PH.D. DISSERTATION HANDBOOK

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO THE PH.D. DISSERTATION HANDBOOK

The Doctor of Philosophy degree (Ph.D.) Dissertation Handbook is a guide to promote efficiency during the rigorous process of writing proposals and Dissertations. It is not a contract between students and Trident at AIU nor is it to be used to determine published program admission or graduation requirements. Trident at AIU reserves the right to update or amend this guide at any time according to Trident at AIU Ph.D. program needs, accreditation requirements, and/or ProQuest publication changes.

A Ph.D. is the highest academic degree obtainable, and requires novel, independent research supported by advanced-level, program-specific theoretical knowledge geared toward scholarship and systematic inquiry. Completion and publication of the Dissertation is required to earn a Ph.D. Publication provides a permanent record of original research directly attributable to the student. Trident at AIU is committed to the preservation and dissemination of such research.

The first section of this guide provides a general overview of degree requirements and policies. The subsequent sections address Dissertation requirements, procedures, and responsibilities of the Committee Chair and Members. Appendixes provide guidelines, procedural information and evaluation rubrics for a research proposal and dissertation. The guidelines for writing, formatting, and publishing the Dissertation are contained in the separate Dissertation Template.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The degree requires a total of 56 semester hours of coursework. Following the completion of the 600-level required core coursework, students work on their Dissertation in the 700-level courses.

DISSERTATION TIMELINE

Students are strongly encouraged to complete the Ph.D. based on their Academic Plan (AP). All Ph.D. degree requirements must be fulfilled within nine consecutive years. Dissertation (700) courses not completed within three years require permission from the Doctorial Studies Director and/or College Dean to continue. Please review the University Catalog for more information on program requirements and the policy related to maximum time for degree completion.

DPS COMPONENTS

1. 600-level core, concentration, and elective courses are valued at four credit hours each.
2. Dissertation courses begin after all 600-level course requirements are completed. There are two levels of dissertation courses.
Dissertation series (700-701-702). These four-module courses are valued at four credit hours each. Each course requires substantive progress in the Dissertation tasks in all modules. **Students must defend the dissertation proposal by the end of 702.** 702 can only be repeated twice. If a student fails to pass 702 after the third attempt, they will be dismissed from the program.
Dissertation continuation courses (703 through 711) are valued at zero credit hours. The Dissertation Continuation courses must be taken every session for students to maintain their active status in the doctoral program. During Dissertation Continuation courses all students are required to demonstrate academic progress in their Dissertation research. At the end of every session enrolled, students complete a Progress Report detailing their achievements, which is graded by the Committee Chair, a rubric is completed with feedback, and a final grade of P/NP is assigned. Credits earned toward 700 series and continuation courses will NOT be included in overall GPA calculation. The 700 Dissertation course are equivalent to a full-time enrollment status for reporting purposes only. Dissertation continuation courses are not eligible for federal financial aid and VA/GI Bill benefits.

3. 800-level courses. These courses are valued at zero credit hours. They are the Dissertation task courses created for each individual student following program registration requirements to facilitate submission, tracking, and approval for completed Dissertation tasks.
4. The ePortfolio provides a single place to save documents related to the development of a student's Dissertation. Students can utilize it to develop a portfolio for Dissemination before and after graduation. All eForms are available in ePortfolio.

GRADING

To meet graduation requirements, students must receive a minimum grade of "B-" in all 600-level courses. Dissertation level courses are graded as P/NP (pass/ no-pass). Students who fail to meet course expectations will have to repeat the course.

A passing grade in Dissertation Continuation courses (703 and above) requires continuous interaction with the Dissertation Chair, submissions of updated Dissertation drafts, and submission of a Progress Report at the end of each course. It is the responsibility of all students to remain in contact with their Dissertation Chairs during the 700-level courses regarding their Dissertation progress. Lack of Dissertation progress will be recorded as "NP". Students who receive two consecutive NPs will be on Academic Probation and must submit a plan of action to

the Doctoral Studies Director before registering for the succeeding session. Students who receive three consecutive NPs will be Academically Disqualified.

Note on Resources: Most of the course materials are available to students through Trident's Online Library or open access on the Internet. Students are responsible for additional tools and materials needed to complete their dissertation. For example, students need to purchase statistical software needed for their data analysis. All students are required to complete the on-line training for Protecting Human Research Participants (PHRP) to meet the requirements of the Trident Institutional Review Board. Students are also responsible for professional editing of their final Dissertation if needed before publication. Fees for software, publishing at ProQuest and PHRP Training are paid directly to the vendors.

DISSERTATION REQUIREMENTS

Trident at AIU Ph.D. programs require a five-chapter Dissertation format. Within the Dissertation, students must defend a comprehensive synthesis of their Ph.D. study by demonstrating knowledge and scholarship with a significant and novel research project which contributes to the body of knowledge in the field(s) potentially affected by the research.

METHODOLOGY TYPES FOR DISSERTATIONS

Two types of Dissertations are widely accepted in the Ph.D. programs at Trident at AIU: 1) Quantitative and 2) Mixed Methods. The Qualitative methods are accepted in the College of Education Ph.D. program. Each student should consult with their Doctoral Studies Director and Dissertation Chair for approval on use of Qualitative Methods in a Dissertation. An overview of these methods is discussed below.

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Quantitative research methods use multi-variate statistical analyses of numeric data to generate results which are responsive to defined research question(s). The research design can consist of, but is not limited to, the following: 1) Experimental, 2) Quasi-experimental, and 3) Non-experimental research designs. The research design is meant to address the research questions and test hypotheses/null hypotheses grounded in theory. **Students can use primary or secondary data**. The measurement tools must be valid and reliable. Findings that address each research question and hypothesis are presented in tables, graphs and figures, as well as subsequently discussed in the context of the literature. Appendix B provides details on quantitative research methods.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Qualitative research methods generate data via some of the following: interviews, focus groups, and participant observations. The research approaches can consist of grounded theory, phenomenological research, narrative research, ethnographies, and case study research. Findings for qualitative research studies are presented through case studies and narratives with themes identified to help address the research questions. Appendix C provides further details on Qualitative research methods.

MIXED METHODS RESEARCH

Mixed methods refers to a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. At times, qualitative methods are utilized as a means of exploring project feasibility which is then validated with quantitative research methods.

DISSERTATION CHAPTERS

Trident Ph.D. programs require the following five Dissertation chapters:

I. Introduction
II. Review of the Literature
III. Methodology
IV. Data Analysis and Results
V. Discussion and Conclusion

The first three Dissertation chapters are reliant on the approved Dissertation Proposal. Major modifications of the general content need to be approved by the Chair and the Committee.

CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM STATEMENT, AND RESEARCH QUESTION(S)

This chapter introduces the topic and rationale for the independent research. This includes defining and discussing the problem or issue and its overall impact on the field(s) in question. The student should explain the process resulting in the identification of the research question(s) and support their project justification with literary references from peer-reviewed journals.

CHAPTER II – LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is a comprehensive review of all literature pertaining to the research question(s), variables and the field of research. The review establishes the appropriate theoretical background and conceptual framework to support the hypotheses. Students must also discuss how their research contributes to the current body of knowledge in the field(s) of research.

CHAPTER III – METHODS

The student will describe and defend the methods selected for their study. A methodological analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of available or alternative methods should be included, in addition to literary supported rationale to defend the method(s) of choice. The nature of the research sites, sampling arrangements, research procedures, and statistical or analytical methods are articulated and justified here.

CHAPTER IV – DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This chapter details the statistical applications used to analyze the data. Results are presented in Tables and Figures, and interpretation of the results must be provided. Conclusions and outcomes of the study are articulated here.

CHAPTER V – DISCUSSION

This chapter explains how the study results address the research question(s). Discussion is presented of the implications and contributions of the research to the current body of knowledge. Recommendations for further research should be included, and recommendations for practice modification(s) are highly desirable where appropriate.

