

WALDEN UNIVERSITY

A higher degree. A higher purpose.

A Guide to the
Knowledge Area Modules
Making the KAMs Work for You

Guiding Principles
Writing Tips
Frequently Asked Questions

A Guide to the Knowledge Area Modules

Making the KAMs Work for You

WALDEN UNIVERSITY

Iris M. Yob, Ed.D.

A GUIDE TO THE KNOWLEDGE AREA MODULES

**MAKING THE KAMs
WORK FOR YOU**

Iris M. Yob, Ed.D.

Revised March 2010

Acknowledgments: We are grateful to Mark Bignell, Patricia Bresser, Robert Gerulat, Sally Miller, and Diana White for permission to reproduce excerpts of their work.

© 2010 Walden University LLC.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Basics	1
Guiding Principles	5
The Learning Agreement	12
The Breadth.....	18
The Depth	24
The Application.....	29
Writing and Formatting Tips	31
Frequently Asked Questions	34
The Rubrics	39

THE BASICS

A Knowledge Area Module, or KAM, is a unit of study in a social science subject area. The study is conducted as an independent investigation for which you will prepare a contract, known as the Learning Agreement. The Learning Agreement indicates what learning objectives you set for yourself within the subject area, what resources you have located to help you meet those objectives, and how you will demonstrate that you have competently met those objectives.

At the completion of your study, you will write a comprehensive paper known as a KAM demonstration. This paper has three parts—Breadth, Depth, and Application. Each part is given a course number and is equivalent to four or five quarter credits. The first part, the Breadth, critically examines the basic theories of the specific subject area. The second part, the Depth, explores more closely an aspect of that subject area focusing on current research. The third part, the Application, provides an opportunity for you to undertake a project to demonstrate the relationship of what you learned in the earlier parts to actual professional practice. The three parts of the KAM are interconnected, with the latter parts building on and developing what has preceded them.

The KAM has been designed this way to strengthen the connection between theory and practice. The theoretical base of the Breadth component becomes a foundation for examining current research developments in the Depth component, and together these form a conceptual and research base for informing practice in the Application component.

KAMs are first and foremost about learning.

A major part of writing a KAM demonstration is the research. The objective is to learn something—a lot, actually—about a particular field of knowledge. The KAM demonstration is a vehicle for confirming that you did, indeed, learn. Thus, the real effort should be directed to the learning as much as to the writing.

KAMs are about a special kind of learning.

At the start of your KAM work, your learning will focus on the facts, research, and theories; however, the real learning—higher order learning—is about what you do with the facts, research, and theories you study. So, you need to aim not only to understand but also to critically analyze, evaluate, and synthesize what you understand in order to create something new. At the end of your doctoral program, you are assessed on whether you have been able to make a unique contribution to the body of knowledge. The KAMs are where you start practicing that skill during your program.

Why KAMs?

The rationale behind the KAM approach is that you structure and shape your study program according to your own interests and purposes. In other words, you customize your own study program. While everyone examines the same general theoretical foundation in the Breadth to gain a broad overview of the knowledge area, even here you have the opportunity to focus particularly on those theories and approaches that are most central to meeting your own objectives. Then in the Depth, you choose a topic

within the field of inquiry that relates directly to your own professional interests and that you pursue more narrowly and closely. In the Application, you develop a project for a real or imagined situation in your professional practice, based on the knowledge gained in the earlier parts of the KAM. So, each completed KAM demonstration is as unique as each student's professional responsibilities and aspirations.

One of the primary advantages of this approach is that you can forge a link between your professional life and your doctoral studies. You design the KAM demonstration so that theory and practice inform each other. What you study can enhance your daily practice, and what you know from experience can provide a critical perspective on the ideas you are studying. In essence, you are a scholar-practitioner—an active practitioner within a profession. Your work is deeply informed by theory and research, and your work informs your professional knowledge.

Forging your own study program is a significant way to develop those scholar-practitioner skills that you will carry with you beyond your doctoral program. You will learn library and Web-based skills for locating information, research findings, and theories; you will articulate ideas; you will exercise critical-thinking skills; you will bring yourself up-to-date with recent developments in your profession; you will enhance your ability to ask the right questions and seek answers to them; and you will practice problem-solving. More importantly, you will make an original contribution to the body of knowledge in each KAM—one of the hallmarks of doctoral work—by writing a reflective paper or developing a project that breaks new ground.

Through it all, you will learn much. You will also probably unlearn some things. The possibility of new perspectives and a clearer vision of your professional life, combined with the surprises that come with discovery, drive the KAM approach.

Why these KAMs?

There are as many as six KAMs per doctoral program. These are divided between core KAMs (which are consistent across all degree programs) and specialized or advanced KAMs (which are focused on a specialization area). In some programs, courses have been substituted for the core KAMs or the specialized KAMs.

The three core KAMs focus on the theories, analyses, and modes of inquiry typically employed in the social and behavioral sciences:

- KAM I: Principles of Social Change
- KAM II: Principles of Human Development
- KAM III: Principles of Organizational and Social Systems

Together, these KAMs help you to examine the basic units of the individual, people in small or large groups or people in interaction with one another, and whole cultures or societies. These KAMs also help you to ask why things are as they are and how they change or how they can be changed.

Along with the KAMs, you will also take a series of research methodology courses. The research methodology sequence explores how inquiry is undertaken in the social sciences. Here you will learn the approaches and skills for conducting your own research and assessing the findings of others in your field. These courses depart from the general model of the KAM independent study: they are conducted as online seminars.

What is the role of the faculty member?

While working on KAMs, you will find faculty members take two distinct roles: mentor and assessor.

Your faculty mentor will guide and advise you throughout the program. You will meet your appointed mentor in your section of SBSF 7100 Research Forum, and that person will stay with you throughout the program. He or she may even become the chair of your dissertation committee. Of course, as your interests change, you may request a different mentor so that you can work with a person whose interests match your own and whose expertise you believe fits well with your needs as a scholar. It is particularly important for you to choose the right mentor at the time you form your dissertation committee. (The final decision regarding faculty mentor assignments rests with the associate dean or the associate dean's designee.)

