The Dissertation Guide

Doctor of Philosophy Program

College of Pharmacy

Nova Southeastern University

3200 S. University Drive- Terry Building

Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 33328
Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set forth policies in order to maintain high standards of quality in the conduct of graduate student research and writing at Nova Southeastern University, College of Pharmacy. This document provides guidelines for the research and writing components of the dissertation. It also addresses the responsibilities of the members of the students’ dissertation committee.

Pre-dissertation Course Work Phase:

It is expected that students have a solid background and understanding of the literature in their field of study prior to the dissertation phase. Required core courses and elective courses that are track specific must be completed prior to this phase. After completion of the didactic portion of the curriculum, students will be required to complete a qualifying exam. This exam consists of two sections, a written portion and an oral portion. The qualifying exam format is department specific and is described in a separate document. It is only after successful completion of the qualifying exam that graduate students can move into the dissertation phase of their studies.

The Dissertation

A dissertation is a showcase for a student’s original contribution to the field allowing him/her to present the results of their research. It is considered to be a culmination of all their hard work and it is absolutely essential to obtaining his/her Ph.D. degree. The student will have to defend their work in front of his/her dissertation committee. The entire faculty will be invited to the defense.

Dissertation Committees

A dissertation committee plays an important role in guiding and directing graduate student research. Each dissertation committee shall be composed of four members as follows:

Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Students:

1. Faculty advisor from the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences
2. Two faculty from the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences
3. An external member (either an NSU faculty or faculty outside of NSU)
Sociobehavioral and Administrative Pharmacy Department Graduate students:

1. Faculty advisor from the Sociobehavioral and Administrative Pharmacy Department
2. Two faculty from the Sociobehavioral and Administrative Pharmacy Department.
3. An external member (either an NSU faculty or faculty outside of NSU)

Summary:
Three of the four required committee members, including the Chair, shall be members of the faculty of the student's degree program. Only members of this group that hold a Ph.D. degree are allowed to chair a dissertation committee. The committee chair must possess requisite knowledge and experience in discipline-based research theory and methodologies at the doctoral level, knowledge of the requirements for doctoral dissertations in the discipline, and a demonstrated ability to successfully direct others in research activities. Faculty members who have been terminated due to retirement or who are no longer faculty members in the COP may complete outstanding examining committee, dissertation committee, and advising assignments as chair or member if they wish to do so, and after negotiations with the Dean and Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education. However, they may not accept new assignments to chair such committees. In order for the dissertation committee to function as required, the program must appoint this faculty as an adjunct faculty. All committee members must possess requisite knowledge and experience in discipline-based research theory and methodologies at the doctoral level, knowledge of the requirements for doctoral dissertations in the discipline, and a demonstrated ability to successfully direct others in research activities. The external member on the committee will be a faculty that has no appointment with the College of Pharmacy. This member will be provided with a letter of agreement with their committee responsibilities delineated (See Forms and Examples).

Responsibilities of the Committee:

Chair of the committee:
- serves as the candidate’s research advisor
- serves as the chair of the candidates qualifying exam committee (Pharmaceutical Sciences only)
- assumes primary responsibility for supervising the candidate, including the following:
  - helps candidate and other members define their roles
  - helps candidate to narrow topic into a feasible and appropriate dissertation study
  - helps assure research is meaningful and will add to the body of knowledge of the candidates major of study
  - ensures that the topic reflects the mission and educational outcomes of the program
  - sets up a regular schedule of meetings with the student, and helps assure candidate is making progress according to an agreeable timeline
  - gives substantive feedback on the candidate’s research process (proposal,
implementation, experiments, analysis, report, etc.)
- has the final word in areas of disagreement among members and/or between members and the candidate
- chairs the candidate’s oral defense
- will be the approving authority (for the dissertation committee) of the final dissertation report prior to submissions and binding
- may facilitate candidate’s decisions and arrangements regarding post-doctoral programs

Members serve on the candidate’s dissertation committee, in which role they:
- offer expertise in methodology or topic area
- give substantive and organizational recommendations for sections or areas of their expertise (or strong interest)
- participate in the dissertation proposal development and approval process
- participate in the dissertation report development and approval process
- read and approve the final dissertation draft
- participate in the committee’s decision-making process and all oral defenses (proposal and dissertation report)

The candidate:
- will thoughtfully seek out appropriate faculty for her/his committee
- takes responsibility to develop and adhere to a feasible timeline for the dissertation milestones
- is responsible for timely and accurate communication with the chair and committee members through all phases of the dissertation process
- relies on the committee chair as the primary mentor and approving authority on all aspects of the dissertation process
- works closely with the committee chair throughout the dissertation process
- works with the committee chair and members to develop a feasible and relevant dissertation proposal and:
  - submits dissertation research to IRB for approval soon after proposal is approved by committee if necessary
  - submits dissertation research to IACUC for approval soon after proposal is approved by committee if necessary
  - seeks outside editorial and statistical/methodological assistance as needed
  - checks with chairperson before making any changes in process or analysis
  - submits drafts of chapters for feedback
  - prepares for a successful oral defense (proposal and dissertation report)
  - is responsible for writing at a scholarly level
  - works independently on all dissertation documents, to include the proposal and dissertation report (complete and sign the Certification of Authorship form- see Forms and Examples).
- and is responsible for giving appropriate credit for all word content, ideas, thoughts
where it is due
• candidates are expected to secure professional editorial assistance at their own expense if writing skills warrant it, however, the dissertation must be the student’s independent work.

