# Alliance Theological Seminary
# Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.)
# Dissertation Manual

## Spring 2021

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Nyack's Philosophy of Doctor of Ministry Research
Frank Chan, Ph.D.

The Final Doctoral Project (FDP) in the Nyack College / Alliance Theological Seminary Doctor of Ministry program is similar to the final projects in other D. Min. programs accredited by the Association of Theological Schools. Our accrediting body specifies that *"the project should demonstrate the candidate's ability to identify a specific theological topic in ministry, organize an effective research model, use appropriate resources, and evaluate the results."* In other words, if one is to become, so to speak, "a doctor of the church" and "a leader of leaders," one must be adept in what Richard Davies has called "the structured observation of ministry." A doctor of ministry asks significant unanswered questions in ministry and knows what needs to be done to answer those questions reliably; he or she explains to his ministry leadership community what still needs to be discovered in their field and how they should go about discovering it.

This means the D. Min candidate must learn the tools of ministry analysis, which will sharpen his or her skills in evaluating the quality or effectiveness of a given ministry. It also means that he or she must have the creative ability to re-conceptualize ministry for an ever-changing world and perhaps even create new models of analysis. Both skills are necessary to anyone who seeks to function as a resource person to the ministry leadership community. The FDP, therefore, is not merely the amassing of information in the student's familiar ministry context; it is the demonstration of skills that would be necessary for research and analysis in any other ministry context.

At the same time, the Nyack College / Alliance Theological Seminary FDP are distinct from final projects in other D. Min programs. Our institution's mission statement is to prepare men and women to "take the whole Gospel to the whole world." This means, first, there should be some connection to the "whole Gospel." Our hope is that our students will pursue research questions that touch upon some aspect of the experience God's salvation. It also means, second, that there is analysis of some social unit in the world which is being reached. Alliance Theological Seminary has sought throughout its history to balance the study of theology in its curriculum with the study of sociology and anthropology. Our hope is that our doctoral students will master and incorporate standard social science methods of research, analysis and interpretation into their final projects, so that their evaluations and judgments about their particular social units are credible and reliable.

Overview of the ATS D. Min Final Doctoral Project Dissertation
(revised May 2017)

1. Differences Between a Ph.D. Dissertation and a D. Min. Final Project Dissertation

| Area of Comparison | Ph.D. Dissertation | D. Min Dissertation |
|---|---|---|
| Length | 300+ pages | 100-120 pages |
| Committee | Chosen by chair, requiring experts in a variety of fields to cover all aspects of the dissertation | Consists of only three people: (a) first reader / advisor (b) second reader / examiner (c) D. Min.Director |
| Focus | Scholarly research: intent is to extend what is known; findings must be absolutely repeatable and therefore generalizable | Action research: intent is to discover information about a ministry problem important to the researcher; findings are repeatable only to a degree and need not be generalizable |
| Structure | Free-style, though involves a hypothesis supported by data | Specified Structure, requires a hypothesis supported by data |
| Level of Research required | Exhaustive | Broad and deep, but not exhaustive |
| Type of data for hypothesis | Can be archival (discovered by reading historical records), or empirical (discovered through instrumentation) | Empirical (discovered through instrumentation) , not archival (e.g. exegesis of biblical texts) |
| Level of Tolerance for Grammatical and Spelling Mistakes | No tolerance for mistakes | No tolerance for mistakes |

2. Difference Between ATS D. Min. dissertation and a term paper

a. ATS students are used to writing term papers for master's level courses. Normally this requires searching the library for source materials related to your topic, and creating some thesis statement in your paper, citing source materials to support your thesis. Theoretically one could start working on this pretty late in the semester and succeed at finishing it in a short amount of time.

b. An ATS D. Min. dissertation is NOT primarily the culmination of library research on a ministry-related topic, although it does require library research. It is actually the "write-up" of a process of "data collection" the doctoral student designs, regarding a ministry-related topic. Think back to your high school biology lab reports, or your high school chemistry lab reports—it would be impossible to write them WITHOUT actually going to the lab and running the experiment and recording the scientific data. The lab report simply reports scientific background information, the experiment procedure, the data findings and your conclusions. So also the ATS D.Min. dissertation—only the doctoral student designs and sets up the ministry "experiment." The lab is your ministry.

c. If you are not giving any thought to the prior ministry "experiment," you do not understand the nature of an ATS D. Min. dissertation and you will find it impossible to write. One cannot start working on this late in the program, without the "lab" work, and succeed at finishing it in a short amount of time.

d. A dissertation is not a reflection paper. The reader is not interested in how you experienced personal growth in your study or what things you didn't know before. You must write with the same voice as an encyclopedia article—with an authoritative voice.

e. A dissertation is not a sermon. Please do not use the "pastoral we" (e.g. "We all shuffle with sin, but we must remember we are unconditionally loved by God."). If you must express this thought write instead, "All Christians struggle with sin, but all Christians must remember they are unconditionally loved by God."

f. A dissertation is written for the general public. Your professor is not the only reader. You cannot assume, "Oh. Dr. Chan knows what I mean,' and fail to explain something a general reader would not understand. Anything a general reader would not understand must be explained.

g. A dissertation must look professional and not amateurish. Because it is on "public display," it represents, and gives an impression about, the quality of an ATS education. We must guard that impression.

3. Principles of Good Topic Selection

   a. The "Structured Observation of Ministry": topic must address a "ministry problem" and offers a plan to learn some information about this ministry problem, with a sound research design (show that you can do "ministry analysis").

   b. Allows the student to exhibit some ministry expertise: topic showcases an area of ministry the student is good at, or where he or she has seen success.

   c. Because the student is on route to being a leader among leaders, the topic allows the student to speak to a defined audience of Christian leaders, among whom the students is establishing some leadership and credibility as a resource person.

   d. Topic contributes significantly to the "literature" on the ministry problem, the ongoing discussion of the problem. It should also be conversant with the concerns of that literature.

4. When to Structure Research Around Research Questions (RQ's) and When to Structure Research Around Hypotheses (H's)?

   *a.* When a student knows the anticipated result, it is preferable to structure the dissertation, especially chapter 4, around a hypothesis. For example, if you are running an intervention (your IV, or independent variable), in hopes that it will enhance some quality within your participants (your DV, or dependent variable), it is preferred that you write a hypothesis like: *"H: Individuals in relationships who participate in the six-month Learn, Live, Hope Counseling Program (the IV) will report higher levels of relationship satisfaction (the DV) at the end of the program than at the beginning."* In this case, the student has a hunch the intervention would work, and can write the hypothesis in terms of an anticipated result.

   *b.* When a student does not have any suspicion the anticipated result, it is preferable to structure the dissertation around research questions. Using the same example above, if the student wants to know what aspects of the intervention were most helpful, he might structure a portion of the research this way: *RQ1*: *"Which element of the*

*Learn, Live, Hope program did participants report as being most helpful to them in enhancing their relationship satisfaction?"* Or even *RQ2: In what specific ways did the coaching element of the Learn, Live, Hope program enhance the participants sense of relationship satisfaction?"*

5. Principles of sound hypothesis formulation:

    a. Good hypotheses make an assertion about a specific population (for whom your participants are a representative sample)

    b. Good hypotheses make an assertion about variables (measurable characteristics or qualities of the population). Often it is the relationship between two variables.

    c. Good hypotheses have terms that are easily definable, especially by your generated data.

    d. Often a hypothesis can be subdivided into smaller sub-hypotheses or research questions.

       For example, if the overall Hypothesis is: "Participants who undergo the evangelism training will be evangelism-ready," then two Sub-hypotheses could be H1: "Participants will demonstrate the ability to start a conversation with strangers." H2: "Participants will demonstrate the ability to present the basic facts of the gospel." Research questions might be structured this way: RQ1: "Did participants demonstrate the ability to start a conversation with strangers?" and RQ2: Did participants demonstrate the ability to present the basic facts of the gospel?"

