverable is the professional contribution of the project to its target audience, defined as the institution or organization that sponsors the project and that receives its direct benefit. It is to be prepared and presented to that target audience as finished and ready for immediate distribution and/or implementation. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT OVERALL PROCESSES** | |
| Benchmark 1: Chair Approval of the Action Research Proposal Template. | Students choose an Action Research Project topic appropriate and explain how the topic fits the student ’s project environment. Finally, the student explains the purpose of his/her Action Research Project. This will be an APA formatted paper that contains:   1. Utilize the Action Research Proposal Template. 2. The Proposal will contain the following sections:    * Proposed Action Research Doctoral Project Title and Introduction to the Problem    * Annotated Bibliography, Setting and Theoretical Framework    * Statement of the Problem    * Purpose of the Study    * Proposed Project Design    * Literature Connections |
| Benchmark 2: Chair and Committee Approval of Action Research Proposal (Chapters 1-3) | The Action Research Project, as mentioned above, separates the deliverable (which can be used directly for professional purposes) from the account in the form of a report of how it was produced (validation of the academic function). This report facilitates publishing the outcome or using it in a professional context. Consequently, each Action Research Project appropriate to the Doctor of Education degree has two parts. Part 1: Action Research Project Report Different Action Research Project types will have different deliverable outcomes:   * For the Action Research Report, the deliverable will be a written document (a research paper) that will convey the results, conclusions, and recommendations of whatever action research activity is undertaken. Depending on the nature of the document and its professional purpose, its format will meet the APA publication standards. The deliverable will be included as Appendix A to the Action Research Report. * For the Action Research Project / Deliverable. The deliverable will be a separate artifact that will meet the specifications of the institution or organization for which it has been developed. The Deliverable will be Appendix A to the Report -- a stand-alone artifact (publishable paper or product). The Action Research Project Report with the appended Action Research Project Deliverable will also include a list of sources.  Part 2: The Action Research Project Report The Action Research Project Report describes how the project was carried out, how the deliverable was developed, and how it will be used to inform practice in the specialization based on the localized solutions generated by the project.  The Action Research Project Report is a written document using APA-style for formatting, data tables, and figures, unless specialization standards supersede it. The sections of the report are those of the proposal, but with more detail and using appropriate verb tenses that indicate that the project has been completed. The report also describes the benefits of the study to the institution for which it was carried out.  The Action Research Project Report will have the following sections:  Chapter 1 Introduction   * + Introduction to the Project   + Significance to the Project   + Historical Background of the Project   + Organizational Context   + Theoretical or Conceptual Framework   + Chapter 1 Summary * Chapter 2. Literature Review   + Introduction to the Literature Review   + Theoretical Orientation for the Study   + Review of the Literature specific to the Topic   + Synthesis of the Research Findings   + Chapter 2 Summary * Chapter 3. Process   + Creating the Project Deliverable Plan   + The Content of the Project Deliverable   + Purpose of the Study   + Target Population and Participant Selection   + Project Decision-Making Process Research Design   + Conclusion of Process   + Chapter 3 Summary |
| Benchmark 2: Ethics Review and IRB Screening | The IRB Screening will be completed after completion of Chapters 1-3 of the Action Research Project Report.  St. Thomas University is committed to the responsible conduct of research and fostering research that is both sound and ethical. St. Thomas University carries out its institutional responsibility to respect and protect the rights of individuals involved in research as human participants by facilitating review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), providing education relating to best practices for safeguarding participants, and engaging in monitoring and quality improvement initiatives. All doctoral research projects are required to undergo review by the IRB.  The student will complete an IRB Screening Form that will determine how and to what extent the planned Action Research Project will be reviewed by the IRB. The IRB screens all Action Research Projects to determine the level of IRB review, if any, required by the federal regulations.  Studies that involve greater than minimal risk to participants require a robust review by the full IRB committee. Minimal risk studies, including those that involve existing records, tend to present fewer ethical concerns, but are still reviewed by the IRB. Studies with significant risk may not be appropriate for novice researchers. |
| Benchmark 3: Chair and Committee Approval of Action Research Project and Deliverable (Chapters 4, 5 and Project/Deliverable) | After receiving IRB Approval, the student will continue completing the Chapters 4 and 5 listed below:   * Chapter 4. Results   + Introduction – The Study and the Researcher   + Evaluation Plan of the Project Deliverable   + Presentation of the Data and Results of the Deliverable   + Expected Findings with Deliverable   + Chapter 4 Summary * Chapter 5. Application   + Introduction   + Discussion of the Results   + Outcomes of the Deliverable   + Conclusions from the Deliverable   + Limitations   + Recommendations for Future Research or Interventions   + Conclusion * Appendix. The Action Research Project Deliverable   The report will tell the story of the Action Research Project and will validate its academic function and its role in demonstrating program outcomes. |
| Benchmark 4: Defense Presentation of Action Research Project Report and Deliverable | After the Action Research Project Report and Deliverable have been approved by the Chair and Committee members, the student will prepare an Action Research Project Defense Presentation. The Doctoral Research Chair will coordinate the scheduling of this virtual defense presentation for the student, committee, friends, family, colleagues and guests. |
| Benchmark 5: School Approval of Action Research Project | Upon successful defense of the Action Research Project Report and Deliverable, the completed documents will be submitted to the DIS 897 Courseroom Chapter 5 Final upload area. Upon completion of the Action Research Project Report and Project/deliverable, the Action Research Project will undergo a formal university review by the STU Library. |