DISSERTATION PROCEDURES

Trident at AIU has an electronic infrastructure called the Doctoral Positioning System (DPS). The DPS is a web-based technology used for the administration, documentation, tracking, and evaluation of progress toward completing all the tasks and milestones required to attain the Ph.D. degree at Trident. The DPS is composed of 600-, 700-, and 800- level courses, and an ePortfolio.

PH.D. PROGRAM MILESTONES

Program milestones include 20 Dissertation tasks, which may vary depending on the respective Ph.D. program. These Dissertation tasks represent a general approach that students must follow to complete their Dissertation study and attain their degree. During the 600-level coursework, students should begin to make progress toward their Dissertation proposal. Using proposal topics as foundation for course assignments can facilitate this process. During the 700-level courses, students are responsible for recording Dissertation progress. Students are responsible for communicating and working closely with their Dissertation Chair to ensure efficient and timely advancement. All substantial Dissertation task documents are uploaded into the 800-course. The rate of advancement is dependent upon the type of study, the tasks required for completion, and the student's effectiveness. At a minimum, students are expected to maintain bi-weekly communication with their Chair.

DISSERTATION TASKS

1. AP (Academic Plan)
2. Identify Area of Research and General Research Questions

3. State Research Questions

4. Draft of Problem Statement and Introduction

5. Draft of literature review

6. Draft of Research Methods

7. Qualifying Exams (Written and Oral)

8. Dissertation Prospectus

9. IRB Certificate (on-line)

10. Committee formation

11. Draft Dissertation proposal

12. Final Proposal - **Defense**

13. Post-defense Proposal with corrections

14. Approved Dissertation Proposal

15. IRB Application

16. IRB Approval (or exemption)

17. Draft Dissertation

18. Final Dissertation - **Defense**

19. Post-defense Dissertation with corrections

20. Approved Dissertation - **Degree**

Task 1: Academic Plan

The Academic Plan (AP) is required and provides a timeline for completion of the Ph.D. program in 3, 4, or 5 years. The AP e-Form, located in the e-Portfolio, is to be completed by the student at the beginning of the program and uploaded into the 800-course. The student may update their AP form if changes are needed.

Task 2: Identify Area of Research and General Research Questions

Upon matriculating to the first program course (600-level), the student will begin to review literature and identify a general research topic of interest within their area of concentration. Students follow the instructions outlined in the individual courses. Substantive drafts are uploaded to the 800-course.

Task 3: State Research Questions

Course assignments are tailored towards refining and specifying research question(s) throughout curriculum progression. Students follow the instructions

outlined in the individual courses. Substantive drafts are uploaded to the 800-course.

Task 4: Draft of Problem Statement and Introduction

Students will conduct literature reviews about their area of interest, identify a knowledge gap that is relevant and novel to the field of science. The student will develop a draft of the Problem Statement and Introduction to explore their topic of interest. Students follow the instructions outlined in the individual courses. Substantive drafts are uploaded to the 800-course.

Task 5: Draft of Literature Review

Students will continue to review theoretical and empirical literature to set up a conceptual framework for their study and formulate a hypothesis(es). Students follow the instructions outlined in the individual courses. Substantive drafts are uploaded to the 800-course.

Task 6: Draft of Research Methods

Students will explore and describe the Methods section of their dissertation research throughout enrollment in methodology courses. Students follow the instructions outlined in the individual courses. Substantive drafts are uploaded to the 800-course.

Task 7: Qualifying Exam (Written and Oral)

The Qualifying Exam assesses the student's ability to conduct independent research. It includes both a Written and an Oral Qualifying Exam to determine the student's qualifications, including knowledge and skills for undertaking rigorous scientific investigation in a research field. Students will be examined on their understanding of research methods and statistical concepts related to the research process. The qualifying exam is conducted via phone conference or e-conference and uploaded to the 800-course and ePortfolio. The Qualifying Exam Committee will evaluate the prospectus and presentation, and will then schedule an oral exam if ready. The results of the Written and Oral Qualifying Exams are uploaded to the 800-course and ePortfolio by the student. Students are allowed up to two opportunities to take the qualifying exams.

Task 8: Dissertation Prospectus

The Dissertation Prospectus must be developed by the end of the 600 level courses. The final version is uploaded by the student to the 800-course and ePortfolio. The

faculty instructor or Dissertation Chair will evaluate the Prospectus using the rubric (Appendix A) to record progress and provide feedback.

Task 9: IRB Certificate

Students must complete the on-line IRB Training session to receive proof of completion in the form of an "IRB Certificate", which is uploaded by the student to the 800-course. The IRB Certificate is required to allow Trident IRB to review the student's forthcoming Trident IRB application. Go to the Protecting Human Research Participants website (PHRPtraining.com) to complete the Online Training in Human Subjects training and obtain the required certificate. The fee to complete this training is paid directly to the vendor.

Task 10: Committee Formation

The student is aligned with a Dissertation Chair and a minimum of two Committee Members based on expertise and availability. The Chair and Members must be Trident faculty. All Committee members must have a doctoral degree from an accredited institution, research experience, as well as active scholarship or professional activity related to his or her degree prior to serving. All Committee members must be approved by the Doctoral Studies Director.

The Chair is responsible for guiding the student during the Dissertation process, ensure the student follows program requirements documented in the Dissertation Handbook and Template, advise student on the selection of committee members, reinforce deadlines, complete checklists and rubrics, schedule defenses, and review and approve revisions. The completed Dissertation proposal must follow all the Dissertation requirements and will be circulated to Committee members by the Chair for constructive feedback. Exceptions to the Committee composition must be approved by the Doctoral Studies Director.

Task 11: Draft of Dissertation Proposal

Once the Dissertation Committee is assembled, the student works with the Committee to develop a proposal that must be defended by the end of course 702. The first objective of the Proposal Development is to add depth to the approved Prospectus, which should be a substantial draft of the proposal following proposal rubric (Appendix A). The student is responsible for contacting their Chair bi-weekly at minimum to discuss proposal issues. Revisions or modifications based on Chair feedback should be completed in a timely manner. The final version submitted in the session will be evaluated by the Chair using the proposal rubric (Appendix A). Substantive drafts of the working proposal are uploaded to the 800-course.

Task 12: Final Proposal

The Dissertation Proposal should be complete and in "final" form, with correct and polished content and style, appropriate notes, bibliography, tables, etc., at the time it is distributed by the Chair to the Committee members. The Committee will review the Dissertation Proposal to ascertain whether student's knowledge, skills, and conceptual framework are sufficient for undertaking a rigorous research process. All Committee members determine if a proposal is ready for defense, which is scheduled by the Dissertation Chair with a minimum two-week notice.

The oral defense of the Dissertation Proposal must be accompanied by a professionally formatted PowerPoint presentation which describes the details and significance of the proposed research project. One-week prior to the defense the student must distribute the PowerPoint presentation to the Committee and the Doctoral Studies Director for review. The final version of the Dissertation Proposal and PowerPoint presentation are uploaded by the student to the 800-course and ePortfolio.

The evaluation rubric (Appendix F) is used to assess the proposal defenses in Trident Ph.D. Programs.

Task 13: Post-Defense Proposal with Corrections

After a student defends their Dissertation Proposal the Committee meets to reach one of four conclusions:

A. Pass. The proposal is approved by the Committee, as presented, with recommendation of only minor adjustments. The completed adjustments must be reviewed and approved by the Committee Chair.
B. Pass. The proposal is approved but requires major adjustments. The completed revisions must be reviewed and approved by all Committee members.
C. Fail. The proposal will be approved only after significant restructuring. The proposal must be defended again after the restructuring. The second defense must be scheduled no earlier than two months after the first defense.
D. Fail. The proposal is not accepted, and the Committee will assist the student in preparing another proposal. A second defense will be scheduled to occur no earlier than three months following the first defense.