Steps in the Dissertation Process

The student dissertation committee chair will guide him/her throughout the various phases in the dissertation process. The process of selecting a dissertation topic begins with the classes students take as well as the research they are exposed to during research rotations (Pharmaceutical Sciences students) or in the guided research electives and topic discussions seminars (Sociobehavioral and Administrative Pharmacy students) and governed by when the students complete didactic coursework and successfully complete qualifying exams.

The process starts with a dissertation proposal which will be track specific. The time frame of when the dissertation proposal is due is also track specific.

Dissertation Proposal

After the first year of courses, all graduate students select their Ph.D. advisors that will subsequently chair their dissertation committees. Graduate students in the College of Pharmacy at Nova Southeastern University must select a dissertation committee before their qualifying exams as this committee plays a central role in this process.

Pharmaceutical Sciences Students

Pharmaceutical Sciences students spend their second year working in the research laboratories of their mentors, honing their research skills and exposing themselves to the various research projects in their mentor’s laboratory. At the end of the second year, the student should have a research project selected and will be required to complete a written proposal (dissertation proposal) which will be the basis of their qualifying exam. The guidelines for this report are as follows:

Dissertation Proposal Format (Pharmaceutical Sciences Candidates must use the following proposal format)

Summary and title

Title: 81 characters including spaces and punctuation marks
The summary will consist of 30 lines of text. The summary will:

- Be suitable for dissemination to the public
- Briefly state the specific aims and research design
- Provide information on the significance (i.e., the gap the study is addressing and the public health significance)

**Background and Significance**

- Explain the importance of the problem
- Explain prior art and existing interventions to solve the problem
- Explain the gap the study is addressing and the public health significance
- Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses
- Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields
- Describe how the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or interventions are driving the research

**General and specific aims, and hypothesis**

- Concisely state the goals of the proposed research
- Summarize the expected outcomes, including impact of research on fields involved
- Succinctly list objectives of the proposed research (e.g., to test a hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, etc.)

**Research design and methods**

- Briefly describe the rational for aim
- Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project
- Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted
- Describe the anticipated outcomes
- Describe benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims
- Provide justification for the IACUC or IRB (if applicable)

**Challenges, and resolution to challenges**

- Describe potential problems, alternative strategies

**Budget and timeline**

- Prepare list of supplies, equipment, animals, treatments, etc.
- Justify the budget for each category
- Prepare a timeline associated with the progress of your research
Back matter

- References (typed single space, and double-spaced between entries. Cross-check all references to ensure they were cited, and that all cited references are listed).
- Appendices
  - Interview Guide, Checklists, Other Measures
  - Letters of support, agreement, and approval, etc., as applicable

Format:

- Number of pages (excluding back matter)
- Font: times new romans, single spaced
- Margins: one inches

After successfully completing the written portion of their qualifying exam, Pharmaceutical Sciences graduate students will defend the project orally. The oral defense of the project will occur a minimum of two weeks and a maximum of three months after successful completion of the written proposal. The proposal will be presented to the NSU community. Students will have 40 minutes to present the proposal. The session is open to the NSU community for questions for at least 30 minutes. The student is required to attend a closed session composed of his/her qualifying exam committee members. After completion of this project, Pharmaceutical Sciences graduate students are now in the dissertation phase of their graduate studies.

The proposal that is submitted as part of the qualifying exams for Pharmaceutical Sciences students will be the basis for the dissertation report that these students will present at the end of their studies.

Sociobehavioral and Administrative Pharmacy Students

Sociobehavioral Pharmacy students complete a separate written qualifying exam. The oral portion of the qualifying exam will be a presentation of their dissertation proposal. This dissertation proposal will be completed during their third year in the program. The dissertation proposal will consist of:

Dissertation Proposal Format (*Sociobehavioral and Administrative Pharmacy Candidates must use the following proposal format*)

I. Introduction (Chapter 1)
   - Background to the problem (population statistics, provide the context, issues)
   - Statement of the problem
   - Purpose of study
Research questions and hypotheses
Definitions of variables (conceptual and operational)
Rationale and need for study
Assumptions and limitations of study

II. Selected Review of the Literature (Chapter 2)
Historical overview of relevant theory(ies) and research literature on topic
What is known and unknown about the topic? (Use your own subheadings. Summarize and critique what is known and unknown and describe how these are linked connection to your research.)
Critique of validity of theory and research in the literature, instruments (description, history, development, application in other studies, reliability, validity, trustworthiness), procedures (description, history, development, application), etc., as applicable to your study.
Relevant concepts (not covered under relevant theory)
Relevant contexts (or reflexivity, clinical experience etc. issue if a qualitative study)
Summary of literature