The assessor is the faculty member who works closely with you on a particular KAM. The assessor guides you in the development of your Learning Agreement and KAM and evaluates your work at the end. Your mentor will be your first KAM assessor and may work with you directly on more than one KAM. Check your college's or school's policy on how many KAMs you may work on with your faculty mentor. For all other KAMs, you will invite a faculty member to work with you as your assessor. It's a good idea to consult with your faculty mentor when choosing assessors for your KAMs.

Your mentors and assessors will be your learning partners. They will listen to you as you envision your objectives and purposes and ensure that you translate these into an appropriate plan of study. They will encourage you to meet new challenges and set for yourself appropriately demanding objectives and standards for personal accomplishment. They will ask questions so that you probe the central issues. They will point you toward relevant resources. They will explore with you your own imaginative ideas, research options, and practical demonstrations. They will look for you to evaluate your own work and progress. And your assessors will read and evaluate your written work with respect. However, your assessors will not copy-edit or proofread your work for style. You are responsible for this and should master the essentials outlined in the APA style manual. If you need additional help with writing, consult the online Walden [Writing Center](#).

Each faculty assessor has 14 calendar days from receipt of your work to either approve it or advise you on how to improve it. It is a good idea to contact your assessor to make sure your submitted work has been received. If your paper is lost or stalled in the process, contact your assessor.

Taking charge of your own learning and making it work for you may seem overwhelming. While there is something comfortable about having an instructor prescribe your path, it can also be stultifying and limiting—and frustrating if you are not studying what is important to you as a scholar-practitioner. While faculty members do not dictate your study program, they do act as your guides. They will work with you as you identify and formulate your questions, seek out ways of finding answers to those questions, and forge links between the study program and your professional interests.

What is the role of the Walden University librarians?

The librarians are significant resource persons in your study program. Their role is to help you learn how to identify relevant literature, obtain resource materials, and evaluate information resources. You will meet them at residencies, and you can contact them by e-mail or phone for individual questions.

You can also visit the [library's website](#) for general information. In particular, you will find there suggested reference lists for many of the KAMs under "Get KAM Research Help."

What is the role of the academic advisors?

Academic advisors can counsel you on policies related to processing Learning Agreements and KAM demonstrations. They also track your progress through the program according to the specific progress standards that relate to Walden doctoral work. While they do not advise you on the content of your work, they can confirm whether a Learning Agreement or KAM demonstration has been received and approved. With their help, you are encouraged to follow your work through the approval process. Also, the advisors may be your advocate if a faculty member is not responsive to your requests and reminders.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Be guided by a vision for social change.

A doctoral degree at Walden University is intended to meet a real need. Whether your issue is managed health care, at-risk students, business downsizing, team building, multiculturalism, or some other area of social concern, purposefully customize your study program toward that issue. If you can see that your work has the potential to make a real difference somewhere in your professional world, it will help you maintain focus in your study, sustain a sufficient level of motivation to carry you through to graduation, and bring a greater sense of purpose and personal satisfaction to your effort.

Put your imagination to work for you.

Bringing about social change in some corner of your professional world begins with a dream, however small it may seem in the grand scheme of things. There are no pre-established steps for either creating the dream itself or finding ways to express and explore it progressively in the successive KAMs. Rather, this is a task for the imagination, another skill that improves with practice. So, give yourself permission to “think outside of the box” as you work your way through the program, by looking for connections among theories, between theories and practice, between research questions and research methodologies, and within different sociocultural settings.

Consider pointing the KAMs toward your dissertation research.

The dissertation is where your project for social change is most fully realized, but each KAM can be a step toward the dissertation and can be sustained by the same vision. If the context of your chosen area of study is sufficiently broad and deep, you will discover that most, if not all, KAMs will give you a firm grasp of the topic. The broad theoretical analyses, the in-depth examination of current research findings, and the application projects you design and test can combine directly to form an abundance of ideas, experimental approaches, and practical solutions on which to draw when implementing your dissertation study. The more carefully you plan your Program of Study in general and the KAMs in particular, the more you will be able to capitalize on this opportunity to prepare for the dissertation. You may also discover that you will revise and refocus your dissertation topic through doing your KAM work, but that in itself is also significant preparation for the dissertation.

In fact, by the time you come to the dissertation proposal, you should have some understanding of what gaps exist in the collective knowledge on the issue you will address, a set of possible research questions, the essentials for developing the theoretical framework for your study, a good collection of critical readings for the literature review, some preliminary ideas on the research design, and possibly even the results of a pilot study. Even more, you will have honed the skills of doctoral-level thinking and scholarly writing so that these have become second nature when it is time to write your dissertation.

Be sure to use academic integrity when producing your scholarly work. Although you may be writing for a second, third, or fourth time on a topic (such as your dissertation theme), each time you visit that theme, your work should reflect new approaches and insights. In general, you may use only small portions of documents from your KAMs as background or foundation for additional development in a subsequent KAM or research project, at the discretion of your faculty member. You may not merely copy and paste substantial sections from one KAM to another unless you receive prior approval from your faculty member. When using your own scholarly work in subsequent research, you should cite yourself as the primary author and your previous coursework or KAM demonstrations as unpublished works, as shown in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

See the KAM as a whole.

Although a KAM has three identifiable components—Breadth, Depth, and Application—the final product should exhibit a wholeness. Each of the KAM components is investigated within the same general field of inquiry, but this alone does not produce a unified KAM demonstration. Each component builds on the foundation laid in the previous ones and, moreover, provides a critical perspective for assessing the claims advanced in the other components. So, there is a retrospective and a prospective quality to the integration of the parts of a KAM, a review of what has preceded it and a preview of what is to come. Identifying and making explicit this interconnectedness is one indicator of a successful KAM demonstration.

Read the materials you have been provided or have been asked to prepare.