6. Some examples of recent projects and hypotheses:

| Student | Project Title | Hypothesis / Hypotheses | Type of Data / Instrument(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Michael Plunket (Cohort 101, graduated May 2014) | Assessing the College of Prayer International's Ministry in Uganda 2007-2009 and Its Long-Term Effects | H1: Ugandan members of Parliament who participated in the College of Prayer Uganda's prayer breakfast and follow-up mentoring (2007-09) believe the effects of this ministry's extraordinary spiritual impact continue to the present day. | Qualitative data only: 24 Interviews |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Eva Geddes (Cohort 102, graduated May 2014) | SHAPING AND SUSTAINING A COMMUNITY IN COVENANT: RETENTION OF SALVATION ARMY OFFICERS IN THE U.S.A. EASTERN TERRITORY | Hypothesis: There is a negative correlation between past and present experiences of community shared with fellow Salvation Army officers and future expectations of resignation from officership. That is, healthy community encourages retention; deficiency in community exacerbates attrition. | Mixed Methods: Survey of 527 current officers and 310 former officers and Interviews with 8 current officers. |
| Ronald Morrison (Cohort 101, graduated May 2014) | Utilizing Life Coaching to Transform Aspiring Church Leaders in Small, Urban Churches. Directing Them Toward Ministry Impact in Needy Communities in the Greater Cleveland Area | Hypothesis Three: The HABC coaching program will be successful in increasing participation in activities that connect with the community around HABC for the eight participants. | Researcher Observations Using a Predefined Checklist of Coaching Benchmarks |
| Roy Pembroke (Cohort 101, graduated May 2014) | Racism in the Church: Perceptions of Guyanese Pastors | H1: Guyanese Church Leaders have a High Perception of Racism in Society and in the Church<br>H2: The Gap Between Guyanese Church Leaders Sense of Moral Imperative to Combat Racism and Their Sense of the Church's Compliance in Combating Racism is Wide. | Quantitative Data Only: Survey of 159 pastors |

7. Two Models for Projects:

    a. Model 1: Descriptive research. Project discovers information that describes the state of things in the world and does not claim to do anything more than this (e.g. Pembroke, Geddes). The findings, however, offer implications for an intervention.

    b. Model 2: Experimental research. Project introduces some intervention into the ministry problem situation and measures the resulting outcomes, in the hope that the state of things in the world have improved (e.g. Morrison, Plunket)

8. Principles of Sound Advisor Selection:

    a. Advisors must have written a dissertation of some sort, whether D. Min or Ph.D.

    b. It is preferred, but not required, that advisors have some expertise in the subject area. The stature of the advisor is a plus to the dissertation, as he or she “signs off” on the signature page.

    c. The best advisors have a personal relationship with the D. Min. Student. Past professors with whom the student had an extraordinarily good relationship and mentors, or even people with doctorates who go to your church, work much better than strangers and acquaintances. The lack of a personal relationship often means the advisor takes a less active role. It helps if he or she has some “stake” in the student finishing, because he or she loves or has a friendship commitment to the student.

    d. The doctoral student is asked to identify and approach their first reader / advisor. The dissertation coordinator will follow up by sending a thank you letter, a contract and forms that enable ATS to pay compensation (four $300 payments or $1200 total).

    e. If the doctoral student cannot find a suitable advisor/ first reader, the dissertation coordinator will often serve as first reader, but this is not an ideal situation.

9. First Reader /Advisor Duties:

    a. Advise on the formulation of the research method, in particular, the wording of the hypothesis, the choosing of an instrument, the arrangement for the participant pool, the analysis of the data (the IRB approval application)

    b. Assist the Coordinator in the governance of the dissertation during the data collection and writing stage.

    c. Go line by line over chapter drafts. Offer feedback to the student, primarily through track changes and comments in a WORD document, on chapter drafts. The main need is for quality control. Comments on professionalism in presentation are especially appreciated. Chapter 1 (ministry problem), chapter 2 (literature review), chapter 3 (method), chapter 4 (findings) and chapter 5 (conclusions).

    d. Assist student with re-writes and revisions if defense draft does not pass inspection.

    e. Attend oral defense and sign the approval signature page

10. The Topic Approval Process

    a. In DML 871, Seminar 1, The Proposal, the main assignment is an 8-10 page prospectus (format laid out in Sensing textbook, p. 11-12). Dr. Chan will communicate with the student if the topic is acceptable. (This topic need not correspond with what the student proposed at the time of application or during the Orientation Seminar DML 800)

    b. The student uses the prospectus to secure the agreement of an advisor to take on the project. The proposed advisor should receive and sign a contract with the D. Min. office.

    c. In DML 872, Seminar 2, Instrumentation and Research Design, the student fills out a 26 question form for the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval, which meets approximately once a month. Upon IRB approval, the student's topic is considered "approved." This in essence finalizes the "research protocol."

11. Principles of Sound Theological/ Theoretical Framing (chapter 1)

    a. The ATS D. Min Dissertation asks the student to show advanced proficiency in exegetical or theological analysis. This is demonstrated in the "foundational knowledge" in the "theological / theoretical foundations" section of chapter 1. The student can choose whether to make this one section or two.

    b. The "theological foundations" section merely establishes the theological convictions undergirding the project. For example, if the project is about enhancing evangelistic techniques, the theological / theoretical foundation section in chapter 1 should offer a biblical (Scripture texts) and theological basis (influential theological writers and their books) for the church engaging in evangelism. And if the technique for your project is a well-established theoretical idea, let's say, seeker sensitive church services, then declare that your project relies on, and assumes, the theory of seeker sensitive evangelism (and discuss Bill Hybels and the Willowcreek philosophy).

       Another example: If the project is about racial reconciliation, the student should explain in the "theological foundations" section why racism is considered by Christians to be immoral.

    c. Unlike other D. Min. dissertations at other schools where this section is an entire chapter, at ATS, this section need not be more than five to ten pages, depending on the project. The hypothesis in an ATS dissertation will never be an argument from the Bible, so theological analysis is usually tangential, not central, to the dissertation. But it is still to be considered part of the "argument" of the dissertation. If the dissertation is about techniques to increase church attendance beyond the "200 barrier," you should answer for the reader, *"Why should churches be over 200 in attendance?"*

    d. The "theoretical foundations" section should give the theory undergirding your instrument and how the variable you are seeking to measure is understood. For example, if you are writing on "breakfast satisfaction," then tell the reader your study's method follows the scholar who said "Breakfast satisfaction is a sum of attitudes about the food's taste, price and convenience." Your instrument (chapter 3) should therefore measure for these three things. Your data presentation (chapter

4) should therefore offer data on these three things. But both the instrument and the data presentation are grounded in the theory of how to think about and measure breakfast satisfaction, which you present in this section in chapter 1.

e. Often the dissertation is the "testing" of a current theory for your particular population. If it is, the "theory" you are "testing" is your theoretical foundation.

f. Historical surveys of your topic should appear in your "foundational knowledge" section, not your literature review.

g. There is often some connection between this section and the literature review of chapter 2. Often the student must decide whether foundational books and articles should be in the foundational knowledge" section in chapter 1 or the literature review in chapter 2. Here are some guideline thoughts:

   1) If your dissertation DEPENDS upon a concept that is defined in the literature by a key thinker/ theorist, you should discuss that thinker / theorist in the "Theoretical Foundations" section in chapter 1, instead of in the Literature Review in chapter 2. For example, if your dissertation is about applying Gert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions to compare first generation and second generation Vietnamese-Americans, you should discuss Hofstede's cultural dimensions in chapter 1. not chapter 2. You can discuss reactions and critics to Hofstede in chapter 2.

   2) If your dependent variable involves a "construct" breaking down into its component parts—its sub constructs, and analyzing interview comments (qualitative data) to search for the sub constructs, then you should discuss the work that proposes the sub constructs in chapter 1, not chapter 2. For example, if your dissertation is about measuring 'resistance to change" and you believe "resistance to change is detectable by searching for "Routine-Seeking," "Cognitive Rigidity," "Emotional Reaction" to change, and "Short Term Focus" (four sub constructs to 'resistance to change"). then you should discuss Shaul Oreg, the scholar who defined "resistance to change' in this way in chapter 1, not chapter 2. Discuss reactions and critics to Oreg in chapter 2.