# APPENDIX B – Dissertation Final Defense Procedures

As a Dissertation Chair for St. Thomas University, you will be responsible for supporting your Doctoral Candidate through their dissertation milestones to completion. This includes the Oral

Defense.

**IMPORTANT**: Under no circumstances, will a Doctoral Candidate be allowed to defend their dissertation if the student has not completed all of the Doctoral Research work or their equivalents from prior Saint Thomas University Ed.D programs. A student may defend, if they are currently enrolled in DIS 903, and have completed all Dissertation Benchmarks, and is now enrolled in DIS 904 (1-3 credits) in order to maintain their active dissertation status. A Doctoral Candidate MUST be enrolled in a Dissertation Benchmark during the semester they defend their dissertation. No exceptions!

Please follow the steps below to schedule the defense and keep this as a resource to use during the

presentations.

**Scheduling the Oral Defense via ZOOM:**

1. Have the Doctoral Candidate select three dates (at least 10 days out from the committee’s initial approval of the manuscript) that accommodate the Candidate, Chair and Committee Member’s schedules.

2. Please send those options to the Director of Doctoral Programs and Lead Doctoral Dissertation Chair at and he/she will schedule the defense and provide the ZOOM information to all those attending.

3. A Zoom session is scheduled regardless of whether the Doctoral candidate is participating

in a “live” or a defense on campus.

The STU Approved PowerPoint Protocol/Template must be used for all presentations. Please be sure to ONLY use the Dissertation Defense PowerPoint template for the actual PowerPoint used on that day. This is available on the Dissertation Resources webpage which can be accessed through the Dissertation Resources link in any Dissertation Milestone or in DIS 897 Dissertation

Experience. The agenda (to be the first slide after the title page in the PowerPoint) for the actual Defense must follow the format found in the Dissertation Defense PowerPoint template.

NOTE: make appropriate adjustments to the Presentation sections for Qualitative, Quantitative, Action, Delphi etc…., paying particular attention to including all sections of the Dissertation that should be covered based on the Defense Powerpoint Template. The Dissertation Presentation by the Doctoral candidate must not take more than 30 minutes, so it allows for Introductions, Q&A, and Closing Comments in the remaining time.

When scheduling for the defense, the Lead Dissertation Chair must receive the following four items:

* a completed Agenda as specified in the Defense PowerPoint template list of names and email addresses of any family/personal or professional friends that the Doctoral candidate would want for us to formally invite.
* Verification of the actual "Title" of the Dissertation and send this to the Lead Doctoral Dissertation Chair so it can be included in all communication regarding the defense.
* Provide a complete list of names and verified degrees of each Chair and Committee Member (Ed.D or Ph.D.)

**Online Oral Defense Structure and Tips:**

On the day of the defense, the Program Director or the Lead Doctoral Dissertation Chair will launch the ZOOM Session as the facilitator, to begin and record the defense. The Candidate, Chair, Committee Members and all others will join the meeting as participants. The facilitator will open the call and explain the process, and then turn the defense over to the Dissertation Chair. The Chair will ask the candidate to give a brief bio (if not already accomplished). The Chair should say some introductory words and then invite the candidate to begin. The candidate will do a “Share Screen” in order to facilitate the entire presentation. The PowerPoint (PPT) should take approximately 30- 40 minutes. After that, the floor is opened for questions. The Doctoral Research Committee Chair leads the Question & Answer session.