This would seem to go without saying, but you may be tempted to neglect this important first step. The particular materials that support the KAMs include the following:

Professional Development Plan (PDP) and Program of Study (POS)

These are the first pieces of writing you produce when you begin your doctoral program. They will show the order in which you plan to undertake the KAMs. They will also give a brief overview of what you are likely to attempt in each of the components of Breadth, Depth, and Application for each KAM. Of course, what you once planned is not set in stone, and as you engage the resources and establish some experience on which to build, you may want to revise these early outlines. Nevertheless, they do give you a starting point for thinking about each new KAM.

At the beginning of each quarter, you will consult both the PDP and POS and develop a plan that outlines your goals for the quarter. At the end of the quarter, you will report on your progress and check off on the POS any requirements met during the quarter. This way, you will stay on track to graduate in a timely manner.

Online Catalog and Student Handbook

The [Walden University Catalog](#) contains the degree requirements for each of the doctoral programs, providing course codes and titles for each KAM section.

The [Walden University Student Handbook](#) has separate sections describing the policies and procedures for the Learning Agreement and the KAM, including useful information on the appointment of assessors and approval processes.

KAM Curriculum

The curriculum for each KAM, accessed directly within the SBSF 7100 course and also on your program's home page, lists the syllabus and learning activities. It outlines the content area, offers learning objectives, suggests references, and describes a variety of possible learning demonstrations for each KAM.

While the curriculum does impose a degree of structure, it is still more like an outline of possibilities than a collection of prescriptions and rules to follow. You will find that the Breadth is the most prescriptive component, for it defines a knowledge area and identifies its seminal thinkers—thus providing a theoretical base for the rest of the KAM. Within the Breadth, though, you can bring a particular perspective to bear on your selection of themes: ethnicity, gender, cultural context, professional objectives, and so on. The Depth and Application encourage even greater discretion, for here you identify the particular aspect of the study you want to pursue and how you will put it to work in a practical way.

The curriculum will help you frame your work in terms of Walden's expectations. As you get a clearer idea of what you want out of the program and as you gain more confidence, you will increasingly use it as a point of departure for delving into the knowledge area. From there, look for additional resources and alternative approaches within the field of inquiry and develop your own particular demonstrations of competency. Your scholarly expertise will grow as a result of practicing these skills.

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association

This manual (6th edition, 2010) provides you with the information you need to know about formatting, citing, punctuating, and other grammar rules for writing your KAM demonstrations. While creativity is valued in other aspects of your work at Walden, these rules are fixed, and this manual is your rule book. The [Writing Center](#) also provides additional information on style and formatting preferences online.

SBSF 7100 Research Forum

This online course for continuing research is designed to give you a place for conversation with your mentor and other students about your work, as well as ready access to a wealth of supporting materials, including samples of work and links to pertinent documents. You will be automatically enrolled in the course each quarter.

If you have not yet been appointed a mentor, you will be assigned to a section with a temporary instructor. Once you have a mentor, you will be assigned to your mentor's section. If you invite a different faculty member to be your dissertation chair, you will be transferred to your chair's section of SBSF 7100 as soon as the appointment is made official.

SBSF 7100 includes a rubric for KAMs. Use this [rubric](#) as a guide for writing your KAMs. This same rubric will be used by faculty members when assessing your KAMs.

Approach each KAM as a creative exercise.

Fashioning your scholarly work and designing your KAM demonstrations are similar to painting a picture or composing a symphony; that is, they are all creative exercises. Even though you may use many of the same original materials as others, your choices and scholarly decisions along the way will result in a final product that is uniquely yours. You will find some models or samples of complete KAM demonstrations, but do not let these restrain your own thinking. While your faculty mentor and KAM assessor will advise you, the creative initiative lies with you.

Think critically.

In creating the KAM demonstrations, it is helpful to adopt a critical mind-set. In other words, in your KAM work, you should look for weaknesses or oversights in proclaimed theories, demand evidence to support claims, question the way things are usually done, and avoid taking anything for granted.

You may wonder what qualifies you to criticize well-respected, published theorists or researchers, especially when you are new to their domain of knowledge. Remember that no theorist has all knowledge and no one is without blind spots. For many, their writings preceded the full testing of their ideas in real situations and often the corrective influence of alternative points of view. The theorists you will study do not have the advantage of what you know from experience or from advances made since they wrote. You have at your disposal an array of methodologies and new perspectives in social science research not available to earlier generations of scholars.

Today, scholars are much more sensitive to the fact that there can be differences in interpretation among different cultures or genders. Contemporary writers are more hesitant to make claims for all people for all times. They increasingly realize that their own cultural contexts and personal value systems help determine what they study, how they study it, and what conclusions they might put forward. On these grounds, not only may you criticize the ideas of others, but you *must* do so if the collective knowledge is to continue to grow and be trustworthy in diverse situations.

Turn your critical analysis not only on the writings of others, but on your own work as a scholar and as a practitioner as well. This requires a good deal of research and unhurried reflection along with a measure of the kind of common sense that grows out of experience.

Use library collections and other resources.

Identifying and obtaining scholarly material is a significant part of your doctoral program. Since no textbooks are prescribed for KAMs, identifying resources is a basic skill that you begin to practice from the initial KAM. At the [Walden Library website](#), you will find some suggested references for particular KAMs under the “Get KAM Help” link. Do not limit yourself to these references only. Explore online library catalogs, scholarly citation indexes (also known as databases), and scholarly websites to identify theoretical works and research that match the requirements of the KAM and your professional and research interests. You may find books, journals, reports, Internet documents, and other resources to help you. For assistance in identifying scholarly material, consult the Walden Library website or contact the librarians at waldenlb@waldenu.edu.

The Walden Library offers you access to more than 35,000 full-text online journals and 31,000 electronic books, as well as thousands of dissertations, reports, conference papers, and more. You can access these materials immediately through the library's research databases and other online collections. Explore the [Walden Library website](#) to become familiar with the resources available to you. The library also offers document delivery and reference services, which can help you obtain materials from other sources.