Post-defense corrections of the proposal must be completed and uploaded by the student within 30 days of the defense to the 800-course and ePortfolio. If revisions are not submitted within 30 days, *the student must defend the proposal again.* The Committee Chair will review and provide feedback until all issues have been addressed. The Committee Chair will submit the approved, latest version of the proposal along with a list of completed post-defense revisions to the Doctoral Studies Director with a recommendation of whether to approve the student's advancement to candidacy. The Doctoral Studies Director may request additional

revisions if any problems/issues are identified. The final approved Dissertation Proposal will be uploaded by the student to the 800-course.

If the defense is unsuccessful and approval is not achieved, a second defense can be scheduled no earlier than 30 days after the first defense. A Dissertation Proposal may be defended up to three times. If a student fails the third defense, they are dismissed from the program.

Task 14: Approved Dissertation Proposal

Once the Doctoral Studies Director approves the Dissertation Proposal, the completed document is uploaded by the student to the 800-course and ePortfolio. Only the Doctoral Studies Director will assign "Approved" in the 800-course. Final approval and **declaration of Advancement to Candidacy** will be sent via email by the Doctoral Studies Director to the student. Advancement to Candidacy implies all requirements for the degree have been completed, except for the research Dissertation itself. ***No data collection can occur without IRB approval.***

All students must be aware of the following standard academic protocols. These protocols are rigorously respected and observed at Trident at AIU. Prior to formal admission to candidacy, students should not refer to themselves as "doctoral candidates" or "Ph.D. candidates." In a Ph.D. program, the term "candidate" has a very specific meaning, and students should be careful in using the term to refer to themselves. No Ph.D. student or candidate should ever use the initials Ph.D. after their name until all degree requirements have been met and the student is notified by the University that the degree has been conferred. The same is true for using the title "Dr." or "Doctor."

Students who have been admitted to candidacy should refer to themselves as "Ph.D. Candidate in Health and Human Services (or Education or Business Administration), Trident at American Intercontinental University, expected date of completion 20xx." Students should not refer to themselves as "ABD" ("all but Dissertation") until they have been formally admitted to candidacy.

Task 15: IRB Application

Once the Dissertation Committee has approved the research plan, and **before any data collection, the research plan must be approved by the Trident at AIU Institutional Review Board (IRB)**. Federal law and regulations require an IRB review of all research involving human subjects. The purpose of such reviews is to ensure that research complies with established ethical standards and principles.

All proposed studies with human subjects require Trident IRB review. No data collection can occur until Trident IRB approval is received.
If data is collected before that approval, the data may not be used in the Dissertation (a certain degree of exploratory reconnaissance is allowed).

SUBMISSION OF THE IRB APPLICATION AND DOCUMENTS

To complete Trident IRB review, the student must prepare the Trident IRB application under the guidance of the committee Chair. After the Chair approves, the student submits the application which summarizes the project and the human subject's protection issues that it poses. Copies of the research methods and any relevant forms and/or data gathering instruments are generally attached to the application. Appendix D provides instructions for generating and submitting a Trident IRB application.

The Trident IRB Committee reviews applications and makes the determination as to the nature and extent of the review. An IRB decision letter is sent to the student and Chair stating if the application is **Approved, Exempt, or needs further information** to proceed.

Task 16: IRB Approval

Once the Dissertation research plan has been approved by the Trident IRB Committee, the student can then begin data collection under the supervision of their Dissertation Chair. ***Any changes in the research plan will require notification and approval by the Trident IRB.*** The student must keep their Dissertation Committee, especially the Chair, informed on the progress of the research and any changes that may be considered. Students upload the Trident IRB approval/ exemption letter to the 800-course and e-portfolio. Only the Doctoral Studies Director will assign "Approved" in the 800-course.

Task 17: Draft of Dissertation

The student completes the Dissertation research study as approved in the proposal. During this period, the student will set up regular meetings with the Chair to discuss the issues in the research process. Every draft of the Dissertation will be uploaded to the 800-course, and the Chair will provide feedback regularly. The student will address the issues and/or make revisions accordingly. At the end of each course session, the Chair will use the grading rubric to evaluate a Progress Report and assign a P/NP grade.

The Committee Chair will provide supervision and guidance for the student. The other Committee members will provide feedback to the Dissertation Chair. Each course session, the Chair will report to the Doctoral Studies Director on the progress of the Dissertation.

Task 18: Final Dissertation

The Committee will review the Dissertation to ascertain if the data analyses and

discussion are sufficient for rigorous inquiry into the student's designated field of research. All three Committee members will review the Dissertation in detail. A defense will be scheduled once the Committee assesses that the Dissertation is ready. A Ph.D. Dissertation defense must be scheduled at least two-weeks before the end of the session to provide the time needed for the Committee, Doctoral Studies Director and Dean to review. Otherwise, the defense will be scheduled for the following session.

One-week prior to a Dissertation Defense, the student will distribute to all Committee members and the Doctoral Studies Director, a PowerPoint presentation describing and defending the Dissertation. The student uploads the final version of the Dissertation and PowerPoint presentation to the 800-course and ePortfolio. The evaluation rubric (Appendix G) is used to assess Dissertation Defenses in Trident Ph.D. Programs.

Task 19: Post-Defense Dissertation with Corrections

After the defense of the Dissertation, the Committee will meet and reach one of three conclusions:

A. Pass. The Dissertation is approved by the Committee, as presented, with only minor adjustments that must be reviewed and approved by the Dissertation Chair.
B. Pass. The Dissertation is approved but with adjustments. These completed adjustments must be reviewed and approved by all Committee members.
C. Fail. The Dissertation will be approved only after significant restructuring. The Dissertation must be defended again after the restructuring. The second defense will be no earlier than two months following the first defense.

After the post-defense Dissertation corrections have been completed, the Committee Chair will recommend approval to the Doctoral Studies Director. Any necessary revisions must be made within 30 days from the Doctoral Studies Director's review of the Dissertation. The Committee Chair is responsible for the continued guidance of the student with the post-defense revisions. The student will upload their updated Dissertation to the 800-course and ePortfolio.

Task 20: Approved Dissertation

Dissertations must be approved by the Committee, Doctoral Studies Director and Dean. All corrections must be made within 30 days of the date of defense. The student uploads the final approved Dissertation and an explanation of post defense revisions to the 800-course and ePortfolio. Only the Doctoral Studies Director will assign "Approved" in the 800-course. The Registrar will start the degree audit (check) to make sure all academic and other requirements have been

satisfied for this degree. The Registrar will send a degree completion letter to the student for submission of the dissertation to UMI.

Once the student receives the letter from the Registrar, the Dissertation can be prepared for publication at ProQuest following the publication guidelines available at http://www.proquest.com/products-services/Dissertations/submitting-Dissertation-proquest.html. ProQuest will provide more information to the student upon request. Trident's librarian can assist further with the process if there are questions.

Upon receipt, the student will send the Trident librarian a digital copy of the dissertation after it is published at ProQuest. In addition, the student should consult with each Committee member and the Doctoral Studies Director to determine if they would like to receive a hard-copy or a digital copy of the Dissertation. **Upon receipt of these copies and confirmation of degree clearance, the degree and diploma will be awarded**.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

All Ph.D. Committee Chairs report to the Doctoral Studies Director and are subject to a quarterly assessment of student progress and committee activities. The relationship between the student and committee members is one that can take many forms. There is no single pattern that characterizes successful relationships, and due to the dynamics of such relationships, random evaluation is neither possible nor helpful. Rather, a formative self-evaluation with completed Progress Reports are used to encourage all parties to remain engaged and effectively communicating to promote continual improvement.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

While the responsibility for progress and completion of the Dissertation is that of the student, the Chair will have the following specific responsibilities:
- Coordinate regular meetings with the student.
- Provide guidance and supervision during the entire Dissertation process.
- Provide timely first reviews of all elements of the research process.
- Provide feedback to student's Proposal/Dissertation.