**Example of questions a Doctoral candidate could expect during the Q&A (but not limited to):**

1. Was there a particular researcher(s) who stood out as foundational for your study? Who was

it and how did your findings relate to their research?

2. If you could do anything differently, what would it have been?

3. Based on your research findings, if you were to make policy recommendations, what would

they be?

4. Were there any surprises you discovered along the way? How did they impact your

research?

5. What are your plans for further research?

You can also use the PPT to formulate a content-specific question usually related to the

findings. Questions regarding statistics can trip up the candidate and can be avoided unless there are important issues that the candidate can discuss cogently and comprehensively. Questions asked should will always result in success.

**Post Q&A Discussion:**

After the Q&A period, the Chair should ask if there are any additional questions, thank and direct the candidate to exit the meeting, and instruct the candidate to log back in after ten minutes to hear the results. If the defense is also being held “live”, the Committee would be the ones to leave the room and deliberate in a different location.

The facilitator will dismiss all non-committee participants from the meeting. The Chair will lead the discussion, and it usually only takes a few minutes. Ask each member to weigh in with feedback and give their vote of pass or fail.

When the candidate logs back in (or the committee re-enters the room, if live), provide feedback to the candidate regarding the dissertation defense and the preliminary feedback from the committee. (Note #5 below)

**Date for Oral Defense of Dissertation**

Prior to the Oral Defense the completed five chapters must be submitted to all committee members. This is to allow for Dissertation Committee reading and providing feedback. The Chair of the Committee, in consultation with the Committee members and the Director or their designee, gives the approval to the proposed defense date. In addition:

1. If a candidate intends to graduate in a particular semester (Fall, Spring or Summer), the date of the oral defense for the dissertation must follow the Academic Calendar. These dates are published in the annual academic calendar available on the STU website.

2. The date and time shall be scheduled by the Chair (once cleared with the Director of Doctoral programs) and approved by all members of the committee. The defense of the dissertation is open to the St. Thomas University community. Members of the faculty, staff and fellow Ed. D. students (both online and blended) are invited by the Director of Doctoral

programs. St. Thomas doctoral students are strongly encouraged to attend at least one defense prior to their own.

3. The Candidate ONLY meets with the Chair of the committee to prepare for the oral defense. Under no circumstances does a Doctoral Candidate meet with the full committee to rehearse or practice for their defense.

4. The Oral Defense presentation of the dissertation shall be facilitated by the Dissertation Committee Chair. The Doctoral Candidate must use the “Defense PowerPoint Template” for their presentation. This template is available on the Dissertation Resources webpage that can be accessed in all Dissertation Benchmarks and in DIS 897 Dissertation Experience.

5.Candidates will be told immediately after the Oral Defense of the “official” results of their Defense.

6.At the discretion of the Full Committee, a second defense of the same dissertation may be required. Only two formal oral dissertation defenses may be scheduled per dissertation.

7.The passing of the oral defense does not imply or guarantee that the final written dissertation will be approved. The completed dissertation must still meet all the requirements of the current University Dissertation Publication Manual, and the Style and Writing Quality Assessment, as determined by the University.

**After a Dissertation Defense**

1. If there are any modifications or changes to the study, the student will make the necessary changes with the timeframe required to meet the STU Library set timeframes. The changes will be reviewed by the Doctoral Research Chair and Committee Members for final approvals.
2. Upon approval of both the Doctoral Research Chair and Doctoral Committee Members, the student will be responsible to:

* Ensure that they have a completed Doctoral Research Dissertation uploaded to the DIS 897 Courseroom DIS 904 Research Continuation Course Final.
* Ensure they have run the completed manuscript through the TurnItIn process
* Ensure that the Title has been signed by the Doctoral Research Chair and Committee Members.
* Ensure that they have completed all of the requirements outlined in the Dissertation Publishing Handbook.
* Ensure that all signatures have been included in all areas of the completed manuscript.
* Submit to the STU Library by following the instructions outlined in the Dissertation Publishing Handbook.

**NOTE: A candidate is not yet a “doctor” and has not yet earned the doctorate degree until the degree has been officially conferred and awarded by the University. This is normally performed at Commencement (graduation ceremonies) or specific graduation dates established by the University. Refrain from calling yourself “doctor” until such time.**

**Final Disposition of the dissertation / publishing the dissertation**

Important information from the Dissertation Publications Manual (please review the Dissertation Publications Manual for full instructions and procedures to follow)