If you are affiliated with a local university or college, you may be able to use that institution's resources and services. If you are not affiliated with any of your local institutions, explore their library websites or contact them to determine if they extend services to unaffiliated patrons. You can also contact the Walden librarians at waldenlb@waldenu.edu for guidance regarding options available to you for obtaining scholarly materials.

Develop a filing system.

Locating information is the first step in mastering resources; developing a filing and retrieval system is the second. You may want to consider using a computer software filing system. Such downloadable software packages allow you to store and manage bibliographic references. They also permit you to collect references from online and Web-based databases, create instant bibliographies and reference lists, and import some text files from online sources. Some Walden students have found such software packages as ProCite and EndNote helpful. Other students use annotated notes and card files. Whatever system you choose, you will probably discover that you need to adapt it along the way to suit your own needs. The primary objective is that you maintain good records of the information you have discovered, including where you found it and the research strategy you used to locate it. That way, when you next need the information, you can relocate it. You will also have the full details for citing it in your work.

Take comprehensive notes.

Read with pen in hand or computer keyboard at your fingertips. That is, as you read, develop a record of your findings: the writer's key ideas, the exact page where you found these ideas, pivotal quotes in the work you might want to use, and more importantly, questions, criticisms, and other observations that come into your mind. In other words, make your reading an active, creative exercise—and keep a record of it. Good record-keeping will also help keep your writing honest. If an idea is already credited to another writer in your notes, you will not inadvertently claim it as your own.

Example

Notes on Gilligan, C. (1982). In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

p. 2 "The different voice I describe is characterized not by gender but theme. Its association with women is an empirical observation.... But this association is not absolute...." [Note: How does this relate to the title of the book which focuses on women's development? Will she actually show that men too may use this "voice"?)

p. 2 central assumption: way people talk reveals how they see the world.

p. 3 makes distinction between her research that looks at moral problems in people's experience and other research that focuses on subjects thinking about problems presented to them by researcher.

p. 6 "...how accustomed we have become to seeing life through men's eyes."

p. 8 separation and individuation different for males than females. [Claim based on Chodorow's work but is she the only theorist who makes this argument? Why don't Freud and some of the other psychologists also notice this?]

Just write.

When the reading and planning are complete, you may find yourself staring at a blank sheet of paper (or blank computer screen), not sure how to craft that first sentence. Or writer's block may come upon you at some other critical juncture of a KAM demonstration. The most effective preparation for writing is to outline and organize your paper before you begin. After that, one solution to writer's block is to walk away from the task for a time, focus on other things, and then come back to make a fresh start. Another solution is to skip the opening and write a portion of the paper that flows more easily for you. The text of your paper does not have to be written in the order in which it is presented. Whatever strategy works for you, ultimately you will just need to write. If you make a start, then you will find the pen (or keyboard) will do some of the work for you. Sooner or later, the ideas will begin to take shape, and whole paragraphs will start to appear. Putting some thoughts down in writing will give you ideas about how to improve what you have said and where to go from there.

Be your own editor.

You should act as the first friendly critic of your own work. As an independent scholar, you are responsible for correct spelling and grammar, the application of the conventions of scholarly writing, and the clarity and persuasiveness of your ideas. Polished writing is the end result of multiple drafts and fine-tunings. It is not unusual for the refining and editing of a scholarly paper to take as long as writing the first draft. It is a good rule to leave an iteration (or rewrite) of your work untouched for a day or two and then to read it again with a fresh eye. Reading your work aloud to yourself or others will also reveal where the continuity of ideas or the development of an argument might need some adjustment.

Use iterations as learning opportunities.

A request for further iterations of your work is not an indication of failure but an opportunity to strengthen your work by extending your ideas or reaching a higher standard of thinking or communication. At least one iteration request is normal, and several requests are not unusual. The review of your KAM demonstrations by your faculty assessors is similar to the review process for other scholarly endeavors. A research project, such as a journal article or book chapter, has not only been carefully reviewed by the writer, but has undergone further reviews by peers and colleagues before it is published. The goal of the review process in each case is to make the final product stronger and clearer.

Aim for quality and integrity in your scholarship.

As a doctoral student, you are an active participant in the scholarly enterprise. The integrity of scholarship as a whole ultimately depends on the integrity of individual scholars, especially since scholarship is a community activity shared among peers and colleagues. You must be sure to acknowledge all sources you use for ideas or wording. Accurately citing sources is critical to the integrity of your work; be sure to check your style manual for proper citation methods. Evaluate the work of others respectfully. Represent the findings of others accurately. And for your own development as a member of the community of scholars, strive to make each KAM demonstration reflect your best endeavors.

Balance growth and haste, completion and perfection.

There is a fine line you need to find as you work your way through the KAMs and into the writing of your dissertation. It is the line between not doing enough and doing too much. No KAM demonstration is going to be perfect, but every KAM demonstration should show measurable growth in your ability as a researcher, a scholarly thinker, and a communicator. On the one hand, don't get caught up trying to make the perfect thumb when there is a whole statue to sculpt. On the other hand, don't sacrifice quality for haste, for haste is the antithesis of reflective and productive thinking.

THE LEARNING AGREEMENT

What is a Learning Agreement?

The Learning Agreement (LA) is the plan you create for a KAM to help you focus and design your KAM research. It is also a contract, in that you agree to study the KAM according to the plan outlined. It can save you time by allowing your assessor to give feedback and guidance on the framework of your study before you fully invest in researching and writing the KAM.

The basic components of a Learning Agreement are the following:

- An overview of the KAM—that is, a summary statement of what you plan to accomplish in each component of the KAM, with an indication of how each of the components is related
- Separate outlines of the Breadth, Depth, and Application components, in each case listing the objectives, the references you plan to consult, and a description of how you will demonstrate that you have met the objectives

You can find sample Learning Agreements in the SBSF 7100 course and a writing template for Learning Agreements on the [Writing Center website](#).

How does the Learning Agreement work?

You submit the Learning Agreement to your faculty assessor, who may or may not have further suggestions or questions for revision. A [rubric](#) for Learning Agreements can be found in SBSF 7100. The rubric can guide you as you develop your Learning Agreement and will be used by your assessor to evaluate your Learning Agreement. By reviewing your Learning Agreement, the assessor assures you that your plan for the KAM appears workable, is sufficiently comprehensive, and meets basic expectations.