12. Principles of Sound Literature Review (chapter 2)

   a. The student should seek to gather anywhere between 75 and 100 sources total for the entire dissertation, and perhaps between 30 and 40 for the literature review.

      Seek a balance between books and articles

      Seek a balance between authors who agree with you and who disagree with you.

      Seek a balance between Christians and non-Christians.

      Go beyond the authors you were required to read in the D. Min. courses.

   b. The style needs to be a review of literature—chapter 2 is not meant to resemble a research paper. The student in this chapter does not need to "teach anything" (and use the literature as documentation) about the subject matter to the reader. Sentences should highlight the existence of important works and their connection to the project. For example, if the project concerns measuring the perception of racism, "Daniel Hay's 2003 excellent biblical theology of race (footnote here) does not discuss specifically measuring the perception of racism." On the other hand, if your project is on the practice of lectio divina, you could write, "Richard Foster's classic 2002 work Celebration of Discipline (footnote here) has a short section on the practice of lectio divina, but does not address it as positively as the present study does." And that can be it --move on to the next work.

   c. As an example, if the student wishes to write a paragraph like the following in chapter 2:

Posttraumatic stress disorder is a popular term used in the law enforcement profession. One author argues that "to meet the diagnostic of PTSD, one has to be exposed to actual or threatened death; serious injury; sexual violence either directly or witness it occurring to another, learn about it having occurred to a close friend or loved one; and/or experience repeated exposure to aversive details of the traumatic events as a first responder."6 However, stress is a continuous element of persons that serve in law enforcement. Researchers are continuously affirming such details in their writing.

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[6] Conn, Stephanie M. Increasing Resilience in Police and Emergency Personnel: Strengthening Your Mental Armor. 2018.

The style above is that of a research paper on PTSD in law enforcement, not a literature review on the spiritual needs of law enforcement officers, which is what the student's project is about. The same entry should be re-written is a manner similar to the following:

Stephanie Conn's 2018 book6, is an important work in the study of the spiritual needs of law enforcement officers. Her particular focus is on the occurrence of PTSD in law enforcement. Her definition of PTSD alerts us to the circumstances that give rise to stress among law enforcement officers: "to meet the diagnostic of PTSD, one has to be exposed to actual or threatened death; serious injury; sexual violence either directly or witness it occurring to another, learn about it having occurred to a close friend or loved one; and/or experience repeated exposure to aversive details of the traumatic events as a first responder."7 The spiritual care of law enforcement officers must take into account this element of their daily lives.

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[6] Conn, Stephanie M. Increasing Resilience in Police and Emergency Personnel: Strengthening Your Mental Armor. 2018.

7Ibid., p.______.

d. The literature review must present categories of literature being reviewed, each with its own subheading. The categories will be dependent somewhat upon the topic chosen.

For example, if the dissertation topic is "Evaluating the Use of Art Therapy to Foster Healing From Sexual Abuse Among Women on a Navajo Reservation," then some possible subheadings could be (others are possible):

--Literature Related to the Wounds of Sexual Abuse in General
--Literature Related to Healing the Wounds of Sexual Abuse
--Literature Related to Sexual Abuse Among Navajo Women
--Literature Related to Art Therapy

d. The student must decide what works should re-discussed in the chapter 2 literature review and what works should be discussed in the following other portions of the dissertation that often require grounding in current literature:

—Chapter 1: Community Context

—Chapter 1: Ministry Context

—Chapter 1: Statement of the Ministry Problem

—Chapter 1: Theoretical Foundations

—Chapter 1: Theological Foundations

—Chapter 3: Instrumentation

It is also possible to discuss key sources in two places in the dissertation.

13. Principles of Sound Participant Selection

    a. The student should begin by thinking of the social unit that comprises his or her target ministry population. For example, Uzbek migrant workers in Moscow. Let's say this population is 5 million people. Conceivably, a student should choose a small sampling of these 5 million, let's say 50 or so. Then these 50 should be a representative sample of the 5 million. Whatever one concludes about these 50, the hope is these conclusions are applicable

    b. Sufficient Pool Size: although sample pool is always to be considered in comparison to the size of the entire ministry target group population, a good minimum for a survey is 40. A good minimum for a set of interviews is 20

c. Participants are good representatives of the ministry target group population. There should be a “participants: characteristics” section in chapter 3. A summary chart is preferred, with participant (identified by participant number) in rows and characteristics listed in columns.

d. Participant selection must be free from researcher bias. There should be a “Participants: Recruitment and Selection” section in chapter 3. Random selection, where the researcher has no say or control over selection, is free of researcher bias.

e. The recruitment process must be disclosed. Sometimes in recruiting participants, the researcher may pre-dispose the participants toward providing a pre-conceived outcome. This pre-disposing must be minimized.

f. If there is an intervention, participants are all willing to comply to a specified minimum level of compliance (there must be a standardization of treatment).

g. When describing participants in the dissertation, please keep their identities anonymous. This means their identities are not known to the reader. But this does not mean their identities are unknown to you. As the researcher it is advisable that you know which participant said what. In previous instances, the student researcher has mistakenly thought participants should be unknown to him—and the student researcher was unable to make report accurate findings because he couldn’t reconstruct who said what. Do not make this mistake.

14. Principles of Sound Interventions for Model 2 Projects—the introduction of an independent variable into an “experiment group” (n = the number of participants)

    a. The intervention is a “treatment” of the ministry “problem.” Your project seeks to “test” the treatment to see if it brings desirable results.

    b. Be sure the treatment is standardized, that is there is protocol that all participants in the experiment group agree to follow.

    c. For example, if the treatment is a six-week Bible Study group on Wednesday nights and meeting with a mentor, the standardization of treatment would be something like, "attending (being physically present) at the Bible study for at least five of the six weeks" and meeting with the mentor for at least an hour at least five of the six weeks. This would mean if someone attended only four sessions or met with the mentor for half an hour, he or she would be disqualified as a participant in your experiment.

d. Also, if you the researcher conducts an intervention with one part of the participant pool (let's say, lead a Bible study) and a co-pastor conducts the same intervention with another part of the participant pool, make sure you and the co-pastor follow the same basic procedure, so that the treatment is standardized. If not, the Bible Study leader would be an unaccounted factor in the results.

e. You must also show compliance—in the above example, an attendance record at the Bible study or a log of mentoring hours would do it.

f. Should you choose to have a "control group," the control group is not properly the object of study. They exist only for comparison to the experimental group. Try not to not fashion a hypothesis around the control group.

15. Principles of Sound Instrumentation Selection and Research Design (chapter 3)

    a. There are two main instruments in social science research: survey / questionnaires, which often can be "scored" *quantitatively*, and interviews, which are described in proposals and IRB forms by "interview scripts" (to which responses are reported *qualitatively)*.

    b. In general, existing surveys that have been used in other studies are preferred over creating one's own survey, if one exists and is applicable.

    c. In general, a "mixed methods" approach (both a quantitative component and a qualitative component) is preferred over a single approach.

    d. Instruments must be double-checked to ensure precision, so that response data can be used to establish a hypothesis statement easily.

e. If the project requires a pre-survey and a post-survey, the student must ensure that a participant's responses on a pre-survey can be paired with the same participant's responses on the post-survey. This means avoiding "surveymonkey.com" or any other system that merely gives the aggregate responses and does not allow the student to identify an individual participant.

f. If the project requires demographic information (age, gender, etc.), the student must ensure that a participant's response on, say, a gender question (call it Q1) can be connected to that same participant's response on the subject (call it Q5). You'll have to be able to isolate only the male responses to Q5. Recording each individual's responses to all questions on an excel sheet will do this. But simply receiving surveymonkey.com's summary of the aggregate data (how many males total) will not do this.

g. Audio recordings of interviews should be transcribed. Many schools have done away with the requirement because audio files are so easy to use nowadays. We still require it because it is useful in the event there is weak interview data and either the advisor or the D. Min. office needs to make a determination about the permissibility of the data.

