UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER
Warner Graduate School of Education and Human Development

ED 540: Program Evaluation Dissertation Proposal Seminar
Summer 2009
Department of Education Leadership
Class Sessions: Mondays, 5:00-7:30 pm (June 1 – July 27)
Location: Dewey 1-154

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Course Description and Objectives
This course is designed to provide students with support and guidance from faculty and other students as they work through revising the dissertation proposal through the final stages of their dissertations. The intensive timeline requires a commitment from students to meet all deadlines, provide feedback to peers, and work collaboratively in small groups and as a full class.

Format
The course will be conducted in a seminar format, using presentations and summaries of individual work to guide discussion. The course was created to provide structured support from faculty, along with peer support from students through a cohort learning model. The class will not meet every week. All students are required to access Blackboard to communicate when we are not meeting and to access others’ work and submit assignments.

Student Role: Students who participate in the program evaluation dissertation seminar are in their final stages of their Ed.D. program, which involves individual program evaluations. In enrolling in the course, students commit to completing their (guided) independent dissertation projects and graduating in May 2010. In addition to receiving faculty support, through cohort participation students will rely on their peers who will provide feedback at critical points in the process. Therefore, if you enroll in the course you are not only committing to your own work but also committing to each other, meaning that you must meet all peer review deadlines to ensure that your colleagues can graduate, as well.
**Expectations:**
1. This seminar relies on cohort participation, which involves students helping each other complete their dissertations. Your voluntary enrollment in this course assumes that you are willing to meet all deadlines as you provide support to your peers.
2. All assignments are due when indicated. No incompletes will be granted, except in cases of serious illness or family emergency. If you do not meet deadlines, you may be dropped from the course and the cohort.
3. For drafts of your dissertation chapters and full dissertation, please be sure to proofread your writing and use appropriate citations throughout your work.
4. Students must attend each class. Please notify Judy in advance at the above number should you have to miss a class.
5. We wish to fully include persons with disabilities in this course. Please let Judy know if you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assessments of this course to enable you to fully participate.
6. **Book Requirement:** (note – not available until July 1)
7. **Academic Integrity:** Any form of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, in this course will be treated seriously – all work must be your own and the work of others must be properly cited as appropriate. The University of Rochester’s “Academic Honesty Policy” and related judicial processes is found on pp. 49-52 in the Graduate Bulletin’s *Regulations and University Policies Concerning Graduate Study* or online at the following location:
   [http://www.rochester.edu/GradBulletin/PDFbulletin/GradBul06-08forWeb.pdf](http://www.rochester.edu/GradBulletin/PDFbulletin/GradBul06-08forWeb.pdf). More information regarding proper citing and plagiarism can be found in the APA Manual. The website below also provides helpful hints, tools, and exercises in proper citation.

**Faculty Role:** The course was created to provide structured support from faculty, meaning that faculty will provide guidance on all aspects of your dissertation, will provide feedback on memorandums and drafts, and will work to keep students on the tight timeline so that they can complete their dissertations and graduate in May. Given that you are under a very intense timeline, determining whether the proposed study is feasible (and identifying ways to reduce the scope or alter the design) is one of our most important (and early) contributions. Faculty will not edit drafts, teach students how to use SPSS, or assist with data collection, entry/cleaning, or analysis. We suggest you work with the Writing Support Services for assistance with your writing ([http://www.rochester.edu/Warner/programs/writing/index.html](http://www.rochester.edu/Warner/programs/writing/index.html)), and seek out additional resources on qualitative and quantitative analysis, as appropriate.
Course Schedule
Phases of Program Evaluation Dissertation

Phase One: Proposal Development
Spring 2009 until August 21
Major products:
1. Proposal (June)
2. RSRB application (July)
3. Pilot instruments (July)

Phase Two: Proposal Defense and RSRB Approval
August 22 to October 2nd
Major Products
1. Revised Proposal
2. RSRB approval

Phase Three: Data Collection
October 3rd through December 4th
Major products:
1. Collecting all data
2. Revising chapters 1-3

Phase Four: Data Analysis and Findings
December 5th through January 15th
Major products
1. Findings plan
2. Findings outline
3. Chapter 4

Phase Five: Full Draft
January 16th to February 19th
1. Full Draft of Dissertation

Phase Six: Feedback and Revision
February 20th to March 31st
1. Full Revision of Dissertation

Phase Seven: Final Revisions and Defense
April 1st to April 30th
1. Final Approved Dissertation
2. Dissertation Defense
Course Schedule

Note: You must reserve the Monday course slot (4:50 – 7:30 p.m.) throughout this summer and during the 2009-2010 school year, as we may need to adjust this timetable to address problems or issues students are facing.