III. Methodology (Chapter 3)
Research Design and Methodology
Subjects (Participants)
Ethical Considerations and Review (IRB, HPD Research Committee, HIPPA, other)
Funding, if applicable
Study Setting
Instruments and measures, if applicable (describe measures, data type/level, use or application procedures, reliability and validity of measures, equipment needed)
Pilot study summary and how linked to study (if applicable)
Data collection procedures
Data analyses (management of data, describe all analyses, include rationale for use of analytical procedure for data type, to answer research questions,
Format for presenting results
Summary

Back matter
References (typed single space, and double-spaced between entries. Cross-check all references to ensure they were cited, and that all cited references are listed).
Appendices
Interview Guide, Checklists, Other Measures
Letters of support, agreement, and approval, etc., as applicable

The Dissertation Report
The final dissertation report should be a concise, but comprehensive detailed and accurate,
scholarly account of the student’s investigation. This report will establish the student’s credentials as an expert in the domain of their study. The document will be written in the past tense as it describes what you proposed to do, what you did, and what you found. Although the dissertation proposal served as the core of the first three chapters of the dissertation report, the student must ensure that the report in its entirety is reflective of the studies that were actually completed. Students will be required to update their literature review, questions/aims and methods sections to reflect what was actually performed. These changes must be discussed with and approved by the chair of the dissertation committee prior to implementation.

Students are responsible for a scholarly level of writing and careful editing is mandatory. Proficiency in the use of the English language in all works submitted during the dissertation process is required. Dissertation documents that contain grammatical and spelling errors are unacceptable and will be returned to the student. A professional editor may be recommended prior to submission. Students will need to complete and sign a Certification of Authorship form prior to submitting the dissertation draft report for review, as well as with the final dissertation report. (See Forms and Examples).

The final Dissertation Report for all College of Pharmacy students is as follows:

**Front Matter**

The front matter includes the following:

- **Title Page** *(See Form and Examples- copy exactly)*
- **Approval/Signature Page** *(See Form and Examples- copy exactly)*
- **Abstract** *(limited to 350 words see ProQuest/UMI required format) [begins with Roman numeral iii]*
- **Acknowledgements** *(See Form and Examples- copy exactly)*
- **Table of Contents**
- **List of Tables**
- **List of Figures**
- **List of Abbreviations and Symbols**

**FORMAT #1**

*This format is based on five Chapters:*

**Chapter 1: Introduction**

This chapter is an expansion of the Dissertation Proposal and generally includes the following sections:
• Background to the problem (population statistics, provide the context, issues)
• Problem Statement
• Dissertation Goal/Purpose of the study
• Research Questions and/or Hypotheses
  ➢ Note: Some studies have research questions and hypotheses while others have one or the other.
• Relevance and Significance (Rationale and the need for the studies)
• Barriers and Issues

• Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations: Assumptions are the unprovable factors that are accepted as true within the context of the study. Limitations are factors that are beyond your control and potentially impact the internal validity of the study. Delimitations are factors that you intentionally impose to constrain the scope of the study to make it manageable. Delimitations impact the generalizability of the results of the study.
• Definition of Terms
• Summary of the chapter

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature
In Chapter 2, the student will expand and develop the review presented in the Dissertation Proposal. The review can include:
• Overview of the topics included in the review.
• Justification of the criteria for what is included and excluded as part of the review.
• Identification of what has been done before including the strengths and weaknesses of existing studies.
• Identification of the gaps in the literature.
• Analysis of research methods that are used in similar studies and determine whether these methods were valid and reliable.
• Synthesis of the literature and present it in a way that helps the reader gain a new perspective on the literature.
• Summary of the chapter.

Chapter 3: Methodology
In Chapter 3, the student will describe, in detail, how the investigation/studies will be conducted. Enough detail should be provided to enable replication by other researchers.

The following topics are intended to serve as a guide:

- Overview of research methodology/design: Explain exactly what type of research study will be done, and outline briefly how the study will be conducted.
- Specific research method(s) employed: Describe in detail the specific research methods that were used to answer the research questions and/or test the hypothesis(es).
- Explain how these methods were carried out both conceptually and operationally.
- Instrument development and validation: If applicable, describe/identify the instrument(s) that were used and how each construct was measured. Discuss the threats to validity and reliability and how these threats will be addressed. Address internal validity, external validity, instrument validity, and construct validity.
- Describe the sample population, how many participants were part of the study.
- Data analysis: Explain how data was analyzed in order to answer the research questions and/or test hypothesis(es). The student should use the research literature to support his/her decisions.
- Formats for presenting results
- Summary of the chapter

**Chapter 4: Results**

Chapter 4 includes an objective description and analysis of the findings, results or outcomes of the research. Limit the use of charts, tables, figures to those that are needed to support the narrative.

Additional illustrations can be included as part of the appendices.

The following topics are intended to serve as a guide:

- Data analysis
- Findings- the findings should be given in the context the studies proposed.
- Summary of results - If the research has been guided by hypotheses, make a statement as to whether the data supported or rejected these hypotheses.

**Chapter 5: Conclusions, Implications, Recommendations, and Summary**

In this chapter, interpret, examine, and qualify the results of the investigation and draw inferences from them.