16. Principles of Sound Survey/Questionnaire Design, For Quantitative Studies (chapter 3)

a. The Survey /Questionnaire should measure for a specific variable (.e.g spiritual well-being) important to your study. It should present a series or numbered statements (Q1, Q2, etc.) that capture the variable it seeks to measure.

For example, "I feel that life is a positive experience," measures spiritual well- being. You should offer a Likert scale of responses for the participant: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Disagree. Agreement should be scored at the high part of the scale and disagreement should be at the low part. SD =1, D=2, N= 3, A= 4, SA =5. On occasion you should have a statement that represents low spiritual well being (e.g. "I feel unsettled about my future"), which should be reverse-coded: SD = 5, D= 4, N =3, A = 2, SA = 1. When you tally the responses, you have a numerical "spiritual well-being" score.

b. Each question should inquire about one thing only. Never combine inquiry into two things in one question.

c. If your instrument is meant to measure an attribute or outcome as a result of some intervention, DO NOT MENTION the intervention in the questionnaire. This would be clear researcher bias. DO NOT inquire about the participants attitude toward the intervention in your questionnaire. This would also be researcher bias. Simply inquire about the variable only.

d. If you inquire about basic demographic (e.g. gender, age, race), you MUST run analyses of the groups you inquire about.

e. Other basic characteristics that you believe that can influence he outcome (e.g. years as a Christian, years of previous therapy. etc.) can be inquire about as a demographic category.

f. If the variable can be conceived as comprising components, you can create "subscores." For example, spiritual well-being is made up of religious well-being (satisfaction with one's relationship with God) and existential well being (satisfaction with life in general). You can arrange the statements so that subscores can be easily calculated. For example, you can make odd numbered statements religious well being statements and even numbered statements existential well being. Your analysis is always enhanced with attention to subscores.

g. The instrument should be grounded in the literature on your variable.

In the Chapter 3, instrument section, you should describe your instrument (e.g. its scoring system—how points are awarded, range of possible scores) and justify it at the same time, by citing sources in your scholarly literature that support what you claim it is trying to do. For example, suppose you are trying to measure "satisfaction with one's breakfast." The variable "satisfaction" can be conceived as comprising a number of constructs: 1) the participant liked the taste 2) the participant liked the price 3) the participant liked the convenience of getting it. If your instrument has three sections, one for each construct, cite in a footnote some author (some expert on marketing) who says "satisfaction with breakfast should measure for taste, price and convenience."

Also, you might have to subdivide, or differentiate, the constructs as well. Suppose by "taste" you must determine whether the participant liked (1.1) the flavor and (1.2) the temperature of the breakfast. Again, cite in a footnote the expert who says "taste satisfaction must measure for both flavor and temperature." Again, suppose by "price" you must determine whether the participant thought the price was (2.1) affordable given his budget and (2.2) a fitting price for the value of the meal and (2.3) favorably priced in comparison to competing prices from other sellers. Cite this decision in footnote: what expert says price satisfaction must measure for whether the consumer thinks the price is affordable, fitting and competitive?

You must be careful about how decisions about the differentiation of constructs affect the scoring of your instrument. If you choose to use two questions for taste, three questions for price and one question for convenience, then your six question breakfast satisfaction survey would be skewed toward price: one half of the questions on price (3 out of 6), one third of the questions on taste (2 out of 6 ) and one sixth on convenience (1 out of 6). If you don't want the differing weights, adjust the number of questions or the points awarded per question.

h. When you collect all your survey / questionnaire sheets, record all the responses in an excel file. List the participants as rows (participant #1, participant #2, etc.). Make the questions the columns. Put in the column headings Q1, Q2, Q3, etc. Then enter all the scored values (1's, 2's, 3's, 4's and 5's). You can have excel calculate totals and averages for you. You can also have excel "sort" for you.

i. For projects that have large amounts of data (hundreds or thousands of participants), you should look into using SSPS software intend of Excel.

17. Principles of Sound Interview Data Coding, for Qualitative Studies (chapter 3)

a. A coding system for qualitative data (words in a transcript), is a set of instructions, by which anyone who has the transcript in front of him can come to the same conclusions as you the researcher.

b. If you want to read more about coding systems please consult:

1) Johnny Saldana, The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers (SAGE publications, 2009)

2) Uwe Flick, An Introduction to Qualitative Research (SAGE Publications,

2006)

c. Otherwise. The instructions in the course textbooks is very good. See

1) Kjell Erik Rudestam and Rae R. Newton, *Surviving Your Dissertation, 3rd ed.* "Presenting the Results of Qualitative Research." *P. 177-202.*

See especially the seven steps on p. 183.

2) Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, p. 102-113 and 120-124

If you have hundreds of pages of transcripts you might want to consider a software program called nVivo to do the analysis for you. Here is a YouTube video that describes it:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7bLZ7fqSEEc

d. Describe your coding system in chapter 3 in a section entitled "Data Analysis." Try to break down your analysis into its component stages. Here your lit review should dictate some of the broad categories by which categorize comments.

Tell the reader if you are pursuing a "top-down" strategy (where you dictate the categories by which you categorize comments, or a "bottom-up" strategy (where you allow the categories to emerge from the data itself.

If your research interest was some attitude change in your participants, you might want to have Stage 1 to be the identification and categorization of comments that are

AFFECTIVE (emotion) statements: participant describes an emotional reaction to the attitude object

BEHAVIORAL (behavior) statements: participants describes a behavioral reaction to the attitude object

COGNITIVE (belief) statements: participant describes what he or she believes about the attitude object

Then in Stage 2, you should look for sub-categories in each of the three.

Let's say (+) and (-), for positive emotions and negative emotions.

Then in Stage 3, you can further sub-categorize the (+) and the (-) comments, and so on.

e. Try to be as objective as possible. Remember a reader with just the transcript and your coding instructions should come to the same conclusions as you.

If your participant pool is twenty, make sure you have like comments from at least a majority of them (eleven, more is even better) before you make summary conclusions about the attitude of the entire group. Moderate your conclusions if there are opposite comments from the minority.

Also, carefully weigh the intensity of the comments. Stronger comments are different than milder comments.

18. Principles of Sound Data Reporting (chapter 4)

    a. In general, each heading in chapter 4 should be a hypothesis or sub-hypothesis you are trying to demonstrate or a research question you are trying to answer (see point 3 above). This way it is clear to the reader what the data in that section "argues" for.

    b. In the case of quantitative data (scores), a summary chart is required. Often this chart will list participant (identified by participant number) in rows and scores in columns. If there are pre-scores compared to post-scores, present these in two columns side by side.

    c. In the case of qualitative data (words), a summary chart is preferred. Often this chart will list participant (identified by participant number) in rows and your "coding" categories of the interview data in at the top of the columns. In these columns, for each participant, you can either type the "keywords" he or she used in the interview, or an "x" denoting that he or she said something that "fits" that category. In the latter case, the reader is then looking for a chart with many "x's." It is also preferred after the summary chart that you write a paragraph that contains good direct quotes that help establish the hypothesis. If you use a direct quote from a given participant, then type a capital "X" in the summary chart for that participant.

19. Principles of Sound Conclusions (chapter 5)

a. Conclusions in chapter 5 should be based on findings in chapter 4. Citations to data results, with page number references, in chapter 4, are encouraged.

b. Recommendations should be stated succinctly and numbered. It is easiest to organize the recommendations according to the groups to which they are directed:

For example, if your project is on soul care in the First Baptist Church of Flushing, then you can have a) Recommendations to the Board of Flushing First Baptist b) Recommendations to any church seeking ministry in Flushing (maybe: "be attentive to emotional healing needs in this neighborhood") , c) Recommendations to any church seeking to offer soul care ministry (maybe: "be attentive to these common emotional wounds we discovered"), d) Recommendations to the church at large (maybe: "allocate resources to soul care").

c. Some thought should be given to "Implications." In this section, the student should offer a preliminary answer to the question, *"What am I going to do with this research?"* In what other venues can you disseminate this information? Teaching seminars? Pamphlets? Webpages?