Topics of communication include:
- When the Dissertation proposal or Dissertation is ready for review.
- When an element is unacceptable and should be returned to the student without forwarding to the members.
- Specific constructive critique by the Chair, including inquiry into lack of acceptable progress.
- Forward Committee member comments to the student. Only the Chair communicates directly with the student. Committee members may not communicate directly with the student unless the Chair is aware.

- Make logistical arrangements for the defenses of the proposal and completed Dissertation, and forward copies of each document to the relevant parties.
- Serve as Chair and moderator for the Proposal and Dissertation defenses.
- Report results of the proposal and completed Dissertation defenses to the Doctoral Studies Director.
- Schedule and moderate all meetings of the full Dissertation Committee.
- Assign final grades, provide feedback and complete the grading rubric for all 700-level courses.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF DISSERTATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- Provide the Chair feedback regarding the dissertation as needed.
- Review all dissertation elements forwarded by the Chair and respond with constructive critique in a timely manner.
- Attend and participate remotely in the Proposal and Dissertation defenses.

APPENDIX A: PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

TITLE PAGE

- Clearly identifies main constructs
- Lists Committee members

ABSTRACT

- A concise, brief, rational statement of what will be done in the study (about 350 words).

CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

- Presents the context and the knowledge gap, the study purpose, what will be done in the study, and how it will fill the knowledge gap.
- Should be brief, clear, and specific to the topic.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

- Identifies the study as novel and significant.
- Clearly identifies the problem; addresses the knowledge gap, study significance, and novelty using evidence from the literature.
- The study purpose and aims stem clearly from the problem statement and knowledge gap.
- Must be clearly presented, focused, specific, and theory-based.

RESEARCH QUESTION(S)

- Should be clear, articulated, and specific, corresponding exactly to the study purpose.
- Provide original insights to the issues.
- Be thought-provoking.
- Provide clear and compelling promise of contribution to discipline and/or communities.
- Clearly address the knowledge gap.
- Include main and sub-questions, and be comprehensive in scope.
- Refer to the main constructs and his or her relationships (relationships to be investigated in the study).

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

- Identifies the key terms used in the study and provides clear definitions as used in the literature and as used for the purposes of the study.

CHAPTER II - LITERATURE REVIEW

- There is a relevant synthesis of empirical and theoretical literature.
- Critical understanding of literature is evident in style, organization, and content.
- Mastery of appropriate canon is evident. Sources cited are rich and diverse.
- Recent publications are utilized.

- The knowledge gap is clearly identified and discussed.
- The review is comprehensive in scope.
- Key issues are included. All the components of the research question(s) (main constructs and his or her associations) are addressed.
- Multiple citations from diverse literature are cogently woven together.
- The existing controversies or issues in the literature are reframed in novel terms.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

- The theory, theories, theoretical models, or mechanisms have been identified and are relevant to the research questions and associations under study.
- The concepts and the relationships among the constructs/variables are presented clearly and logically.
- The dependent variables and independent variables are clearly assigned in the conceptual framework, and there is clarity of directionality.
- A clear graphical presentation is provided.

HYPOTHESES

- Correspond to the research questions.
- Are relevant and flow logically from the theory used.
- Are accurately stated.
- Are testable based on operationalized variables.

CHAPTER III - METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

- Is accurately identified and described.
- Answers the study's hypotheses and is appropriate.
- Includes sufficient protection for human subjects.
- Feasibility is discussed

STUDY POPULATION

- Populations have been identified and described (i.e., his or her identity, location, accessibility, etc.).
- Recruiting and sampling procedures have been identified.
- Power analysis and effect size have been calculated and are sufficient and correctly presented.

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

- Measurement instrument and other appropriate tools are valid, reliable, and correctly presented.
- Plan for data collection and analysis is appropriate.
- Measures exist for all variables.

VARIABLES—INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES

- Operationalized variables are identified and discussed.
- A <u>Table of Variables</u> is required which defines each variable based on type, the Level of Measure, and role in the analysis (independent variable, dependent variable, and covariates).

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

- There is a correspondence between the research questions, measures, variables, and analysis.
- **Multivariate statistics are required for a Ph.D. dissertation**, and description must be specific to the type of dependent variables and independent variables investigated.
- The study is feasible (in terms of cost, time, resources, approvals, etc.).
- A <u>Table of Proposed Statistics</u> is required which describes proposed bivariate and multivariate analyses for each research question/hypotheses.

LIMITATIONS, DELIMITATIONS, AND SIGNIFICANCE

- Limitations and delimitations are detailed.
- Potential biases are detailed.
- Potentially confounding factors (Covariates) are described, and methods to address their impact are discussed.
- Methods and strategy for addressing missing data are detailed.
- How the study will advance the field is discussed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Confidentiality and privacy are discussed.
- References and timetable of research activities are presented.
- The Proposal should be about 50 pages without references and appendices.

APPENDIX B: QUANTITATIVE DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

The following list contains most of Dissertation components of a quantitative Dissertation. These components must be adapted to each Dissertation and follow the PhD Dissertation Template.

ABSTRACT

- Concise, brief, rational statement of what was done in the study (300-350 words)
- Describes the Purpose, Methods, Results and Conclusions of the study
- Primary results (effects, significance from statistical analyses) are included.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction
- Presents the context and the knowledge gap, the study purpose, what was done in the study and how it fills the knowledge gap.
- Clear and specific to the topic.
- Reflects the specific characteristics of the study conducted

Problem Statement
- Novel and significant study.
- Problem clearly identified; knowledge gap, study significance and novelty clearly addressed
- Study purpose and aims stem clearly from the problem statement and knowledge gap.
- Clearly presented, focused and specific
- Theory-based

Research Question(s)
- Question(s) clear, articulated and specific corresponding exactly to the study purpose
- Research questions ask about a relationship (causal or correlational) between an independent variable and an outcome dependent variable, in a defined population.
- Thought provoking; provide original insights to the issues
- Promise of contribution to discipline, and or communities is clear and compelling
- Clearly addressing the knowledge gap
- Comprehensive in scope. Includes main and sub-questions
- Refers to the main constructs and relationships (relationships to be investigated in the study)

Definition of Key Terms
> • Identifies the key terms used in the study and provides clear definitions as used in the literature and as used for the purposes of the study.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature Review

- There is a relevant synthesis of empirical and theoretical literature
- Critical understanding of literature is evident in style, organization and content.
- Mastery of appropriate principals is evident. Sources cited are rich and diverse.
- Recent publications.
- Clearly identifies and discusses the knowledge gap
- Comprehensive in scope.
- Key issues are included. Addresses all the components of the research question/s (main constructs and associations).
- Multiple citations from diverse literature are woven together cogently.
- Reframes existing controversies or issues in the literature in novel terms.

Theoretical Orientation and Conceptual Framework
- The theory, theories, theoretical models, or mechanisms have been identified and are relevant to the research questions and associations under study.
- The concepts and the relationships among the constructs/variables are presented clearly and logically.
- The Dependent and Independent variables are clearly assigned in the conceptual framework and there is a clarity of directionality.
- There is a clear graphical presentation of the Conceptual Framework.

Hypotheses
- The hypotheses correspond to the research questions.
- The hypotheses are relevant and flow logically from the theory used.
- The hypotheses are accurately stated.
- The hypotheses are testable based on operationalized variables.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Research Design
- The design is accurately identified and described.
- The design is appropriate, and it will answer the study's hypotheses.
- Includes sufficient information on protection for Human Subjects.

Study Population
- Populations have been identified and described.
- Recruiting and sampling procedure have been identified.
- Power analysis, effect size has been calculated, are sufficient and correctly presented.

Data Collection Tools
- Measurement instrument, etc. are valid, reliable, and correctly presented.
- Measures exist for all variables.
- Variables - Independent and Dependent and Variables (subheading)
- Co-Variates – identified and described
- A Table of Variables is used to present the operationalized variables
- Each variable described based on type (nominal, continuous etc.) and role in the analysis (IV/DV/CoV)

Statistical Analysis
- There is a correspondence between the research questions-measures-variables-analysis
- Multivariate statistics was performed unless the study was a randomized double-blind clinical trial for which equivalence of study groups is clearly demonstrated. **Multivariate analysis is appropriate and specific for each research question and for type of DV and IV**.