The following topics are intended to serve as a guide:
• **Conclusions:** Clearly state the conclusions of the study based on the analysis performed and results achieved. Indicate by the evidence or logical development the extent to which the specified objectives have been accomplished. Discuss alternative explanations for the findings, if appropriate. Delineate strengths, weaknesses, and limitations of the study.

• **Implications:** Discuss the impact of the work on the field of study and its contributions to knowledge and professional practice. Discuss implications for future research.

• **Recommendations:** Present recommendations for future research or for changes in research methods or theoretical concepts. As appropriate, present recommendations for changes in academic practice, professional practice, or organizational procedures, practices, and behavior.

• **Summary:** Present a summary of the entire paper, written so that it could serve as a stand-alone document. It should be about four or five pages in length.

**Back Matter**

The back matter includes the following:

• **Appendices**

• **References** *(typed single space, and double-spaced between entries. Cross-check all references to ensure they were cited, and that all cited references are listed).*

It is of great importance that all works used be properly cited. Statements, ideas, works presented must all be properly cited. Plagiarism is unethical and a violation of Nova Southeastern University Code of Student Conduct. Students will receive disciplinary actions which may include expulsion from the University for plagiarism.

• **List of Scholarly Works** Scholarly publications, abstracts, patents and inventions from the dissertation if any.

• **Vita** When included, this brief biographical sketch of the author is the last page of the dissertation and the last page listed on the Table of Contents.

**2 ALTERNATIVE DISSERTATION FORMAT**

This is based on a Sections format. The first two sections are exactly as Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 above and as shown below:

**Sections**
**General Introduction**

This section is an expansion of the Dissertation Proposal and generally includes the following sections:

- Background to the problem (population statistics, provide the context, issues)
- Problem Statement
- Dissertation Goal/Purpose of the study
- Research Questions and/or Hypotheses
  - Note: Some studies have research questions and hypotheses while others have one or the other.
- Relevance and Significance (Rationale and the need for the studies)
- Barriers and Issues
- Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations: Assumptions are the unprovable factors that are accepted as true within the context of the study. Limitations are factors that are beyond your control and potentially impact the internal validity of the study. Delimitations are factors that you intentionally impose to constrain the scope of the study to make it manageable. Delimitations impact the generalizability of the results of the study.
- Definition of Terms
- Summary

**General Review of the Literature**

In this section, the student will expand and develop the review presented in the Dissertation Proposal. The review can include:

- Overview of the topics included in the review.
- Justification of the criteria for what is included and excluded as part of the review.
- Identification of what has been done before including the strengths and weaknesses of existing studies.
- Identification of the gaps in the literature.
- Analysis of research methods that are used in similar studies and determine whether these methods were valid and reliable.
- Synthesis of the literature and present it in a way that helps the reader gain a new perspective on the literature.
Summary

Section I

The middle of the dissertation will consist of mini-papers that will have a brief introduction, Methods, Results and brief Discussion sections. These sections will be specific to the topic and will follow the following format:

Introduction

Brief background of the topic (specific to section I)
Overall purpose of the study and nature of the research will be discussed.
This is intended to be a brief introduction of the scope and field of the research

Material and Methods

- Overview of research methodology/design.

- Specific research method(s) employed: Describe in detail the specific research methods that were used to answer the research questions and/or test the hypothesis(es).

- Explain how these methods were carried out both conceptually and operationally.

- Instrument development and validation: If applicable, describe the instrument(s) that were used and how each construct was measured. Discuss the threats to validity and reliability and how these threats will be addressed. Address internal validity, external validity, instrument validity, and construct validity.

- Describe the sample population, including how many participants were part of the study.

- Data analysis: Explain how data was analyzed in order to answer the research questions and/or test hypothesis(es). The student should use the research literature to support his/her decisions.

Results:

This should include an objective description and analysis of the findings, results or outcomes of the research. Limit the use of charts, tables, figures to those that are needed to support the narrative.

Additional illustrations can be included as part of the appendices.
The following topics are intended to serve as a guide:

- Data analysis
- Findings - the findings should be given in the context of the studies proposed.

**Discussion/Summary:**

In this section, the student should briefly examine the results and qualify the results of the investigation and draw inferences from them. If the research has been guided by hypotheses, make a statement as to whether the data supported or rejected these hypotheses.

A student can have several sections as part of their dissertation report. In this case, follow the instructions above for each mini-paper (section).

**Overall Conclusions, Implications, Recommendations, and Summary**

This final section of this format is intended for the student to, interpret, examine, and qualify the results of the entire dissertation and draw inferences from them.

The following topics are intended to serve as a guide:

- **Conclusions:** Clearly state the conclusions of the studies based on the analysis performed and results achieved. Indicate by the evidence or logical development the extent to which the specified objectives have been accomplished. Discuss alternative explanations for the findings, if appropriate. Delineate strengths, weaknesses, and limitations of the study.

- **Implications:** Discuss the impact of the work on the field of study and its contributions to knowledge and professional practice. Discuss implications for future research.

- **Recommendations:** Present recommendations for future research or for changes in research methods or theoretical concepts. As appropriate, present recommendations for changes in academic practice, professional practice, or organizational procedures, practices, and behavior.