20. Principles of a Sound Final Draft (Defense-Ready Copy)

   a. The draft must be complete and not appear to be "under construction." If you created a footnote, but left to later the task of tracking down bibliographical information for it, make sure you fill in the empty footnote before submitting the draft. If the draft appears unfinished, it will not pass initial inspection and will be sent back immediately.

   b. The draft must have not only chapters 1-5, but also the "front matter" (title page, approval page, abstract, table of contents, list of illustrations, list of abbreviations, acknowledgements, etc.) and "back matter" (appendices and works cited). See the Appendix in Turabian's *Manual* for formatting and sample pages.

   c. All instruments used must be included in the appendix. All curricula you used must be summarized in the appendix.

d. Be sure your headings for chapters, sections and subsections comply stylistically with Turabian's specifications. See Kate A. Turbian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers, Seventh Edition* (Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 2003), 397=399.

e. Since most students write chapters at different times, the style can easily be inconsistent. Many students write chapter 1 with their data collection in the future and write chapter 1 in the future tense. Then they proceed to write chapters 3,4 and 5 after their data collection has already happened and write those chapters in the past tense. When they string together all five chapters for the final draft, they must go back and change the tense of chapter 1 to the past tense. Format for first level subheadings (centered, boldface), second-level subheadings (centered, non-boldface), and third-level subheadings (left-justified, italics), should be consistent across all five chapters.

f. Remove material that does not contribute to your hypothesis or hypotheses—either remove it or move it to an appendix. Think of the entire dissertation as an attempt to verify your hypothesis or hypotheses.

g. Remember that you are writing as a researcher. You must speak with an objective, unbiased tone. Refer to yourself in the third person. Although you are arguing for a point (your hypothesis), resist the temptation to overstate your case, or to argue beyond your facts. Refrain from flowery , vague language, in favor of straightforward, precise language. Refrain from derogatory language, or exaggerated language. Refrain from hasty generalizations. Refrain from unwarranted claims.

h. A defense ready draft NEED NOT BE FREE of spelling and grammatical errors. There is always time to send the manuscript to an editor AFTER THE DEFENSE. However, there must be clarity of argument. There must be a clear hypothesis and the data presented must clearly support it.

21. Inspection of a Final Draft for Defense Readiness (often two months before graduation)

a. The D. Min office, either the Coordinator, or someone else authorized by the Coordinator (often the Director of the D. Min.) will do an "inspection" of the final draft.

b. If the inspector is asked to render a decision: is the draft "defense ready or not?" "Will it most likely pass an oral defense?" (with the dissertation defense rubric in mind)

- If the answer is "yes," the Coordinator will schedule the oral defense.

- If the answer is "no." the inspector is asked to make a second decision: are the problems with the dissertation fixable within a short period of time (within a week)?

  --if they are fixable in a short period of time, the Coordinator (with the help of the inspector) will email the student a list of required items to fix to render the manuscript defense-ready

  --if the problems are not fixable in a short period of time, the Coordinator will inform the student that graduation must be postponed.

22. The Second Reader

a. The Second Reader is usually not secured until the final draft has been inspected and deemed defense ready. The Second Reader is usually a member of the Nyack faculty (internal)—which is a useful control, as the first reader is often a non-member of the Nyack faculty (external).

b. The Second Reader duties:

1) After receiving the defense copy, the second reader must read through the draft, and prepare a list of cross-examination questions to be delivered at the oral defense. These questions address the dissertation's validity and general quality.

2) Participate in the Deliberation Portion of the Oral Defense and contribute to the joint verdict.

3) In the event of a conditional pass, on some occasions, provide a list of changes necessary to be made to the defense copy.

4) If the verdict is pass, sign the approval sheet. The second reader is part of the three-person committee that serves as the governing authority on the dissertation.

23. Principles of a Sound Oral Defense

In general, this is the venue in which you convince your three-person committee that you are “doctoral material.” Show that you can stand and speak publicly with expertise and credibility on a ministry subject. Create the impression that you would be a valuable resource person to the church at large.

It is for this reason that the student must do his or her oral defense in person (on site at ATS—first and second readers may Skype in). If circumstances do not permit the student from coming to ATS, he or she may receive special permission to do the oral defense by Skype.

a. 20 minute PowerPoint Summary:

1) Powerpoints slides must be minimalist in content: Please have only summary phrases that prompt your comments and do not have full sentences that you read off the slide. Remember, you are displaying your expertise and ability to do public speaking. Reading off a manuscript is unacceptable. Speak to the audience, making eye contact.

2) Practice your presentation at home before the defense and time yourself so that you do not go over 20 minutes.

3) You are the subject of observation as much as the Powerpoint slides. You are presenting yourself as a “doctor of the church.”

b. 30-minute Cross-examination

1) You do not need to have a full answer to every objection. Convince the second reader that you had at least considered the issue he or she is raising. After the defense, the readers may recommend a way for you to address the objection in your post-defense draft.

c. The Deliberation, Evaluation of the Student’s Responses

1) Students should refrain from ad hominem responses in their defense—do not tell the readers, the dissertation is acceptable because the IRB committee considered it acceptable, or because other professors considered it acceptable.

2) If there are features in the dissertation that are not changeable (flaws in the instrument, or in the data collection), the student should acknowledge the flaw, describe what he or she could have done differently if he or she could, and propose an additional comment to the "limitations" section.

d. The Meaning of the possible Verdicts from Three Readers:

1) Oral Defense Verdict

a) Pass: Student meets requirement

b) Fail: Student must repeat the oral defense within two weeks

2) Written Dissertation Verdict

a) Fail (Not Yet Pass): Student must resubmit dissertation and is not cleared to graduate. This should be interpreted as "not pass YET."

b) Unconditional Pass: Dissertation is considered publishable on ProQuest, as is. Student meets requirements and is cleared to graduate.

c) Conditional Pass: Student meets requirements and is cleared to graduate. The substance of the dissertation is considered publishable on ProQuest, but there are some modifications required by the three readers before publishing. Student must submit a post-defense revision.

24. Governance of, and Decision Making / Approvals for, a Given Dissertation:

   a. **Proposal Phase** – General Idea Approval (DML 871): <u>The Coordinator is the Sole Supervisor at this point</u>. He decides if a dissertation topic is a workable idea or whether the student should be advised to pursue another idea.

   b. **IRB Phase—Research Protocol and Methodology Approval** (DML 872): <u>Supervision is shared by the Coordinator and the First Reader/ Advisor</u>. The research protocol is recorded in the IRB approval application and the IRB, which meets once a month, is invested with the authority to approve, disapprove, or revise, the research method.

c. **Data Collection and Writing Phase**: Supervision continues to be shared by the Coordinator and the First Reader. A project can be stopped or altered by either one. Ultimate supervision falls to the Director of the D. Min, who may be called upon to help make a decision.

d. **Inspection of Defense Draft**: Responsibility for this falls primarily to the Coordinator, who has the authority to delegate the task of inspection to others, especially to the Director. The inspector decides if (a) a draft is defense = ready and (b) an oral defense should proceed. This decision is essentially a decision about whether the student can graduate at the target date.

e. **Oral Defense**: The verdict on the defense draft falls to a three person committee, who sign the approval page: (a) the first reader/ advisor (b) the second reader /examiner (c) the Director of the D. Min. program. The Coordinator will support the decision of this committee.

f. **Post-Defense Copy (or Institutional Copy);** Responsibility for this falls primarily to the Coordinator, though aspects of it he may delegate to the oral defense committee.