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS
- Results are presented according to scientific presentation order and APA format. Results flow logically.
- Data Screening including assessment of missing data, outliers, normality, etc.
- Results have the following order: Descriptive Statistics, Bivariate Analyses, Multivariate Analyses.
- Descriptive analyses are appropriate for the type of variables and presented for all relevant variables (begin with demographic analysis followed by study sample characteristics and frequencies)
- Assumptions checking (for example, Normality, Linearity, Heteroscedasticity, Multicollinearity).
- Bivariate statistics are run with appropriate statistical tests for the type of variables, and are used to test study hypotheses and assess confounding potential of covariates.
- Multivariate statistics are run with appropriate statistical tests for the type of variables and are testing study hypotheses. Controls for effects of potential confounders when measuring the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable.
- Instrumentation and measurement model: validity and reliability for initial and final instruments.

- Statistical results are presented in Tables for each analysis (i.e. coefficients, p-values, R squares for linear regression, Odds Ratios and Confidence Intervals for Logistic regression etc.)
- Statistical results are presented for an audience with professional knowledge of statistics.
- Data analysis is consistent to the analyses planned in the Methods section of the Dissertation
- Results for testing study hypotheses are included in Tables and Figures and interpreted appropriately
- Significant results besides those answering main research questions are highlighted and interpreted
- Tables/figures make sense independently and convey clear information. Only relevant information is included.
- Tables/figures have appropriate headings and footnotes and follow APA format
- The corresponding text precedes Tables, complements the Tables/Figures, highlights and interprets important findings, and is not redundant

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- Describes how the purpose of the study was accomplished by the statistical analyses.
- Discussion of the findings puts the study in a larger context, is extensive and exhaustive.
- Main findings are briefly presented. The largest part of the discussion compares and contrasts study findings with past studies in the literature. Peer-reviewed literature is used.
- Unexpected findings are discussed. Potential mechanisms/theories for unexpected findings are proposed using peer-reviewed literature.
- Refers to all study hypotheses
- Implications and directions for future research are presented and flow logically from study results
- Study strengths, limitations and delimitations are detailed
- Potential biases are detailed
- Potentially confounding factors are described, and methods to address impact are discussed
- Methods for missing data are detailed
- How the study will advance the field is discussed
- Discussion ends with conclusive and definitive statements on main findings and implications (methodological, theoretical, practical)
- Limitations

REFERENCES

- Complete reference list, adhere to APA format

APPENDICES

- The documents are relevant to the construction and execution of the dissertation study.

APPENDIX C: QUALITATIVE DISSERTATION GUIDELINES (PH.D. E.L. PROGRAM)

Previously, our Ph.D. program has accepted only quantitative or mixed-study-approach Dissertations. However, a review of other WASC-accredited Ph.D. education programs shows that other programs in Education allow both quantitative and qualitative Dissertation formats. Therefore, based on the results of benchmarking and an external reviewer's recommendation, Trident at AIU has added qualitative methodology to the current allowable Dissertation formats in the Ph.D. Educational Leadership Program. This change has been prompted by the highly specialized work of some of the students in the Ph.D. E.L. Program, including special education. Students in the special education field and other areas may have difficulty obtaining the large sample sizes necessary for quantitative research, but have access to a unique population that may lend itself to high-quality qualitative research. The modification to our Dissertation requirement will enrich our students' learning experience and increase student success without sacrificing quality.

METHODOLOGY IN QUALITATIVE STUDY

Designing qualitative studies is quite different from designing quantitative studies. Qualitative research is defined as research devoted to developing an understanding of human systems, be they small (such as one or a small group of students/classrooms), or large (such as a cultural system). Qualitative research studies typically include ethnographies, case studies, and generally descriptive studies. Of the qualitative methodologies, currently only the case study is accepted in the Ph.D. E.L. program.

Case studies emphasize detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and his or her relationships (Soy 2006). The case study will be an individual or group studied for a specific period of time. Usually the study includes interviews (individual/group), data, and observations to triangulate conclusions and answer research questions.

Primary Goal of the Dissertation

The primary goal of the Dissertation is to make an original and significant contribution to the body of knowledge with practical applications.

CHARACTERISTICS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

- The research provides views that reality is constructed and supported by individuals interacting with their social worlds.
- The researcher decides the primary instrument for data collection and analysis.
- The research usually involves fieldwork.
- The study primarily employs an inductive research strategy.
- The product of a qualitative study is richly descriptive.
- In most cases, the design is emergent, flexible, and responsive to changing conditions of the study.

METHODOLOGY
DEVELOPMENT OF METHODOLOGY

I. Process used to bring about the product, and the design of the product
II. How was the process validated? By experts? During field testing? Or by employing evaluation methodology of the results?

EVALUATION OF METHODOLOGY

I. Process of identifying if a product is doing what it is supposed to be doing—reaching its goals and/or objectives
II. Sources are experts, and statistical procedures are appropriate

ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE METHODS

New technologies to analyze qualitative data and to report findings of qualitative studies include Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis programs:
1. Nvivo 8: http://download.qsrinternational.com/Document/NVivo8/NVivo8-Introducing-NVivo.htm
2. Transana: http://www.transana.org/about/Tour/index.htm

VALIDITY, RELIABILITY, AND ETHICS

- Validity
  - Internal validity vs. credibility
  - External validity vs. transferability
- Reliability vs. dependability
  - Explanation, triangulation, and audit trails
- Ethics
  - Autonomy, beneficence, and justice

SIX STEPS OF CONDUCTING A QUALITATIVE STUDY

1. Determine and define the research questions.
2. Select the cases and determine data gathering and analysis techniques.
3. Prepare to collect the data.
4. Collect data in the field.
5. Evaluate and analyze the data.
6. Prepare the report.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING QUALITATIVE STUDIES (AECT, 2001)

- Is the problem clearly stated? Does it have theoretical value and currency? Does it have practical value?
- Is the problem or topic situated in a theoretical framework? Is the framework clear and accessible? Does the document contain competing epistemologies or other basic assumptions that might invalidate claims?
- Is the literature review a critique or simply a repetition? Is it relevant? Does it appear accurate and sufficiently comprehensive?

- Are the theses stated in a clear and coherent fashion? Are they sufficiently demonstrated in an accessible manner? Are there credible warrants to claims made about the theses?
- Does the method fit the problem, and is it an appropriate one given the theoretical framework?
- Do the data collected adequately address the problem? Do they make explicit the researcher's role and perspective? Are the data collection techniques a "good fit" with the method and theory?
- Are the data aggregates and analysis clearly reported? Do they make explicit the interpretive and reasoning process of the researcher?
- Does the discussion provide meaningful and warranted interpretations and conclusions?