- **Summary:** Present a summary of the entire sections, written so that it could serve as a stand-alone document. It should be about four or five pages in length.

**Back Matter**

The back matter includes the following:

- **Appendices**

- **References** *(typed single space, and double-spaced between entries. Cross-check all references*
to ensure they were cited, and that all cited references are listed).

It is of great importance that all works used be properly cited. Statements, ideas, works presented must all be properly cited. Plagiarism is unethical and a violation of Nova Southeastern University Code of Student Conduct. Students will receive disciplinary actions which may include expulsion from the University for plagiarism.

• **List of Scholarly Works** Scholarly publications, abstracts, patents and inventions from the dissertation if any.

• **Vita** When included, this brief biographical sketch of the author is the last page of the dissertation and the last page listed on the Table of Contents.

**Final Dissertation Report Copy Guidelines**

Candidates must use the most current APA style to start their dissertation report, unless in conflict with dissertation formatting guidelines contained in this document. If a newer APA Publication Manual edition becomes available after the student has started writing the report (4th and 5th chapters), then he/she may continue to use the APA manual that he/she began the report with.

**Copyright Permissions**

Inclusion of any copyrighted materials must have letters of permission from the holder of the copyright. The student should prepare him or herself with information in the pamphlet, Copyright Law and the Doctoral Dissertation: Guidelines to your Legal Rights and Responsibilities available from ProQuest/UMI.

**Paper, Ink, and Printing**

The final copies to be submitted by the candidates must be on 8.5 x 11 inches 25% cotton acid-free fiber bond paper. The paper should have a watermark that reads 25% cotton when held up to the light. All manuscripts must be submitted in black ink. All text must be clear and crisp. A laser or LaserJet printer should be used. Use only one of the APA approved fonts throughout the manuscript. Chapter titles and major headings may be 2 to 4 points larger than the body font.

**Type Style**

- Body Text: 12-point Times New Roman.
- Text for the cover page: may be larger but should not exceed 14-point size.
• Text for the chapter title: 14-point size.
• Use typefaces throughout the document consistently.
• Do not use a compressed typeface or any settings on your word processor that would decrease the spacing between letters or words.
• Sansserif typefaces such as Helvetica or Arial may be used for relatively short blocks of text such as chapter headings and captions but should be avoided in long passages of text.

Margins

The left margin of the document must be 1 ½ inches to allow for binding, top margin of first page of each new chapter is 2 inches, all other margins are 1 inch. All text, including tables, figures, page numbers must fit within the area created by the margins. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that printed margins conform to the required margins. Title and signature pages have specific directions noted on them (see Forms and Examples). Students should use left justification (leaving a ragged right edge) for body of the dissertation or both left- and right-aligned (justified).

Spacing

All text should be double-spaced with the following exceptions:

1. Title Page
2. Signature Page
3. Table of Contents (see APA)
4. Block Quotations (see APA)
5. Tables and Figures should be single spaced including table and text figure captions, legends, and notes.
6. References (single space within entries and double space between entries)
7. Appendices may use any spacing
8. Abstract
9. Acknowledgements

Paragraph Spacing

The text of the document is double-spaced. There should be no extra spaces between paragraphs in sections; however, indent the first line of paragraphs five spaces. Chapters must begin on new pages.
Page number

Use lower case Roman numerals to paginate pre-text pages (not the title page, signature page, nor abstract are paginated even though they count as i, ii, iii, etc.). All other pages must be numbered and fall safely inside the acceptable margins. Page numbers need to be placed in the upper right corner only. All page numbers, including page numbers in the appendices, must be the same font and size as the body font, in plain font style. They must not include periods, hyphens, parentheses, or running page heads. Be sure that at least one double space separates every page number from any text, tables etc. All page numbers are to run consecutively and fall within designated margins. Follow APA Guidelines for paragraphs, headings, avoid widows and orphans etc.

Title Page

The title page includes (see Forms and Examples):

1. The exact title of the dissertation
2. Date of submission
3. Student name
4. Name of the Ph.D. program

Approval Page

The approval page should be completed as shown under the Forms and Examples section of this document.

The Abstract

The abstract (see Forms and Examples section) is single-spaced. The abstract should not include citations because it would then need references. The abstract must be fewer than 350 words in length as it must meet the length standard of UMI Dissertation Abstracts International, which requires abstracts to be fewer than 350 words. Abstracts are published in Dissertation Abstracts International, which is published by University Microfilm Incorporated (UMI).

Chapter Title Heading, Subheadings, and Sub-Subheadings

It is preferred that dissertations use no more than three levels of headings in the body text. All headings should have only the first letter of each word capitalized except that non-major words shorter than four letters have no capital letters. Instructions for heading levels follow:
Level 1: Chapter Title Heading

This heading starts two inches from the top of the page, is centered on the page, and is set in 14-point type. The first line contains the chapter number (e.g., Chapter 4). The second line is blank.

The third line displays the chapter title, is centered on the page, and is set in 14-point type.

Level 2: Subheading

Start the subheading at the left margin of the page, four spaces (i.e., two returns when your document is set for double-spacing) down from the title, set in bold 12-point type. Double-space (one return) to the subheading body text. Indent the first line of the body text five spaces.