**Summer and Fall 2009**

**June 1:** Introductions, ground rules, and plans
Review of APA foundations

**June 8 – June 9:** Individual meetings with Judy and Logan—review of feedback from Andrew, Judy and comps exams

June 8

1:00 – 1:30 p.m.
1:30 – 2:00 p.m.
2:00 – 2:30 p.m.
5:00 – 5:30 p.m.
5:30 – 6:00 p.m.
6:00 – 6:30 p.m.

June 9

1:00 – 1:30 p.m.
1:30 – 2:00 p.m.
2:00 – 2:30 p.m.
5:00 – 5:30 p.m.
5:30 – 6:00 p.m.
6:00 – 6:30 p.m.

**June 9:** RSRB Session I & II (4:30-6:30pm)

**June 15:** Discuss dissertation timelines, politics, the role of your committee, small group responsibilities, and issues of confidentiality

Discuss data collection and developing a high quality dissertation

Discuss the “messiness” of evaluations in applied settings. Have you faced any roadblocks? Do you need to need to make changes?

ASSIGNMENTS DUE: Bring a copy of your purpose statement, research questions, and draft protocol or survey instrument to class. (post on Blackboard as well)

Memo (max. 2 pages) to Judy and Logan regarding data collection - do you have access to site, what data do you have access to currently, problems or issues that you have faced or currently face, your status compared to your individual proposal timeline. Post on BlackBoard.
June 22:   No class meeting (Judy at ASHE board meeting)

Send first draft of your completed proposal to your partner this week. Provide feedback (either online or in person) so that edits can be made before June 29. Post feedback (either a memo or track changes) on Blackboard.

Have a second reviewer check for spelling and grammar edits.

June 29:   Proposal review/ update

ASSIGNMENTS DUE: Complete draft of updated proposal including study instruments and letter of access as appendices. (post on Blackboard)

July 6:    RSRB Session I (w/Brian & Kara’s cohort)
Advice from a recent Program Eval graduate
Prep to begin piloting of instruments

July 13:   RSRB Session II (w/Brian & Kara’s cohort)
Practice piloting instruments with partner

July 20:   Individual meeting with Judy and Logan

Bring a copy of your data collection instrument with you to the meeting. Bring notes from piloting of instrument.

July 20

1:00 – 1:30 p.m.
1:30 – 2:00 p.m.
2:00 – 2:30 p.m.
5:00 – 5:30 p.m.
5:30 – 6:00 p.m.
6:00 – 6:30 p.m.

July 21

1:00 – 1:30 p.m.
1:30 – 2:00 p.m.
2:00 – 2:30 p.m.
5:00 – 5:30 p.m.
5:30 – 6:00 p.m.
6:00 – 6:30 p.m.

Jul 27:    RSRB III (optional) (w/Brian’s cohort)
Small group meeting about proposal
Individual practice proposal presentations
Assignment Due: RSRB protocol to be posted on Blackboard. Final draft of proposal with revised instruments based on piloting; include a memo detailing what changes were made to your instrument.

August: Individual meeting with Judy once during August to prepare for proposal defenses.

Final draft of proposal with all summer revisions must be posted on Blackboard no later than August 14.

August 24: Organization for Defense Meeting (Location to be determined)

****Full Proposal Due sent to committee members two weeks ahead before defense date.

August 25 until September 11: Proposal Defenses
(*proposal defenses can and will be scheduled earlier if student is ready)

Resources
For dissertation drafts, you should follow APA guidelines for your references. The following cites provide further APA style guidelines:
http://www.crk.umn.edu/library/links/apa5th.htm
http://www.docstyles.com/apacrib.htm
Program Evaluation Dissertation Outline

Title Page
Abstract
Acknowledgements
Table of Contents
List of Tables and Figures

I. Introduction to the Report (approximately 2 pages)
   a. Brief introduction to the evaluation, including rationale and discussion of audience

II. Focus of the Evaluation (approximately 15 pages)
   a. Descriptive information about the organization where the program is located
   b. Program description, goals and objectives, and scope of activities
   c. Logic model (program theory or theory of action)
   d. Purpose of the evaluation (including evaluation questions) and research stance (i.e. role of researcher in study context)
   e. Literature review of prior work that grounds the study including an overview of research on topic, an exploration of the gaps of prior work and limitations, and a forward thinking discussion of how this body of knowledge sets the context and provides direction to this new study