QUALITATIVE DISSERTATION OUTLINE
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

- Background of the Problem
- Statement of the Problem
- Purpose of the Study
- Research Questions
- Importance of the Study
- Scope of the Study
- Definition of Terms
- Delimitations and Limitations

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

- Rationale for the study
- Literature review
- Synthesize previous studies and explain knowledge gap

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

- The Qualitative Paradigm
- Qualitative Methods
- The Researcher's Role
- Data Sources
- Data Collection
- Data Analysis
- Verification
- Ethical Considerations
- Plan for Narrative *or* Pilot Study Results

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

- Demographics data
- Participants
- Data analysis
- Summary
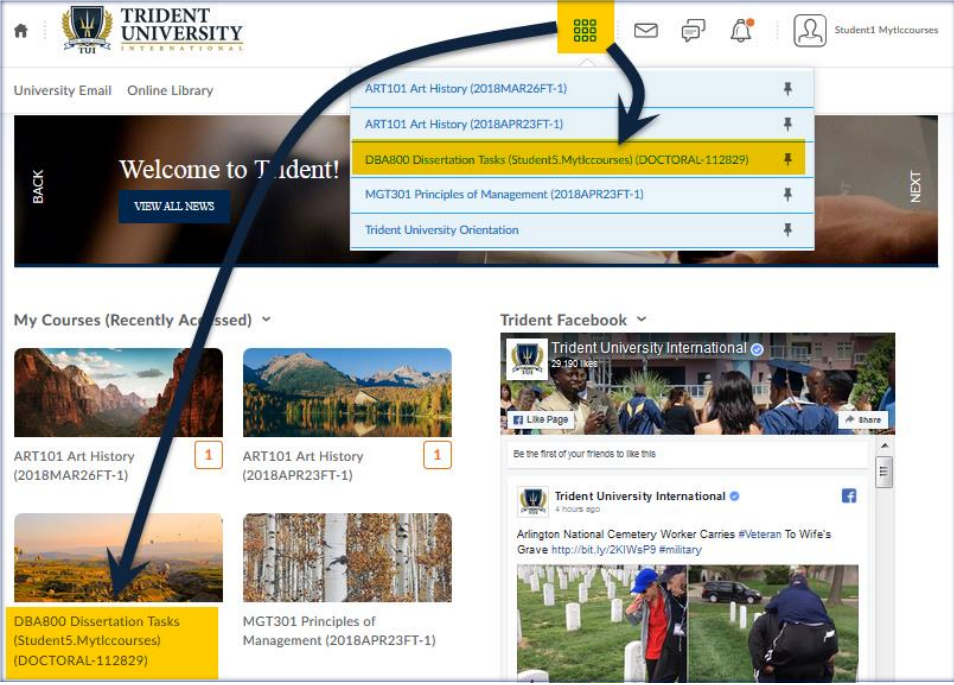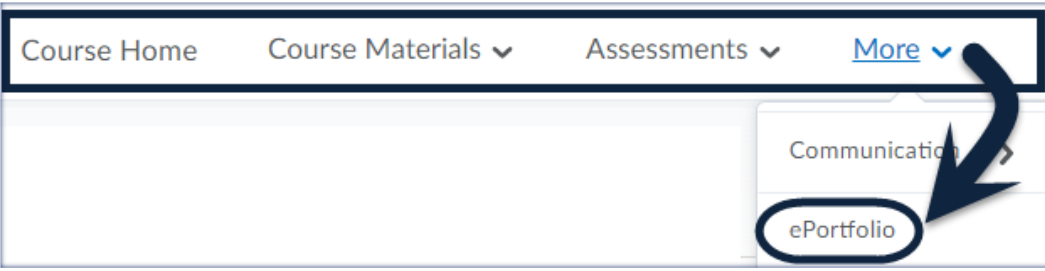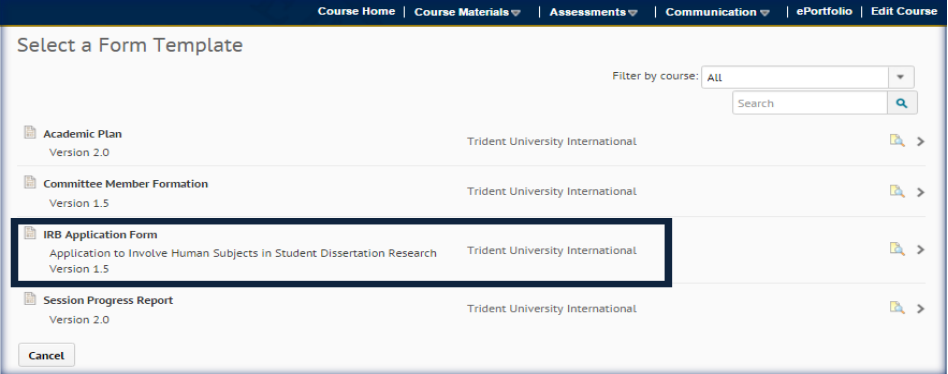
- Summary
- Conclusions
- Discussion
- Suggestions for Future Research

APPENDIX D: CREATING IRB APPLICATION OR OTHER FORMS IN EPORTFOLIO

PART 1: CREATING YOUR IRB APPLICATION OR OTHER FORMS IN EPORTFOLIO

In TLC, open your Dissertation Tasks course (which is numbered DEL800, DBA800, or DHS800).

	How to Create Forms in your ePortfolio for your TLC 800 PhD Dissertation Tasks
Step 1	In My TLC courses, open your 800 **Dissertation Tasks course** (which is numbered DEL800, DBA800, DHS800 or EDD800).
Step 2	1. Click on '**ePortfolio**' tab in the Navigation Bar.

Step 3	Once you are logged into your '**800 Dissertation Tasks'** course A. Select the **ePortfolio** tab. B. Now that you are in your ePortfolio, go to **'My Items'** C. Create a form by going to **'NEW'** and select **'+Add'** D. Select '**Form Response'** option	
Step 4	To create a New form, **click on the name of the form** that you want to create to open the form: '**IRB Application Form'** 'Session Progress Report' 'Academic Plan'	

Step 5	Fill out the information required in the form. All required fields will have a ✳	Add Artifact - Fill Out a Form **Form Contents** Note: There are nine parts to the form, each with several sub-items. Allow yourself enough time to fill out the entire form at one sitting. You must complete every part of the form in order to be able save it. Save Back Cancel
	Note for the IRB form: There are nine parts to the form, each with several sub-items. Allow yourself enough time to fill out the entire form at one sitting. **You must complete every part of the form in order to be able save it.** (After the form has been successfully saved, it can still be edited later if you like.) Click on '**SAVE'** once you have completed your form.	
Step 6	If you try to save the form without completing it, you will be prompted to fill in the missing information. Example in screen shot is for the IRB form.	

Add Artifact - Fill Out a Form

There were 21 error(s) found in the information you submitted:

- *1. Title of Protocol: is required.*
- *Select an option*
- *4. Dissertation Committee Chair is required.*
- *Select an option*
- *Select an option*
- *Select an option*
- *7. Specify name and location in text box below for any items checked above: is required.*
- *Select an option*
- *Select an option*
- *Select an option*
- *Other risks: Please enter in the text box provided below. is required.*

| Step 7 | After you have saved your **'IRB Application form'** or whichever form you are completing, you can edit it by:
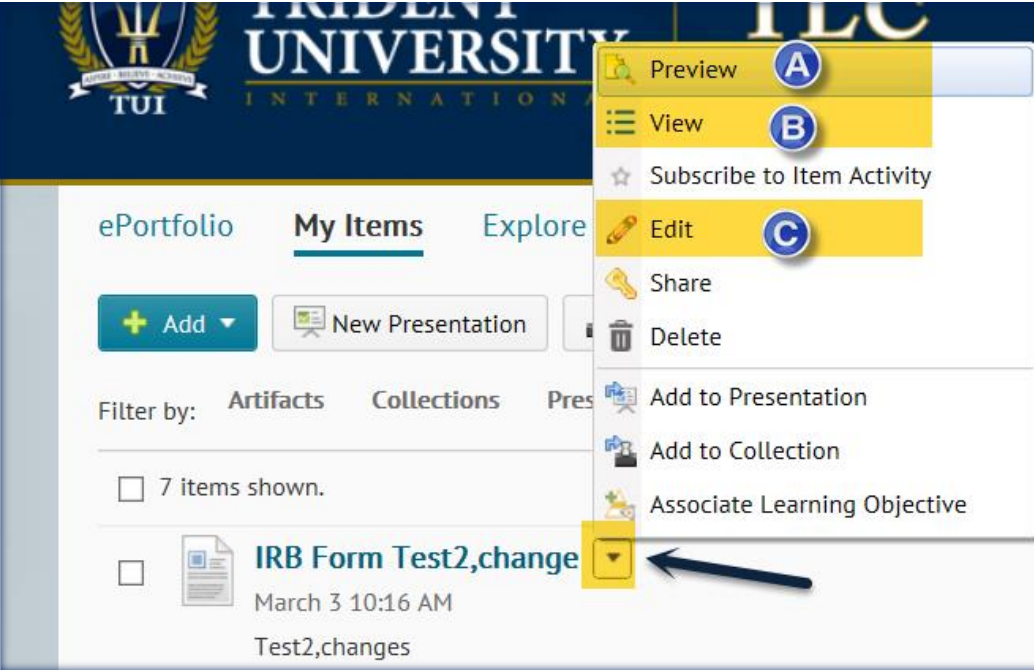
▪ Clicking on the arrow next to the form name