Level 3: Sub-Subheading

Start the sub–subheading at the left margin of the page, double-spaced (i.e., one return when your document is set up for double-spacing) from the subheading, set in 12-point italics. Double-space (one return) to the sub-subheading body text. Indent the first line of the body text five spaces.

Tables and Figures in the Text Body

Charts, graphs, diagrams, figures, and summary tables that significantly enhance reading of the dissertation should be placed in the text body. If figures and tables are used:

- Tables and figures must be properly cited
- Permission must be obtained to reproduce copyrighted materials.
- Only use tables and figures that are absolutely essential for the reader to understand the point(s) you are trying to make.
- Additional tables and figures should be placed in appendices.
- All tables and figures that are less than body width must be centered properly.

Additional guidelines are provided in the current edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

Appendices

Appendices may be used for the following:

1. Analytical tables, evaluation instruments, and other material important in the determination, evaluation, analysis, and description of your research that is not contained in the text body (see section above).
2. To present material that supplements the text or may be of interest to readers but is too detailed or distracting for inclusion in the main body of the text.
3. Surveys, evaluation instruments, original data, complicated mathematical tables, new computer programs, computer printouts, and data collection forms can also be appropriately appended.
4. Do not exclude material that would be necessary for another researcher to replicate your work and that is not available elsewhere.
5. Copies of IRB approval letters
6. Copies of IACUC approval letters
7. Letters and e-mails that allow you to use and modify materials belonging to others. If appropriate,
A titled cover sheet may also be used for an appendix.

Oral Defense of the Dissertation

The candidate must defend his/her research and the conclusions and recommendations drawn from it, to his/her dissertation committee and the public at large. The dissertation oral defense will be scheduled only after the dissertation committee has agreed that the dissertation report is sufficiently complete with all major concerns and questions adequately addressed by the candidate. The purpose of the defense is to ensure that the candidate is thoroughly competent to articulate, explain, and defend any aspect of the dissertation. The defense is the final presentation and clarification process between the candidate and committee.

The candidate should be prepared to explain in detail the rationale for the methods utilized, the results and their interpretation, implications for practice and research, and recommendations. The candidate should be prepared to answer questions on the research and dissertation asked by your committee members. A unanimous vote of all committee members is required for the candidate to pass the dissertation defense for completion of the Ph.D. degree.

Note that the pre-defense version of the dissertation report is not final. The candidate will likely need to correct/add (by revisions) any concerns and/or other issues that may be addressed by the committee during defense. It is the role of the committee chair to continue to review all revisions (post defense) and give final approval before the dissertation report is ready for printing and binding. The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education will provide the candidate with printing/binding and submission instructions to the candidate after defense.

Course Registration and Grades
Continuous registration is required until completion of the dissertation. A PhD candidate who has completed the required minimum 60 credits but who has not completed the dissertation must continue to enroll in Dissertation Research.

During the dissertation phase students will be registered for dissertation research. The committee chair is responsible for entering a grade at the end of each term. The candidate is responsible for clearly and regularly communicating with the committee chair to provide updates on progress, challenges, concerns, etc. of the dissertation. It is recommended that committee chairs and the candidate have goals for each semester and a plan as to how to accomplish the goals. It is the ultimate responsibility of each candidate for their pace and progress of the dissertation. The dissertation committee chair should allow some flexibility (for life circumstances) in grading. Incompletes for dissertation credit courses are strongly discouraged. Failures will result in a referral to the Graduate Committee on Policies and Procedures; the committee may recommend suspension or even dismissal from the program.

**Leave of Absence**

Candidates will need an approved written leave of absence to waive the continuous registration policy. No faculty or committee members’ time will be used regarding dissertation advising, review, approval, or editing during an approved leave of absence. A leave of absence is granted on a semester-to-semester basis based on policies for excused absence.

**Important Time Limits**

Candidates must complete all doctoral program requirements within 7 years from starting the Ph.D. program. Candidates may petition for an extension of time for completing the dissertation only in the event of unforeseen extenuating circumstances, such as medical/health conditions, or other long term issues that may result in leave of absences from the program. Only one extension will be granted to candidates during their doctoral education program at Nova Southeastern University, College of Pharmacy. Granting of an extension over the time limit is no guarantee that students supported with tuition waivers and stipends will continue to receive financial assistance from NSU College of Pharmacy. Time limit extension requests must be submitted in writing to the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education. All appeals or waivers must be approved by the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education and the Dean.

**Dissertation Requirements and Deadlines**
The candidate must allow sufficient time for committee review (15 working days minimum) with each dissertation draft or revision and post defense revisions and review, the final pre-defense copy of the dissertation must be submitted to the chairperson and committee members at least 4 weeks before the desired defense date to allow sufficient time for review and approval by all committee members. The defense date can be scheduled only after all committee members agree that the candidate is ready to defend. The defense date must be coordinated with all members of the committee, and should not be scheduled during a university holiday.