25. The timing and grading of "Dissertation" Doctoral Courses

The ATS D. Min. program assigns eight "courses" to dissertation writing. All are pass/fail in grading.

| Module / Year in Program | Course /Core Task | Main Resources |
|---|---|---|
| Module 1 = Year 1, First semester | No course: Learn what a dissertation is | 1) D. Min. dissertation manual<br>2) Carol Roberts, *The Dissertation Journey*, ch 2: What Exactly is a Dissertation? |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Module 2 = Year 1 Second Semester | **DML 871, Seminar 1, Writing the Proposal (1 cr)**:<br>1) Define variables to measure for your project<br>2) Determine the best method to measure your variables: quantitative or qualitative or both?<br>3) Do preliminary reading on your topic | 1) Sample Proposal, by Joel Smith<br>2) Rudestam and Newton, *Surviving Your Dissertation*, ch 2: Selecting a Suitable Topic and ch 3: Methods of Inquiry:<br>3) Carol Roberts, *The Dissertation Journey*, ch 9: Reviewing the Literature<br>4) Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, ch 1: Beginnings |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Module 3 = Year 2, First semester | **DML 872, Seminar 2, Instrumentation and Research Design** (1 cr) and **DML 994, Stage 1 (1 cr)**<br><br>1) Secure first reader<br>2) Determine the instruments for your project, whether a scale (quantitative) or an interview script (qualitative)<br>3) If quantitative data, determine which of the three statistical tests to use<br>4) If qualitative data, determine the constructs that comprise the variable you are seeking to measure<br>5) Do the required training on research on human participants (online)<br>6) Begin the writing process = write a rough draft of your first chapter—usually chapter 1 (Introduction) | 1) Sample IRB Form, by Joel Smith<br><br>2) YouTube videos:<br><br>a) Paired T-test<br>b) Stats cast: What is a t-test?<br>c) Simple explanation of Chi-Squared<br>d) The Correlation Coefficient<br>e) Qualitative Analysis of Interview Data<br>f) I've got Interview Data: What Next?<br><br>3) Three websites:<br><br>a) Protecting Human Research Participants<br>b) Statistic Helps for Students<br>c) Social Science Statistics Calculator<br><br>4) Dissertation Template |
| Module 4-= Year 2, Second Semester | **DML 995, Stage 2**<br>1) Write rough drafts of chapters 2 (Literature Review)-3 (Methodology) | 1) Sample Dissertation by Joel Smith<br>2) Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers, 7th edition |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Module 5 = Year 3, First Semester | **DML 873, Academic Writing** (1 cr) and **DML 996, Stage 3 (1 cr)**<br><br>1) Write rough drafts of chapters 4-5 | 1) Sample Dissertation by Joel Smith<br>2) Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers, 7th edition<br>3) Rudestam and Newton, *Surviving Your Dissertation*, ch 10: Writing<br>4) Carol Roberts, *The Dissertation Journey*, ch 16: The Oral Defense |
| Module 6 = Year 3, Second Semester | **DML 997, Stage 4 (2 cr) DML 999, Oral Defense (0 cr)**<br><br>1) String chapters 1-5 drafts together<br>2) Attach Table of Contents, appendices, Bibliography<br>3) Revise entire draft until defense ready | 1) Sample Dissertation by Joel Smith<br>2) Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers, 7th edition |

26. General Comments:

    a. Better to stay in touch with advisors and Dr. Chan, than to not stay in touch.

    b. This program prefers that students not use the first person singular 'I." On occasion, the first person plural ("we") is permitted, but the preferred style is "the present researcher" (instead of "I") and "the present study" (instead of "my study").

    c. Although Turabian's 7th edition lists formatting for both in-text parenthesis and for footnotes at the bottom of the page, this program prefers footnotes for citations.

    d. The D. Min. office needs to keep track of which students are on track to graduate by a target date and which ones are not. Staying in touch helps the office on deciding this. If a project is deemed to be in distress, Dr. Chan and the director may decide the student is not on track to finish and remove the student from the anticipated graduation list.

e. Write chapters one at a time, but string them together as soon as possible (to close to a hundred page document), and have your advisor email you comments and revisions on a “working draft” of the entire dissertation as much as possible.

f. Anticipate revising and revising many times. This is normal. The advisor should send comments and revisions on content. Dr Chan will send revisions and comments on formatting.

g. At some point the D. Min. office will inspect an advanced stage of a working draft you submit for “defense-readiness” (not perfect, but good enough to defend). A defense will be scheduled once you are defense-ready.

27. Costs of the Dissertation Program, Beyond Regular Tuition

a. Dissertation Fee: $1,500.00 to ATS (applied after fourth core class)

b. There is a $50 fee to do the online human participant training in your first year.

c. Dissertation Courses (DML 871-873, plus DML 994-996, are all one-credit. If the student fails to complete the core task for each “course” on time, he or she will receive an F grade and must re-take the course (and repay for the one-credit). When the core task is completed, the coordinator will change the F to a P.

d. Extension Courses: DML 998 is the extension course, which the student must take when it is clear he or she is making no progress on his/her dissertation. This may be taken, and paid for, multiple times.

e. If a student, after the fourth year of the program, does not demonstrate satisfactory progress on the dissertation, the Dissertation Coordinator in discussion with the Director, may decide to demit the student from the D. Min. program.

f. Publication Fee: around $200 to ProQuest, to house and e-publish your finished dissertation and purchase a hard copy for the ATS Library. The library hard copy is considered a requirement for graduation.

g. So between the failed and re-taken dissertation courses and the DML 998 extension course(s), the cost of a "drawn out" dissertation can add up.

## 9. Timeline for Dissertation Writing

| Cohort | Module 1/ Stage 1<br><br>DML 801 | Module 2 / Stage 2<br><br>DML 871 | Module 3 / Stage 3<br><br>DML 872 / DML 994 | Module 4 / Stage 4<br><br>DML 995 | Module 5 / Stage 5<br><br>DML 873 / DML 996 | Module 6 / Stage 6<br><br>DML 997 DML 999 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **110** | July 2015 | Jan 2016 | July 2016 | Jan 2017 | July 2017 | Jan 2018 |
| **111** | Jan 2016 | July 2016 | Jan 2018 | July 2018 | Jan 2019 | July 2017 |
| **112** | July 2016 | Jan 2017 | July 2017 | Jan 2018 | July 2018 | Jan 2019 |
| **113** | Jan 2017 | July 2017 | Jan 2018 | July 2018 | Jan 2019 | July 2019 |
| **114** | July 2017 | Jan 2018 | July 2018 | Jan 2019 | July 2019 | Jan 2020 |
| **115** | Jan 2018 | July 2018 | Jan 2019 | July 2019 | Jan 2020 | July 2020 |
| **116** | July 2018 | Jan 2019 | July 2019 | Jan 2020 | July 2020 | Jan 2021 |
| **117** | Jan 2019 | July 2019 | Jan 2020 | July 2020 | Jan 2021 | July 2021 |
| **118** | July 2019 | Jan 2020 | July 2020 | Jan 2021 | July 2021 | Jan 2022 |
| **119** | Jan 2020 | July 2020 | Jan 2021 | July 2021 | Jan 2022 | July 2022 |
| **120** | July 2020` | Jan 2021 | July 2021 | Jan 2022 | July 2022 | Jan 2023 |

1

**<u>D. Min. Dissertation Template</u>**

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Statement of the Ministry Problem and Purpose of Research

- Describe and document the 'big problem" in ministry—the need, problem or challenge
- Specify how your "small" study touches upon the "big" problem. You clearly are not solving the "big problem." But you are contributing a tiny piece to solving the big problem—tell the reader the tiny piece and how it fits in. Your purpose is to "discover" some unknown that is an important piece of information for the ultimately solving the ministry problem.

### Dissertation Overview (can write and add this at the end)

Chapter 2: Literature Review will (a one sentence summary of what topics your lit review is organized by). Chapter 3: Method will (:one sentence summary— state the intervention (if applicable), the participants, the instruments and data gathering technique) Chapter 4: Results (a:one sentence summary—state one or two of the most important findings especially if the support the hypothesis.) Chapter 5; Conclusions (a one sentence summary of how your findings relate to the ministry problem).

### Context

1. Community Context: Describe the population and location that experiences the ministry problem, or the sample population on which that you will conduct your research

2. Church or Ministry Context:Describe the ministry "intervention" that is trying to address the ministry problem.

### Hypothesis and/ or Research Questions and Model of Research

#### Hypothesis or Research Questions

•**Hypothesis:** Usually stating a relationship between two variables: an independent variable and a dependent variable (most applicable if there is quantitative data). Label as Hypothesis 1, Hypothesis 2, etc.
•**Research Questions:** Often, in Model 2 researches, evaluative of the ministry intervention (most applicable if there is qualitative data). Label as Research Question #1, #2, etc.