III. Methodology (Evaluation Plan and Procedures) (approximately 15 pages)
   a. Choice of evaluation design and discussion of measures (including reasons for selection) grounded in program evaluation and methods literature.
   b. Costs/benefits of selected design with a focus on anticipated threats to validity of overall design and methods to address these (reliability and validity of particular instruments may be discussed under d or f)
   c. Study instruments: Development (or selection) and design of instruments
   d. Data collection: Detailed discussion of study participants, sampling process, data collection procedures, etc.
   e. Data analysis
   f. Discussion about how safeguards taken to ensure confidentiality of participants during data collection, analysis, and reporting of results. Include a statement about RSRB approval.
   g. Study timeline (present in table) including proposal development (including research instruments), proposal defense, RSRB approval, piloting of data collection instruments, data collection, data clean up, data analysis and interpretation, and writing and revision of dissertation.
   h. Limitations of study
IV. Evaluation Results (approximately 25 pages)
   a. Summary of findings
   b. Interpretation of findings

V. Conclusions and Recommendations (approximately 5 pages)
   a. Criteria and Standards Used to Judge Program (if appropriate)
   b. Judgments about program (Strengths and Weaknesses)
   c. Recommendations about program (relating to evaluation purpose only)

VII. Minority Reports or Rejoinders (if appropriate)

VIII. Appendices (Each item has its own appendix A-Z)
      Things that you may include here:
      o Description of Evaluation Plan/Design, Instruments (questionnaires, focus group/interview protocols, observation instruments, consent forms), and Data Analysis and Interpretation
      o Detailed Tabulations or Analyses of Quantitative Data and Transcripts or Summaries of Qualitative Data
      o Site approval letter
      o Other Information, as Necessary.
Clarification of Expectations of Note

The purpose of this document is to outline a set of shared expectations for the Dissertation Seminar Cohort for the 2009-10 Academic Year. The expectations are an effort to provide clarity on a number of organizational and content matters related to the Program Evaluation Dissertation experience.

1. Admission into the cohort requires completion of all coursework, passing the portfolio and comprehensive (qualify case analysis) exams, along with identification and approval of an evaluation project. If these requirements are not met, then a special agreement must be met with the cohort instructor, and approved by the Department Chair and Associate Dean, to be a part of the seminar.

2. All cohort members become advisees of the faculty member leading the seminar. The faculty seminar leader also serves as sponsor and chair for all dissertations projects. 
   a. Concerns about the seminar should be first directed to the seminar faculty leader and then to the Educational Leadership Department Chair.
   b. Individual project concerns should be directed first to the seminar faculty leader, and then in consultation be shared with dissertation committee members.

3. All seminar participants will be asked who they desire to be on their dissertation committees, efforts will be made to accommodate these requests, but ultimately formation of the dissertation committees will rest with the chair and seminar leader in order to ensure no single faculty member is overburdened with committee membership.

4. There will be three specific reviews of progress toward dissertation completion. At each review each student will receive the mark of either (1) on track for completion (2) falling behind pace for completion or (3) off track for completion. If a student is off track for completion at one of the three reviews they will be dropped from the cohort. If a student is falling behind pace for completion twice they will be dropped from the cohort. Reviews will be conducted by the seminar instructor on:
   a. August 24th
   b. December 11th
   c. March 5th

5. All cohort participants are required to get official access to their program evaluation site. An official memorandum of understanding must be obtained that indicates that you will have access to the participants and data required for your study. This memorandum of understanding should come on official letterhead from an institution official no later than June 29, 2009. Failure to obtain official access to evaluation site may result in your being dropped from the cohort.

Successful completion of the Accelerated Dissertation in Program Evaluation denotes passing minimum qualification for the doctorate of education degree, and while it may be the case it does not directly indicate (a) faculty are in agreement with the findings of your dissertation project or (b) that you are a proficient program evaluator. The product of your dissertation must be shared externally in a format that reflects it is your work that must be examined within the caveats noted. Additionally, a complete version of your dissertation cannot be shared outside of Warner. Executive summaries, recommendations reports, and/or articles are acceptable products to be shared externally.
Additional resources (let me know if you find updated ones so we can continue to add to the list)

The Literature Review


Theoretical Frameworks


Purpose Statement and Research Questions

Methods


Please also review the appropriate methods resources for your program evaluation model and study.
Internet and Computer Research Methods


Research Ethics


Researcher Positionality

Validity


Writing Strategies