**Graduation and Commencement**

Candidates may apply for commencement and hooding ceremony if they have successfully defended before the commencement application deadline. Graduation is held once a year in May, and commencement application deadline is typically in May or June. Candidates not meeting the commencement application deadline may apply for commencement the following year. Note that the degree conferral is a separate process from commencement. The Ph.D. degree will be conferred after all program requirements have been fulfilled and after the candidate has applied for the degree.

**Copy-editing**

The dissertation is considered completed (but not final) only after the candidate has: (1) successfully defended their dissertation, (2) received post-defense revised version approval by the committee chair, and (3) the dissertation has been signed by all committee members. The dissertation is considered final only after the copy-edited revisions have been successfully completed, approved by the chair, and it is then ready for printing and binding. The committee approved dissertation must be copy-edited by a program approved copy-editor prior to sending it to the binder. The committee is responsible for the content of the dissertation, but the copy-editor’s thorough line by line review assures that the technical details of the dissertation are accurate and consistent, and that the dissertation meets APA style guidelines, as well as the program’s format requirements. The candidate is responsible for the costs of copy-editing, and for a high quality dissertation report. Check with the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education if a copy-editor from HPD is available.

**Binding and Submissions**

After the candidate has passed the oral defense and made the required revisions for the completed dissertation, he/she will start routing the signature pages to all committee members for signatures. The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education will send the printed Certification signature pages through the college certification authorities and will mail or
present the signed pages back to the candidate (to be included for binding). The candidate will need to determine the total number of copies to be bound (consider copies beyond the required amount). Note that the entire dissertation, to include all signature pages, should be printed on the same high-quality, white, acid-free or acid-neutral paper (see Paper, Ink, and Printing section). Binding is to be done only through:

   **Anthony Lloret of Dobbs & Brodeur Inc. Bookbinders,**
   
   1030 East 14th St.
   Hialeah, FL 33010,
   305-885-5215

Students should request the NSU College of Pharmacy dissertation cover design and should inform the company that he/she is in the NSU Pharmacy program to ensure that their dissertation is bound with the correct cover format. Four bound copies are required and will go to:

1. NSU Pharmacy Program
2. HPD Library
3. The Dissertation Committee Chair
4. The Candidate

If the candidate plans to print and bound additional signed bound copies (gift copies), then more signature pages will need to be provided to the committee in advance of signatures. The student is responsible for all of these costs.

**Electronic submission through the ProQuest/UMI and NSU Works**

After the final dissertation has been approved by the committee chair for printing and binding, the student must submit an electronic (unsigned) copy of the dissertation to ProQuest/UMI at [http://dissertations.umi.com/hpdnova/](http://dissertations.umi.com/hpdnova/). You will need to create an account to start the submission process.

Your options will be to:

1. copyright your submission
2. have open (free of charge) access to your dissertation
3. purchase printed copies of your dissertation
This method allows your dissertation to be searchable and retrievable through the ProQuest Dissertations and Theses (PQDT) database (if through a library), or Dissertation Express at http://www.proquest.com/products_umi/dissertations/disexpress.shtml if not affiliated with a library.

An electronic copy of the dissertation must also be submitted to NSU Works- the NSU digital repository. Please see Forms and Examples for the author agreement form that must be filled out and returned to:

Todd Puccio  
Director of Technical Services / Librarian  
Nova Southeastern University  
Health Professions Division Library  
3200 S. University Drive  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33328  
(954)262-3114 or ext 2-3114
FORMS AND EXAMPLE PAGES
**College of Pharmacy Ph.D. Program**  
**Appointment of Dissertation Committee Form**

The following dissertation committee members have been selected by the Ph.D. candidate and agree to comprise the dissertation committee for ______________________________:

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Approved this __________ day of __________________ (month year) by the Committee Chairperson, Department Chairperson and the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education.

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<th>Department Chairperson</th>
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Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education
Proposal for Dissertation Research

< date final proposal is submitted>

<TENTATIVE TITLE OF DISSERTATION RESEARCH (ALL CAPS)>

by

<YOUR NAME (ALL CAPS)>

Candidate’s signature: _________________________________

This Proposal is approved by the following Dissertation Committee members:

Chair _____________________________________________

Member ____________________________________________

Member ____________________________________________

Member ____________________________________________

Outside member ________________________________

Approval Date: ______________________
Dear Dr. [Name]

This letter of agreement serves to confirm that you have agreed to serve as a member of the Dissertation Committee of [Name of student], a Ph.D. student at Nova Southeastern University College of Pharmacy Doctoral program.

You responsibilities will include the following:

- offer expertise in methodology or topic area
- give substantive and organizational recommendations for sections or areas of their expertise (or strong interest)
- participate in the dissertation proposal development and approval process
- participate in the dissertation report development and approval process
- read and approve the final dissertation draft
- participate in the committee’s decision-making process and all oral defenses (proposal and dissertation report)

Please sign below indicating your willingness to serve in this capacity, and return this letter via fax at (954) 262-2278. If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (954) 262-xxxx.