### Model of Research

### Model 1: Descriptive or Model 2: Experimental Research

State whether you are doing either model 1: descriptive research (merely describing the state of things) or model 2: experimental research (introducing an intervention and measuring for an improved state of things).

A Model 2 (experimental research) project seeks to improve the world in some way and to present data that it has improved.

A Model 1(descriptive research) project does not seek to improve anything about the world—it gathers data about the world that a later person can use to improve it

**Empirical Unknowns**

- What you need to know that you don't already know to argue for the hypothesis
- Establish that the unknown is measurable by either quantitative data (numbers) or qualitative data (words)

**Definition of Terms**

- If establishing a relationship between variables, identify the independent variable and the dependent variable;
- If possible, define each variable operationally—how it is being measured by what instrument (e.g. some score on a questionnaire)

**Limitations and Delimitations of the Study**

- State the boundaries of timeframe, location, sample size; purposeful limitations to narrow your topic.
- For example, if your data on your participants depends upon the self-reporting of your participants, state that the subjectivity of the participants is an inherent limitation.
- Another example, if the participants have a relationship with you the researcher, state that this relationship has the potential to skew the results. if there are measures you took to offset this (e.g. having someone other than you take the data), state them.

**Theological and / or Theoretical Framework**

- Briefly state theological themes related to the project (biblical materials and key theological thinkers) or theoretical constructs related to the project (theoreticians)

**Summary**

- Summarize how your discovering the empirical unknown contributes to addressing the larger ministry problem.

3

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

**Introduction**

■ This chapter begins within an overview of the purpose of your literature and what this section will cover

■ Your literature presentation should be organized according to categories appropriate to your topic. Some possible categories are below

Literature Related to the Ministry Problem

Background to the Ministry Problem

Documentation and Descriptions of the Ministry Problem

Literature Related to the Proposed Solution to the Ministry Problem

Previous Attempts to implement your proposed solution

Previous Attempts to implement a solution to a ministry problem parallel to yours

The Theological or Theoretical Basis for your Proposed Solution

Literature Related to the Independent Variable in your Study

Literature Related to the Dependent Variable in your Study

## Chapter 3: Methodology

**Introduction**
Restate the empirical unknowns in your study and give the reader an overview of your strategy to measure the empirical unknowns.

**Recruitment and Selection**

Explain how you alerted the participants to your study (did you predispose them toward a certain outcome?) and how you narrowed the pool of potential participants to the actual set you chose (did you show bais in your selection?). Here you are arguing for validity, in that you are showing the process was fair and unbiased and that you did not seek to skew the results by choosing those participants who would give the results you were seeking.

**Characteristics**

Once your data is collected, summarize the demographic information about the actual participants. In a quantitative study (many questionnaires / surveys), this is best done with some sort of visual graphic like a pie chart. In a qualitative study (fewer participants who are being interviewed), this is best done in the form of a chart, in which each participant is identified with a number (participant 1, participant 2, etc.) and give basic information about each.

**Intervention (if applicable, for "Model 2" projects)**

- Describe the "treatment" you introduced to remedy the "ministry problem." Were they meetings? Mentoring sessions? Teaching sessions? What happened at these meetings or sessions? When and where did they take place? For how many weeks?
- Convince the reader that the treatment has been standardized: all participants received the same or close to the same treatment. If this were a clinical trial for a drug, the experiment is valid, and your conclusion about effects is valid, only if the participants receive the same dosage. If you employed instructors, tell the reader the instructors all followed "the same manual" —the same procedures and curriculum.

**Instrument (Be sure to include a copy in an appendix)**

Here you should declare and describe the survey / questionnaire you used in your study. There are three possibilities:

(1) You used an existing instrument. State its name and identify its developers and the original published study for which it was used. Tell if you got permission to use it. Tell what it measures and why it fits your study. Describe the instrument (Likert scale, number of items, point values, sample questions and how it is scored).

(2) You modify an existing instrument. State its name and identify its developers and the original published study for which it was used. Tell why the instrument, as it is, is not suitable for your study and tell item by item how you modified it and why.

(3) You created your own instrument. State previous instruments that you modelled yours after. Tell why these other instruments were inadequate. Describe your instrument (Likert scale, number of items, point values, sample questions and how it is scored). Justify your instrument. Tell what it measures and why it

fits your study.  Describe any trial runs or preliminary field testing you did to see if the instrument worked well before your study,

In the case of an interview script, describe how this script became modified as time went on.

**Data Collection**

Describe what you did to collect your data: the date, place, setting where you got the participants to fill out the instrument.  As you write this, keep repeatability in mind—what would someone have to do to replicate your study?

**Data Analysis Plan**

Tell the reader what data result would verify (or, for that matter, falsify) your hypothesis.   This was your answer to Question 7 on your IRB form.

In the case of Quantitative Data, there are three possible statistical tests that you can use to verify your hypothesis:

1) Comparing two groups of scores (This would include pre- and post- scores): T-test, which shows that Group 1 is statistically different from Group 2.

2) Comparing a set of scores to a set of scores:  (For example, SAT scores and GPA's) Pearson correlation.   The result, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient, will be a number between -1.0 (perfect inverse relationship) and +1.0 (perfect direct relationship).

3) Comparing the number of members of one group with the number of members of another group to see the degree of overlap: Chi-Square test.

In the case of Qualitative Data, tell the reader your method of coding the interview transcripts.  Often this occurs in stages.  Tell the reader what categories you used to classify the comments at the first stage, then what subcategories you used to classify comments in subsequent stages.

## Chapter 4:  Results

**Introduction**

Restate the purpose of the study and give an overview of how your results fulfill that purpose. Organize the results around the research hypothesis, purpose or questions stated in the Introduction

Results

Hypothesis 1

Summary Chart

Explanation of data supporting hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 2

Summary Chart

Explanation of data supporting hypothesis 2

OR

Research Question 1

Summary Chart

Explanation of data answering research question 1

Research Question 2

Summary Chart

Explanation of data answering research question 2

**Summary**

6

## Chapter 5: Conclusions

**Introduction**

- Summarize the purpose of your research and how your results fulfill that purpose (similar to introduction to chapter 4). Restate your hypothesis and /or research questions. Do not introduce any new data or findings.

**Conclusions** (many possibilities here of drawing out the implications of your findings—some examples below)

Surprises:

- State what you discovered that you did not necessarily anticipate

Findings in Relation to Literature

- Are your findings consistent with what has been previously thought? Relate your study to the conclusions of others that you summarized in chapter 2.

Reflections on the Variation in Outcomes

Why did some participants perform better than others?

Reflections on the Research Design

- Discuss the research design, if you believe that it contributed to hindering more significant results. How would you have done things differently?

Recommendations for Future Research

- What would you recommend for someone doing similar research? Or for someone attempting to solve your ministry problem?

Recommendation for Ministry

- What would you recommend for someone doing ministry to the same target population who face the same ministry problem? Make sure your recommendations are tied directly to your findings in chapter 4. Make your recommendations as specific as possible. Name a responsible leadership party and an action step they should take.

**Summary and Conclusion**

## Works Cited

Hanging indents for all references. To keep this format, simply place the cursor at the front of this line and paste or type your reference material. Then press enter. Remember to organize your references alphabetically. Remember to delete this line of text, sample, and any other template text before submitting your paper.

Journal article example:

Abt, E., Rodricks, J. V., Levy, J. I., Zeise, L., & Burke, T. A. (2010). Science and decisions:

Advancing risk assessment. *Risk Analysis: An International Journal*, 30(7), 1028-1036.