▪ Selecting '**Edit'** from the dropdown menu

Note: This feature applies to any of the forms that you create. | Course Home \| Course Materials ▽ \| Assessments ▽ \| Communication ▽ \| Online Rooms \| ePortfolio

ePortfolio **My Items** Explore Sharing Groups   ⚙ Settings Search My Items

⊕ New ▾   ⬆ Upload ▾   More Actions ▾

Filter by: Artifacts Collections Presentations Reflections Objectives \| Shared Unshared   Sort by: Modified: Newest first

☐ 📄 **Academic Plan - 7-2015** ▾
July 27 3:24 PM

test

☆ Subscribe
≔ View
✏ Edit
🔍 Share
🗑 Delete
Add to Presentation
Add to Collection

If you do not see your form in 'ePortfolio' tab, select the 'My Items' tab |

Step 8	Option is either `SAVE and Close` **NOTE: This will update your current form.**	
	To edit, preview or view any of the forms in your ePortfolio:	
Step 1	If you want to edit, preview or view your form in your ePortfolio , then you have the following options: Select `**My Items**` and Click on the arrow next to the file name you want. You can now select one of the following options: A. **Preview** B. **View** C. **Edit**	

Part 2: Uploading Your IRB Application or other form from ePortfolio to TLC
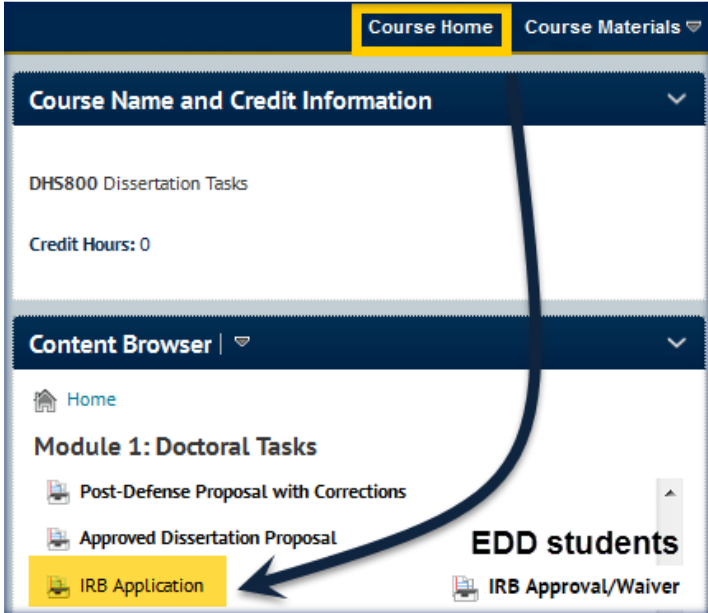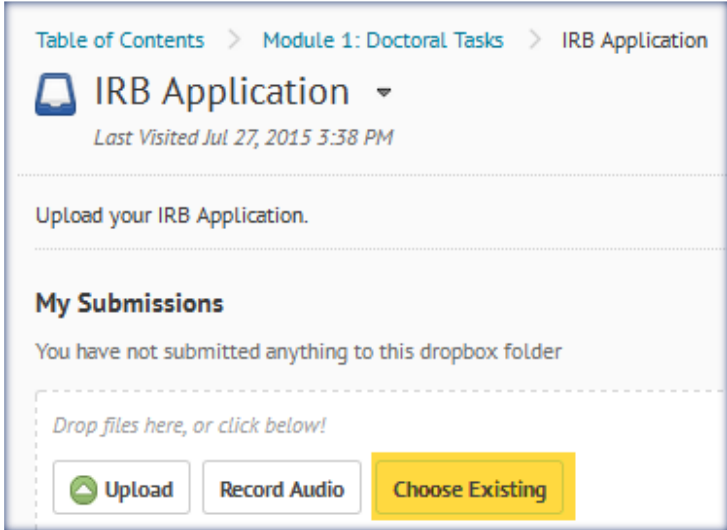
Before starting this process, you must already have created your IRB Application form in ePortfolio.

Once your IRB form is ready in ePortfolio, you must upload the form to the IRB Application DropBox in Module 1 of your 800-level class. (If you edit your IRB form
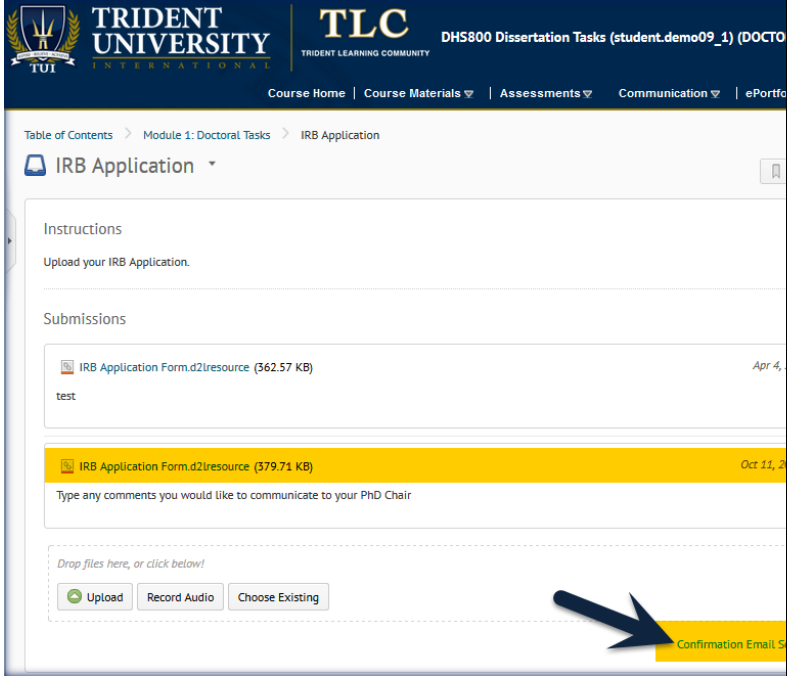
after you have submitted it to your DropBox, you will need to re-submit the revised IRB form to your DropBox.)

Dropbox Submission

Option 1	You can submit your IRB application or other forms to your Dropbox in two ways: **Option One:** Go to '**Assessments'** tab and select '**Dropbox'** ▪ Click on the **'IRB Application'** DropBox or ▪ For **EDD** students select the **'IRB Approval/Waiver'** drop box.	
Option 1 – Continued	▪ Click on '**Add a File'** ▪ Select **'ePortfolio'** ▪ Click on '**Upload'** and select the file	

	that you want ▪ Once the file uploads, click on '**DONE**'	
Option 2	**Option Two:** Go to '**Course Home'** tab and select '**Module 1: Doctoral Tasks'** ▪ Click on the the DropBox that you want, for example, **'IRB Application'** DropBox ▪ For **EDD** students select the '**IRB Approval/Waiver'** drop box.	Course Home Course Materials ▽ **Course Name and Credit Information** ∨ DHS800 Dissertation Tasks Credit Hours: 0 **Content Browser** │ ▽ ∨ 🏠 Home **Module 1: Doctoral Tasks** 📄 Post-Defense Proposal with Corrections 📄 Approved Dissertation Proposal 📄 IRB Application **EDD students** 📄 IRB Approval/Waiver
Option 2 – Continued	▪ Select '**Choose Existing'** to select files from your ePortfolio	Table of Contents ＞ Module 1: Doctoral Tasks ＞ IRB Application 📥 **IRB Application** ▾ Last Visited Jul 27, 2015 3:38 PM Upload your IRB Application. **My Submissions** You have not submitted anything to this dropbox folder Drop files here, or click below! ⬆ Upload Record Audio **Choose Existing**