Sincerely,

Dissertation Committee Chairperson

__________________________________________  ________________
Signature                                      Date
Nova Southeastern University
Health Professions Division
College of Pharmacy
<Select either Sociobehavioral & Administrative Pharmacy or Pharmaceutical Sciences>
Fort Lauderdale, FL

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

Ph.D. Dissertation

This is to certify that the Ph.D. Dissertation of

<NNAME IN ALL CAPITAL LETTERS>

With a major in <major here> with a specialization in <specialization here> has been approved by the Examining Committee on <date> as satisfactory for the dissertation requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy degree

Examinining Committee:

_____________________________________________
Chairperson of Dissertation Committee

_____________________________________________
Dissertation Committee Member

_____________________________________________
Dissertation Committee Member

_____________________________________________
Dissertation Committee Member

_____________________________________________
Dissertation Committee Member

<leave blank, completed by chair>
Nova Southeastern University
Health Professions Division
College of Pharmacy
<Select either Sociobehavioral and Administrative Pharmacy or Pharmaceutical Sciences>
Fort Lauderdale, FL

CERTIFICATION

We hereby certify that this dissertation, submitted by <Student Name>, conforms to acceptable standards and is fully adequate in scope and quality to fulfill the dissertation requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy degree.

Approved:

______________________________________________
<Typed name and credentials>  Date
Department Chairperson

______________________________________________
<Typed name and credentials>  Date
Dean
Candidate’s Proposal and Report Certification of Authorship

Submitted to (Dissertation Committee Chair): ________________________________

Candidate's Name: _________________________________________________________

Title of Submission: _______________________________________________________

This submission is a (check one):

☐ Draft Proposal (for initial review)

☐ Final Formal Dissertation Proposal (for committee approval)

☐ Draft Dissertation Report (for initial review)

☐ Final Dissertation Report (for committee approval)

Certification of Authorship: I hereby certify that I am the author of this document and that any assistance I received in its preparation is fully acknowledged and disclosed in the document. I have also cited all sources from which I obtained data, ideas, or words that are copied directly or paraphrased in the document. Sources are properly credited according to accepted standards for professional publications. I also certify that this paper was prepared solely by me for this purpose.

Candidate's Signature: ____________________________________________________

Date of Submission: _________________
Sample First Page of Abstract

An Abstract of a Dissertation Submitted to Nova Southeastern University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

<DISSERTATION TITLE (ALL CAPS)>

by

<NAME (ALL CAPS)>
  <Month, Year>

Abstract Here

The abstract must be single-spaced, fewer than 350 words and should not exceed two pages
in length. Abstracts do not include citations.
On the second page of the Abstract, the author’s name should be spaced in from the right hand margin as a right-aligned side header.
SAMPLE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS PAGE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgements here

Acknowledgements should be in good taste and should not exceed one page in length.
NSU Works - Nova Southeastern University’s institutional repository
- Author Agreement –

Submission to NSU Works requires that authors enter into an author’s agreement regarding the deposit and use of the items being submitted by the author. This agreement reaffirms your desire to deposit your work in an openly accessible repository, and warrants the rights and permissions associated with that action.

This agreement grants NSU Works (“the Repository”) permission by the author of the submission for the deposit and use of the items being submitted. This agreement reaffirms the author’s desire to deposit his or her work in an openly accessible repository, and warrants the permissions to the Repository associated with that action.

By checking the box below, I direct that the work I am depositing (the “Work”) be stored and made available publicly in NSU Works, Nova Southeastern University’s open access repository, as it may evolve (the “Repository”).

Where I, the author, retain the right, I grant to Nova Southeastern University the non-exclusive right to preserve and reproduce the Work, and to display, distribute and make the Work available publicly without charge from the Repository, in any compatible format, so long as it does not alter the original contents of the Work. Where I, as author, do not retain the right, it remains with the publisher.

I understand that the administrator(s) of the Repository will take the necessary actions to obtain or verify copyright permissions of the Work to the best of his or her knowledge and ability before posting it to the Repository.

I represent and warrant that:

1. I have the right to deposit the Work in the Repository and to grant to Nova Southeastern University the rights stated in this agreement;

2. The Work does not infringe or violate any copyright or other rights of a publisher or any other party. Distribution of the Works from the Repository will not infringe or violate any such rights;

3. If the Work contains any material for which I do not hold copyright, and for which I have not obtained rights to distribute or make available, my use of that material is protected under the fair use doctrine;

4. If the Work contains any material for which I do not hold copyright, I have obtained all rights necessary to permit the Works, including that material, to be distributed and made available from the Repository;

5. If the Work is based upon work that has been sponsored or supported by an agency or organization other than Nova Southeastern University, any right to review or other such obligations of the sponsorship or support agreement have been fulfilled.

6. If I have specified an embargo date as allowed in the deposit process, I will inform the repository of the embargo date so that Nova Southeastern University can delay in making the work publicly available in the repository until that date has passed.

7. If the Work was prepared jointly with other authors, I am authorized to sign this Agreement on their behalf as well as my own.

8. I understand that once a Work is deposited in the repository, it may not be removed. If I have specified an embargo date as allowed in the deposit process, I understand that Nova Southeastern University will delay making the Work publicly available in the Repository until that date.

Name/Description of Work: ________________________________________________________________

Name of Author (PRINTED): ______________________________________________________________

Signature ________________________________________________________ Date: ______________