Who is the assessor of my KAM?

For your first KAM, your faculty mentor serves as the assessor. For all other KAMs, you invite faculty members to serve as your assessor. It is a good idea to consult with your faculty mentor before making these invitations. You'll also want to check the KAM Policies and Processes section of the student handbook for your college's or school's policy on how many KAMs your faculty mentor may assess for you.

As a general rule, use your KAMs to work with a wide variety of faculty members, especially those who share similar interests with you. You will probably want to invite such faculty members to participate on your dissertation committee.

Where do I start?

You will not be able to write an effective Learning Agreement until you have familiarized yourself with the curriculum for that KAM. You can access the curriculum in the SBSF 7100 course and through your program's home page.

Once you have a sense of what the KAM is about, you need to locate and examine possible resource materials. The suggested reference lists given at the [Walden Library site](#) under "Get KAM Help" serve as entry points into the subject area. You might also browse reference books at your local library, look for related topics on the Web, or search other information sources. Doing an overview of the resource materials first will enable you to make informed selections among theories, topics to be examined in depth, and possible application projects. It will also determine what resources are available locally and what resources you will need to acquire via interlibrary loan or by other means.

Then, with your reference materials at hand, the curriculum open, and your Professional Development Plan fresh in your mind, you are ready to begin.

Finding a Theme

KAM curriculum guides are written to encompass a field of knowledge, but your KAM demonstration is limited by the parameters of your own interests and by approximately 30 pages of writing. You do not have to cover the whole field, but you do need to explore a coherent and identifiable element within that field. In other words, find a theme that is important to you and develop that topic throughout your paper. The curriculum gives you some suggestions for themes: you may choose one of these or develop another of your choosing.

Writing the Objectives

BE SPECIFIC.

<i>NO</i>	<i>YES</i>
<i>Analyze several social change theories. (Avoid that word "several" and other vague alternatives.)</i>	<i>Analyze the social change theories of Marx, Blumer, Durkheim, and Toffler in terms of their underlying assumptions about human nature and destiny.</i> <i>Not only does this objective identify the theorists to be studied but also the particular perspective or theme that will be used in the analysis.</i>
<i>Examine a problem in my professional field from the perspective of social systems theory.</i> <i>Now is the time to decide which problem.</i>	<i>Examine the problems associated with managed health care in district X from the perspective of social systems theory.</i>

WRITE OBJECTIVES THAT WILL ALSO DEMONSTRATE WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED.

Hint: Make your objectives read like examination questions.

NO	YES
<p><i>Understand the difference between open and closed systems.</i></p> <p>“Understand” is not a demonstration. Ask yourself what you can do to demonstrate that you understand.</p>	<p><i>Differentiate between open and closed systems in terms of organization, purpose, and effect.</i></p> <p>If you “differentiate” between open and closed systems, you will have demonstrated your knowledge of them.</p>
<p><i>Appreciate the role of social and cultural context on human development.</i></p> <p>What can you do to demonstrate that you do “appreciate”?</p>	<p><i>Describe and explain significant ways in which social and cultural context can affect human development.</i></p> <p>Describing and explaining will show that you appreciate the impact of social and cultural context on human development.</p>

USE LOWER ORDER OBJECTIVES ONLY AS STARTING POINTS FOR HIGHER ORDER OBJECTIVES.

Higher order objectives indicate that you will be making your own original contributions to the field of study; lower order objectives indicate that you will be merely repeating in some way the thoughts of others. While some summary of the ideas of authorities in the field of knowledge may be useful, always keep the summary short and endeavor to go beyond it. It is recommended that you incorporate higher order demonstrations such as the following:

Analyze: Take the work apart to examine its basic assumptions, structure, evidence, reasons, conclusions, logical implications, and so forth.

Compare: Expose patterns of similarity in the basic assumptions, structure, evidence, reasons, conclusions, and logical implications among different writers.

Contrast: Find where writers differ from each other in basic assumptions, structure, evidence, reasons, meanings, and logical implications.

Synthesize: Blend the ideas and contributions of a number of writers into a coherent whole.

Integrate: Harmonize the disparities among theories to give a comprehensive view of the knowledge area.

Evaluate: Appraise the strengths and weaknesses of a theory against identifiable criteria.

LOWER ORDER OBJECTIVES – NO	HIGHER ORDER OBJECTIVES – YES
<p><i>Summarize the major points in the human development theories of Piaget, Maslow, Kohlberg, and Fowler.</i></p> <p>The theories may be unfamiliar to you, but a KAM demonstration is not the place to merely write a disconnected series of book summaries.</p>	<p><i>Synthesize the human development theories of Piaget, Maslow, Kohlberg, and Fowler to produce a comprehensive picture of normal human development at key stages across the lifespan.</i></p> <p><i>Discuss the strengths and limitations of the stage theory approach.</i></p> <p>Here a theme approach looks for parallels among the theories and is followed by a critical analysis.</p>
<p><i>List the key features of open and closed systems.</i></p> <p>A list should be merely where you begin—to explore an application, prepare a critical response, undertake a comparative analysis, or make some other original contribution.</p>	<p><i>Compare and contrast the key features of open and closed systems.</i></p> <p><i>Analyze the administrative structure of school district X against these features.</i></p> <p><i>From this analysis, prepare a set of recommendations for the school district that could make the work of the classroom teacher more effective.</i></p> <p>The list is put to use in several ways.</p>

ENSURE THE COMBINED OBJECTIVES OF THE BREADTH, DEPTH, AND APPLICATION ARE LOGICALLY INTERCONNECTED AND INTERDEPENDENT.

Each component of the KAM builds on what has preceded it and anticipates what is to come.