Option 2 – Continued	▪ Now either **select file** from list or **Search** to select the file you want ▪ Once you select the file, click on **'Select Item'** ▪ Your file name will appear below the '**Add a File'** button. ▪ Click the blue '**Submit'** button to upload the file.	**Add a File** ePortfolio Search For: [____] 🔍 Show Search Opt 20 ▾ per page Item Image Item Name Academic Plan - 7-2015 View: Academic Plan - 7-2015 [Form] Modified on Jul 27, 2015 3:24 PM Type: Artifact test 20 ▾ per page **Select Item** **Cancel**
Option 2 – Continued	▪ Your file name will appear '**Upload'** button ▪ Click on '**Submit to Dropbox'** to complete your submission	Table of Contents > Module 1: Doctoral Tasks > IRB Application 📋 **IRB Application** ▾ *Last Visited Jul 27, 2015 3:38 PM* Upload your IRB Application. **My Submissions** You have not submitted anything to this dropbox folder *Drop files here, or click below!* ⬆ Upload Record Audio Choose Existing 📄 5.d... (284.71 KB) ✕ **you will see your file here** **Comments** ✂ 📋 📋 📋 ▾ Paragraph ▾ Font Family ▾ Size ▾ ■ ▾ ⋯ **Optional: Type in any comments you want.** abc </> 🔍 ⛶ **Submit to Dropbox** ⬅
Option 2 – Continued	▪ The screen shows the file you	

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<td>uploaded and that an email confirming successful upload has been sent to you and you will see a time stamp next to file you submitted.</td>
<td>

</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**For IRB applications**</td>
<td colspan="2">Once you have uploaded your IRB application, send an email to [mail to: IRB@trident.edu](mailto:IRB@trident.edu) to request an IRB review. You will receive an email confirmation within one business day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Version</td>
<td>Published: 09 May 2018</td>
<td>How To Create and Submit Forms in TLC 800 Course_DL_v1.4</td>
</tr>
</table>

PART 2: UPLOADING YOUR IRB APPLICATION OR OTHER FORMS FROM E-PORTFOLIO TO TLC

Before starting this process, the IRB Application form must have already been completed in ePortfolio. Once the IRB form is ready in ePortfolio, the student must upload the form to the IRB Application DropBox in 800. (If the IRB form is edited after submission to DropBox, it will need to be re-submit via the revised IRB form to your DropBox.) The IRB application or other forms can be submitted to Dropbox in two ways:

Option One:
1. Go to '**Assessments**' tab and select '**Dropbox**'
2. Click on the **'IRB Application'** DropBox or Click on '**Add a File'**
3. Select '**ePortfolio'**
4. Click on '**Upload'** and select the file needed
5. Once the file uploads, click on '**DONE'**

Option Two:
Go to **'Course Home'** tab and select **'Module 1: Doctoral Tasks'**
1. Click on the DropBox **'IRB Application'**
2. Select '**Choose Existing'** to select files from ePortfolio
3. Once the file is selected, click on **'Select Item'**
4. The file name will appear below the '**Add a File'** button.
5. Click the blue '**Submit'** button to upload the file.
6. The file name will appear '**Upload'** button
7. Click on '**Submit to Dropbox'** to complete the submission
8. The screen shows the file uploaded and indicates that an email confirming successful upload has been sent to the Ph.D. student. There will be a time stamp next to submitted file.
9. Now either **select file** from list or **Search** to select the file needed.

PART 3: UPLOAD SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The student will prepare the IRB application under the guidance of the committee Chair. After the Chair approves, student will submit, at minimum, the following documents to the Dropbox (with the IRB Application). Hint: upload each document separately and save files with titles that are easy to follow (e.g. "Proposal" or "Interview Protocol").

1. IRB application form
2. Methodology document
3. Instruments (surveys, questionnaires, interview protocol)
4. Informed Consent
5. Permission letter (from the study site)
6. Recruitment Correspondence (email or letter)

PART 4: NOTIFY IRB

1. After the completed application is submitted, the student sends an email to IRB@trident.edu to request a review.
   a. Copy the Dissertation Chair <u>and</u> Doctoral Studies Director
2. For Provisional Approval, send an email to IRB to request a review
   a. Copy the Dissertation Chair and Doctoral Studies Director
   b. This is only for cases where the study site has requested approval from Trident at AIU IRB <u>before</u> providing a permission letter to conduct the research.

APPENDIX E: DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEFENSE RUBRIC

TRIDENT UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL

The evaluation rubric below will be used to assess Dissertation Proposal Defense in the Ph.D. Programs at Trident. The committee Chair completes this rubric with the full committee after a student has defended their dissertation. The final document is sent to the student and Doctoral Studies Director.

Student's Name:

Date:

Committee Chair:

Committee members:

Verification of ID: ☐ Yes, ☐ No; Initials: ___

	Criteria	Level 4 Excellent	Level 3 Proficient	Level 2 Developing	Level 1 Emerging
1	Title and Title Page				
2	Abstract				
3	Introduction				
4	Problem Statement - Research questions				
5	Literature Review				
6	Conceptual Framework				
7	Hypotheses				
8	Study Design				
9	Population Sampling Size and Procedures				
10	Data Collection				
11	Proposed Statistical Analysis				
12	Limitations				
13	Formatting				
14	References				
	Total points				

A minimum of 45 points are required to pass the proposal defense.
Excellent or Proficient is required for ALL categories for approval.

A. Pass. The proposal is approved by the Committee, as presented, with recommendation of only minor adjustments. The completed adjustments must be reviewed and approved by the Committee Chair.

B. Pass. The proposal is approved but requires major adjustments. The completed revisions must be reviewed and approved by all Committee members.

C. Fail. The proposal will be approved only after significant restructuring. The proposal must be defended again after the restructuring. The second defense must be scheduled no earlier than two months after the first defense.

D. Fail. The proposal is not accepted, and the Committee will assist the student in preparing another proposal. A second defense will be scheduled to occur no earlier than three months following the first defense.

APPENDIX G: EVALUATION RUBRIC FOR PH.D. DISSERTATION DEFENSE

TRIDENT UNIVERSITY
INTERNATIONAL

The evaluation rubric below will be used to assess Dissertation Defenses in the Ph.D. Programs at Trident. The committee Chair completes this rubric with the full committee after a student has defended their Dissertation. The completed document is then sent to the student and Doctoral Studies Director.

Student's Name:

Date:

Committee Chair:

Committee members:

Verification of ID: ☐ Yes, ☐ No; Initials: ___

	Criteria	Level 4 Excellent	Level 3 Proficient	Level 2 Developing	Level 1 Emerging
1	Chapter I: Introduction, Problem Statement and Research Questions				
2	Chapter II: Literature Review and Theoretical Background				
3	Chapter III: Methodology				
4	Chapter IV: Data Analysis and Results				
5	Chapter V: Discussion				
6	Formatting APA style				
7	References and Appendices				
	Total points				

A minimum of 21 points are required to pass the dissertation defense.
Excellent or Proficient is required for ALL categories for approval.

After the dissertation defense, the committee will meet and reach one of four conclusions:
  A. Pass. The Dissertation is approved by the Committee, as presented, with only minor adjustments that must be reviewed and approved by the Dissertation Chair.
  B. Pass. The Dissertation is approved but with adjustments. These completed adjustments must be reviewed and approved by all Committee members.
  C. Fail. The Dissertation will be approved only after significant restructuring. The Dissertation must be defended again after the restructuring. The second defense will be no earlier than two months following the first defense.