## D.Min. Dissertation Defense Rubric

D. Min. Student's Name ____________Date of Oral Defense ______________

Dissertation Title:

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

Dissertation Committee:

First Reader / Advisor:

________________________________________

Second Reader / Cross-Examiner:

________________________________________

D. Min. Director or Alternate Institutional Rep:

________________________________________

## Rubric for Evaluation

| Criteria | Association of Theological Schools Standard | ATS D. Min. Program Goal | Exemplary | Proficient | Basic | Emerging | Unsatisfactory |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Identifies and addresses a significant problem in ministry (ch.1 and ch.5) | **Standard 1:** demonstrates the students ability to identify and understand a significant problem in ministry **Standard 6**: provides opportunity for future development of the student's practice of ministry | **Program Goal 6**: demonstrates competency in integrating leadership understanding | Identifies a **significant problem in ministry** with great clarity and makes abundantly clear its relationship to the research project | Identifies a **significant problem in ministry** with sufficient clarity and makes sufficiently clear its relationship to the research project | Identifies a **significant problem in ministry** unclearly, but the reader can still under-stand it with effort and makes somewhat clear its relationship to the research project | Identifies a **significant problem in ministry,** but so unclearly that the reader cannot understand it | Identifies **no significant problem in ministry** |
| 2. Demonstrates biblical-theological or theoretical foundational knowledge (ch.1 and ch.2)<br>3. | **Standard 2:** informed by appropriate biblical, theological, historical, sociological, psychological and other sources | **Program Goal 6:** demonstrates competency in integrating theological understanding | Shows abundant **foundational knowledge** | Shows sufficient **foundational knowledge** | Shows some **foundational knowledge** | Show minimal **foundational knowledge** | Shows no **foundational knowledge** |
| 4. Offers a clear | **Standard 3:** demonstrates | **Program Goal 2**: | **Hypothesis is** abundantly | **Hypothesis** | **Hypothesis is** unclear, but | **Hypothesis is** | |

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| hypothesis and reflects sound research design (ch.1 and ch.3) | the student's ability to use a variety of skills, tools and methods in the practice of ministry | Demonstrates enhanced competency in social/cultural analysis for ministry | clear and well defined<br><br>**Instrument** measures what the hypothesis calls for, with great validity<br><br>Full discussion of **limitations** that undermine validity and takes steps to control for them. | Is sufficiently clear and well defined<br><br>**Instrument** measures what the hypothesis calls for, with some validity<br><br>Full discussion and acknowledgement of **limitations** that undermine validity | the reader can understand it with effort<br><br>**Instrument** crudely measures what the hypothesis calls for, with little validity<br><br>Some discussion of **limitations** that undermine validity | unclear to the point where the reader cannot understand it<br><br>**Instrument** does not measure what the hypothesis calls for, with no validity<br><br>Little discussion of **limitations** that undermine validity | **No hypothesis**<br><br>**No instrument**<br><br>No awareness **of limitations** that undermine validity |
| 5. Clearly presents and accurately interprets relevant data (ch.4 and ch.5) | **Standard 4**: has made a significant contribution to the student's understanding of and practice of ministry<br><br>**Standard 5**: contributes to public knowledge about the practice of ministry | **Program Goal 2**: Demonstrates enhanced competency in social/cultural analysis for ministry | Presents **data** with great clarity<br><br>Draws an **interpretation** that is highly accurate and clearly establishes the hypothesis | Presents **data** with sufficient clarity<br><br>Draws an **interpretation** that is sufficiently accurate to establish the hypothesis | Presents **data** unclearly, yet the reader can still understand it with effort<br><br>Draws an **interpretation** of the data that is somewhat accurate and marginally establishes the hypothesis | Presents **data** so unclearly that the reader cannot understand it.<br><br>Draws an **interpretation** that is inaccurate and fails to establish the hypothesis | Presents no **data**<br><br>Draws no **interpretation** from the data |

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| 6. Demonstrates quality academic writing (chapters 1,2,3,4,5) | **Standard 7**: presented in clearly written prose which conforms to accepted standards, forms, style and grammar | N/A | **Organizes thoughts** so clearly that the reader can follow the flow of thought effortlessly<br><br>All places requiring **citation** are documented, with no omissions or errors in style<br><br>Totally free of **spelling and grammatical errors** | **Organizes thoughts** so clearly that the reader can follow the flow of thought with little effort<br><br>Most places requiring **citation** are documented, with only a few omissions and errors in style<br><br>A very small number of **spelling and grammatical errors** | **Organizes thoughts** unclearly, but the reader can still follow the flow of thought with great effort<br><br>Many places requiring citation are documented, with several omissions and errors in style<br><br>A few **spelling and grammatical errors** | **Organizes thoughts** so unclearly that the reader cannot follow the flow of thought<br><br>Most places requiring **citation** are left undocumented with many errors in style<br><br>Many **spelling and grammatical errors** | No effort to **organize thoughts**<br><br>No effort to **cite sources** or maintain proper style<br><br>No effort to check for **spelling and grammatical errors** |

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| 7. Defended well orally | N/A | N/A | Prepared and delivered an abundantly clear and engaging **presentation**<br><br>**Answered** all questions confidently and knowledgeably with no poor answers | Prepared and delivered a sufficiently clear and engaging **presentation**<br><br>**Answered** most questions confidently and knowledgeably with very few poor answers | **Presentation** showed some preparation<br><br>Delivery was not always clear and engaging<br><br>**Answered** many questions confidently and knowledgeably but with several poor answers | **Presentation** showed little preparation<br><br>Delivery was unclear and unengaging<br><br>**Answered** only a few questions confidently and knowledgeably and had many poor answers | No preparation for the **presentation**<br><br>Had no **answers** to many questions |

## Suggested Questions / Areas for the Cross-Examination during the Oral Defense

Opening Question (to help relax the candidate and give opportunity to how expertise to the audience): Tell us the most significant thing you've learned in your study.

1. Chapter 1 (Introduction): Statement of the Ministry Problem: Is it clear how the (more narrow) project addresses the (more broad) ministry problem?
2. Chapter 1 (Introduction): Hypothesis --Is the hypothesis sufficiently clear or does it use poorly defined terms? (E.g. does showing a children's ministry is "effective" mean you show "the children learn" or "the parents are happy?")
3. Chapter 1 (Introduction): Empirical Unknowns—was there a better way for the researcher to measure the empirical unknown than the method chosen?
4. Chapter 1 (Introduction): Limitations and Assumptions: Is there a limitation or assumption that the researcher should have stated, but neglected to state?

5. <u>Chapter 1 (Introduction</u>): Theological / Theoretical Framework: Has the researcher correctly grasped these concepts? Was there a concept that should have been explained further or better, but wasn't?
6. <u>Chapter 2 (Literature Review)</u>: Is there an aspect of the ministry problem that the literature review should have covered, but didn't? Is there a significant book or article that the literature review should have mentioned, but didn't?
7. <u>Chapter 3 (Methodology)</u>: Could another person replicate the study, using the method described, or is some aspect of the study un-repeatable? Is any vital detail of the study omitted or unclear (e.g. sample questionnaire or sample discipleship activities described in Appendices)?
8. <u>Chapter 3 (Methodology)</u>: Participants: Was the recruitment and selection process fair so that the findings are free from researcher bias?
9. <u>Chapter 3 (Methodology)</u>: Instruments: Do they appear to be valid (measuring what they purport to measure) and reliable (would give the same measurement if implemented a second time)?
10. <u>Chapter 3 (Methodology)</u>: Data analysis: If there are interviews (recordings / transcripts), is the "coding "or "labeling" system of recurrent keywords and themes made clear? In other words, if anyone other than the researcher went over the recordings/transcripts, could he or she use the same coding or labeling system and be led to the same conclusions?
11. <u>Chapter 4 (Findings)</u>: Is the data presented clearly? Is it summarized in a "user friendly" way? Is there a better format (chart, diagram, etc.) that would make the presentation even more clear?
12. <u>Chapter 5 (Conclusions</u>): Does the data support the hypothesis or is it extraneous to the hypothesis?
13. <u>Chapter 5 (Conclusions</u>): Did the researcher draw the correct interpretation from the data or could an alternate interpretation have been drawn? Does the researcher infer too much from the data or does he or she moderate his or her conclusions so that they are more tentatively stated?
14. <u>Chapter 15 (Conclusions</u>): Could there have been a mediating variable that contributed to the outcome that was not properly considered (e.g. a dynamic teacher that contributed more to the outcome than did the curriculum you are evaluating?)