NO	YES
<p><i>Breadth:</i> Critically examine the theory of Piaget in cognitive development, Kohlberg in moral development, and Erikson in social development.</p>	<p><i>Breadth:</i> Compare the theories of Bandura, Mead, and Erikson in the sociocultural development of adolescents and young adults.</p>
<p><i>Depth:</i> Critically examine research based on the work of Jung as it relates to human development.</p>	<p><i>Depth:</i> Critically examine research on African-American adolescents' and young adults' sociocultural development against the general theories of Bandura, Mead, and Erikson.</p>
<p><i>Application:</i> Design a counseling workshop for women contemplating abortion, using the findings of Gilligan.</p>	<p><i>Application:</i> Design a manual for use in youth services to promote healthy sociocultural development in young African Americans.</p>
<p>The difficulty with this set of objectives is that each component is built around the ideas of different theorists and a different issue without identifying any interconnections between them.</p>	<p>There is a sense of continuity between the components and consistency in the theoretical framework.</p>

Choosing References

SELECT PRIMARY SOURCES.

Primary sources are the original works. You should plan to read the original works of the major writers you will study rather than focusing on responses made to their work by others. If the original work is not available in a language you are familiar with, read a direct translation. Any commentator who responds to another's work is making his or her own interpretation based on a particular perspective that you may or may not share or find to be appropriate in your study. Making your own interpretation and response to the seminal thinkers in a field of knowledge is an important part of being an independent scholar.

LOCATE SECONDARY SOURCES TO SUPPLEMENT YOUR IDEAS.

Secondary sources are commentaries on the original writings of others. They may be useful in identifying critiques or analyses that have already been made. Again, the bibliography link in the curriculum guide can direct you to secondary sources. Do not let the secondary sources do your higher order thinking for you. Subject them to the same kinds of critique and analysis as the primary sources.

USE WIKIPEDIA AND SIMILAR SOURCES ONLY FOR ORIENTATION TO A TOPIC.

Online sources such as Wikipedia and many other websites have not been reviewed or edited for accuracy. Browsing some of these sites might be useful to give you an orientation to a topic, but refereed references are usually more reliable for developing the KAM itself.

INCLUDE ONLY THOSE REFERENCES YOU KNOW YOU CAN GET.

While some titles in the suggested reference links of the curriculum might seem to match your purposes well, do not include them among your references unless you actually have access to them. In some cases, the listed references are no longer in print (although they may be found in library collections or as secondhand copies). Remember, the Learning Agreement is a learning contract: the expectation is that you will actually consult the sources you have listed.

LIST SUFFICIENT REFERENCES TO ACCOMPLISH YOUR OBJECTIVES.

There is no predetermined number of references to include in your list. The guiding principle here is to consult sufficient references to meet the objectives you have set for yourself. Most often, students select three or four theorists who can substantiate their proposed study. It is also possible for a study to explore multiple works written by a single theorist or to develop a theme from many theoretical sources, in each case taking just a relatively small part of each theorist's body of work.

In the Depth, you should list all the references you will use for your annotated bibliography and possibly several major comprehensive works that deal with the topic you are addressing.

MAKE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN MAJOR WORKS AND SHORTER ARTICLES.

In the Learning Agreement, you should list the major works you will consult and any seminal journal articles, Internet sources, chapters from edited collections, reports, and other papers that you might use. In the Depth and Application, shorter works and more journal articles are used because the focus of your study has moved to current research and practical applications based on one or more of the foundational theories studied in the Breadth.

PRESENT YOUR REFERENCE LIST USING THE APPROVED STYLE.

At this point, you need to demonstrate that you have mastered the conventions that are used in a reference list. Consult the [APA manual](#).

Designing the Demonstrations of Mastery

Doctoral work is characteristically written work. In all Breadth components and in most Depth and Application components, a scholarly paper will be at least a part of the typical demonstration that you have met your stated objectives. In designing a KAM demonstration, be sure that it matches your stated learning objectives. If you believe that an alternative to a written paper (for instance, a video, Web-based, computer or audio presentation) might better satisfy your objectives (especially in the Application component), you should consult with your KAM assessor and gain approval before moving ahead.

In the Breadth, your demonstration should encompass the objectives you have outlined in approximately 30 pages.

Example

If the objectives state:

Define “social change.”

Compare theories of social change proposed by K. Marx, S. Vago, and A. Toffler.

Critically examine these theories from the perspective of the 21st-century social realities of economic globalization, the growing gap between rich and poor, and technological advances.

Then, an appropriate demonstration would read:

In a scholarly paper of about 30 pages, I will establish a working definition of “social change” and compare and critically assess the theories of social change of Marx, Vago, and Toffler as they relate to 21st-century social realities.

In the Depth, your demonstration should include both an annotated bibliography of at least 15 research articles and a literature review paper of about 25 pages.

Example

I will prepare a critical annotated bibliography of 15 journal articles and a literature review paper of about 25 pages on the role of the family in Hispanic child and adolescent development.

In the Application, in particular, you can design a demonstration that is more practical in nature. Here you can create a project of a different form from the scholarly paper, although a scholarly commentary of about 10 pages is often needed to establish the connection between the project and its theoretical and research foundations. Consult the curriculum for project suggestions.

Example

I will develop a series of four workshops for parents on meeting the developmental challenges of middle school children and append a rationale of about 10 pages drawing on the theories discussed in the Breadth and the current research findings discussed in the Depth.

THE BREADTH

What You Can Get Out of the Breadth

The Breadth of a KAM provides you the opportunity to do the following:

- Build a foundation of theoretical knowledge and explore how the concepts, constructs, and principles are interrelated in a field of study relevant to the social sciences.
- Develop your scholarly skills in researching and writing.
- Practice the skills of making an original scholarly contribution.

Approaching the Breadth

The typical demonstration for the Breadth is a scholarly paper that grapples with the theories of seminal thinkers in a field of inquiry. The following suggestions may help you to create such a doctoral-level work.

Familiarize yourself with the theorist's own work.

Do not rely on the interpretations of others, but read the writer's own words for a better sense of the total picture he or she develops, the nuances of thought, the evidence for the claims made, the logical development of arguments, and possibly the underlying assumptions and values that guide his or her thought. You will usually find the original works much more lively and wide sweeping than commentaries written on them by others.

Choose a perspective.

Before you begin to write, it is a good idea to choose a particular strategy, theme, or viewpoint through which you will examine the theories within the Breadth. You should provide a broad overview of the field of knowledge, as the curriculum indicates, in approximately 30 pages. However, you cannot do justice to all theories and all perspectives. Instead, you should focus on your perspective, particularly on the higher order objectives. In effect, your perspective and how you deal with it represent the original contribution you will make to the discussion surrounding the field of inquiry. You may be able to identify your perspective in an answer to one of these types of questions:

- How does this topic relate to my area of special interest?
- What questions would I like to have answered in this knowledge area?
- What patterns or common themes emerge among these writers?
- What makes each writer different from the others in the field?

Finding your perspective will direct your reading and give purpose to your writing so that you do not get lost in an overwhelming amount of detail and possibility. If you have prepared well in the Learning Agreement, the perspective you choose can be reflected there in your learning objectives. At the very least, the perspective you adopt needs to reflect the higher order objectives you have set for this KAM.

Once your theme is developed, you can read with greater focus, looking for ideas and arguments made by the writers on your particular topic. This will help you navigate through their body of writings without being overwhelmed.

Examples of Perspectives Taken in Effective KAM Breadths

In KAM I, a student identified three common focuses in the writers she studied: economics, technology, and international relations.

In the same KAM, another student compared and assessed theories of social change from the point of view of their relevance in a multicultural world.

Another student summarized the grounding metaphors used in social change theories as described by Lauer and used them to analyze and compare the theories she studied in KAM I.

Yet another student in KAM I identified and analyzed the factors affecting social change, categorizing them either as intrinsic or extrinsic factors.

In KAM II, one student looked at human development theorists from the perspective of the impact of poverty.

In KAM II, another student examined the interplay between the development of cognitive and moral skills.

In KAM III, a student chose to synthesize the theories of three theorists to give a comprehensive view of systems.

Another student in the same KAM looked at systems theories through the lenses of complexity, flexibility, and stability.

You will find other possible themes suggested in the curriculum.

Writing the Breadth Essay

The challenge of the Breadth component of the KAM demonstration is to write a scholarly essay that reflects doctoral-level thinking throughout. In effect, this means that you will need to deal with the lower order objectives succinctly and optimize the writing you do in regard to the higher order objectives. Some suggestions for doing that follow.

Organize your paper into logical sections.

Break down the case you are making into sections. Use the appropriate style of headings as described in the APA style manual and demonstrated in the curriculum to mark off the sections. Make sure there are logical connections between the sections so that the structure of your argument is clear to the reader. Be sure to include in each section only what is relevant to that section.

AVOID USING YOUR THEORISTS AS SECTION ORGANIZERS.

The danger with having the theorists' names as the section headings is that you will be tempted to write book summaries in each section. Using facets of your chosen theme as section organizers will help you write an original essay and make your case.

ANNOUNCE YOUR PERSPECTIVE AND PURPOSE IN THE OPENING PARAGRAPH.

The opening paragraph sets the stage for what will follow. Tell yourself and your reader where your emphasis will be. Flag your intention now and put all the following effort into meeting it. You might also want to announce how the paper is organized and what the upcoming sections will deal with.

Examples of Stage-Setting Opening Paragraphs

The Breadth component of KAM I addresses the area of social change through the works of theorists Robert Lauer, Alvin and Heidi Toffler, Arnold Toynbee, Kurt Lewin, and community organizer Saul Alinsky. The major concepts of each are analyzed and evaluated. Lauer's myths of social change are used throughout to compare and contrast the arguments of the others. Both historical and more contemporary works are highlighted to give a broad range of perspectives. (Patricia Bresser, KAM I Breadth)

The purpose of this forum will be to explore the ideas advanced by several theorists whose contributions have caused significant discussion within the domain of human development. Each writer has observed ways in which culture and nature have had an impact on human development, and therefore sees human beings as a part of a larger context in a multicultural environment. The areas covered in this forum will include but not be limited to biological, sociocultural, cognitive, moral, and psychological aspects of human development.... The panel for this forum spans the historical spectrum from Aristotle (384–322 BCE) to Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) and Daniel Goleman. (Mark Bignell, KAM II Breadth)

Develop your original contribution.

If you think of writing the essay as telling a story, you know you need to follow that story line from beginning to end. Or to put it another way, in the essay you make a case, building it point by point from the beginning.

The most common pitfall for beginning KAM demonstration writers is organizing the Breadth component as a series of book summaries of each of the key theorists, with a few pages tagged onto the end of the paper that deal with the higher order objectives of synthesizing, comparing, contrasting, evaluating, and integrating. This approach fails to tell the story or make the case throughout. Furthermore, it fills up the essay with a recapitulation of somebody else's ideas—and that is lower order thinking. Scholarly writing involves comparing, contrasting, evaluating, synthesizing, or integrating the ideas of many theorists/authors topic by topic or theme by theme—not theorist by theorist.

Do not put anything into the essay that does not relate to the case you are building.

Some of the theories you will study will be fascinating in any number of ways and will tempt you to explore them in all their ramifications. Resist this temptation. For instance, if you are pursuing a study of social change in the sphere of economics, you might find Marx's comments on religion interesting, but not relevant—so, make a note to come back to them later, but leave them out of this essay. You have a task to do, a destination to reach, an argument to develop. It is tempting to include a short biography of the theorist but ask yourself whether where she was born, what her family was like, and what schooling she had has anything to do with your theme. In the end, you will probably know more about the theorists and the theories than appears in your essay because you will have selected from what you know only those points that relate to your story line. This does not mean, of course, that you will leave out anything the theorist might say that would undermine your case—that you must deal with—but do leave out what

is unrelated to your topic. Faithfully represent the complexity of the author's ideas, but do not attempt to reproduce the theory in all its details: the author has already done that for us.

Use direct quotations where pivotal or fundamental points are made by the author.

These quotations should be brief, properly cited, and accurately reproduced. Also, they should be woven into your story line to make a point. Most often you will need to make connecting and interpreting comments to capitalize on a quote's significance to your argument. Avoid filling up your paper with quoted material—the author has already written a book of his/her ideas. Your job is to do something with those ideas. And remember, if you are going to summarize a theorist's ideas, you still need to cite the source.

Example of an Effective Use of Quotations

In the post-positivist era, other paradigms exist that contrast sharply with the positivist and empiricist epistemologies discussed above. These would include constructivism. Merriam (1998) noted that

the key philosophical assumption... upon which all types of qualitative research are based is the view that reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world. (p. 6)

These key philosophical assumptions apply to this study because, as a qualitative ethnographic study, the intent of the research is to understand and interpret the meanings people have constructed concerning the organizational culture of which they are a part. (Robert Gerulat, dissertation)

Paraphrase when large sections of an author's work are needed to establish your case.

A succinct summary of a theorist's ideas is sometimes needed as a foundation for your argument. Paraphrased information should be properly referenced and used to some purpose. Phrases directly quoted from the writer can be woven into the paraphrase, in which case they should be denoted by quotation marks and referenced separately.

Example of a Paraphrase With Quotations

According to Lauer (1991), in order to understand social change one not only has to define it; one has to evaluate the myths that surround it. For some, social change occurs with a change in attitude by an individual or group. For others a change in some social structure or organization is required. Lauer's perspective was that "social change is an inclusive concept that refers to alterations in social phenomena at various levels of human life from the individual to the global" (p. 4). Some of the levels he described include organizations, community, and society. Lauer believed that social change is evident whenever there is "alteration at any level of social life" (p. 6). The direction of the change and how rapidly or slowly the change occurs should be the focus of study. Invariably there is a relationship between change on one level and change on another. For instance, an individual's attitude about affirmative action may lead that individual to try to effect change in the company (institution) for which she or he works. However, Lauer cautioned that one cannot assume that change on one level (individual) will automatically lead to change on another (organization). (Patricia Bresser, KAM I Breadth)

Use secondary sources to enrich your critique and analysis.

The theories you will examine in the Breadth are chosen because they are foundational to the field of inquiry. Many of the theories were developed by an earlier generation of thinkers who have since passed from the scene. Given their significance and longevity, these original works have been discussed by later scholars in published commentaries and evaluations. To become part of the conversation, you need to know what central issues have been identified, especially those that relate to your theme. Again, use these ideas in your argument in the same way you use the original author: with due acknowledgment, with critical commentary, and as support for your own argument (not as a substitute for it).

Example of an Effective Use of Secondary Sources

Bandura has been criticized for minimizing the impact or interplay of developmental stages in learning, because he argued that the child's environment was more of an influence on new behaviors than was the child's intrinsic desire to learn new skills (Crain, 1992). These arguments have been made particularly by the followers of Piaget, who are focused on the cognitive processes of the child rather than the influences in the immediate environment. Bandura also raised questions about Kohlberg's stages of moral development in children. Bandura was in agreement here with Skinner, looking at behavior instead of hypothesizing about what is occurring during the thinking process.

(Here the writer has stated the criticism and determined if there is any basis for it. Then, she expands on the criticism, adding her own reasons and arguments, as you will see below.)

The disagreement with the developmental theorists seems to be part of a certain weakness in the social learning approach in which the "black box" that is the brain, the cognitive and emotional center, is examined from the outside rather than the inside. In Bandura's work, one finds no sense of awe, wonder, or even acknowledgment of the capability of humans to reflect, create, and love. Indeed, if Bandura is to be believed, people are all great imitators, using their cognitive skills to choose who they will imitate. While the self-efficacy appraisal is a form of reflection, there is no generalization of that sort of self-evaluation to the human condition, to an appreciation of the human capacity for philosophy, art, and love. (Diana White, KAM II Breadth)

Develop your original opinion into a scholarly argument.

Where to begin? After you have read the theories and maybe reviewed some secondary commentaries on them, challenge yourself with this simple question: What is my opinion of this theory within the parameters I have set for this study? That will give you a starting place. Now you need to expand those original opinions and hunches into a scholarly argument. Here is how an original intuition might develop into a scholarly argument.

STATE YOUR ORIGINAL HUNCH.

Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development seems right when I read it, but it doesn't seem to explain what my clients do, especially the Southeast Asian refugees I am working with.

GET TO THE BOTTOM OF YOUR HUNCH BY ASKING SOME QUESTIONS.

What do I mean when I say a theory is "right"? What do I mean when I say that my clients don't fit the theory?

FORMALIZE THE HUNCH.

What makes Kohlberg's theory convincing? What does Kohlberg's theory fail to account for?

MAKE A LIST OF ANSWERS FOR EACH QUESTION.

Kohlberg’s theory was built on a longitudinal study over many years and in many different cultural settings; it was built on the established philosophical foundation of Platonic idealism; his studies were replicated and his findings confirmed by others; etc. On the other hand, my clients do not always approach a moral choice so reasonably—their choices are often more intuitive, and making the right choice seems less important to them than pleasing others, especially authority figures, including myself; they are easily persuaded to change their decisions, etc. Gilligan’s work illustrates these same discontinuities.

DEVELOP A FORMAL STATEMENT OF FINDINGS.

Once you have the answers for each question, you can develop these answers into a formal statement of findings, supported with evidence from case histories, reasons, and the findings of other theorists and researchers.

WRITE YOUR OPINION AS A SCHOLARLY ARGUMENT.

By the time you write the final statement, your opinions are replaced by an objective, reasoned argument.

NO	YES
<i>I feel that Kohlberg is probably right when he...</i> (The reader is not particularly interested in your feelings.)	<i>Kohlberg is probably right when he... because...</i>
<i>I believe that Piaget should have taken into account...</i> (Your beliefs are not as important as your reasons for your beliefs.)	<i>I believe Piaget did not take into account... because...</i>
<i>The writer of this essay argues against this viewpoint...</i> (If this is you, say so.)	<i>I argue against this viewpoint...</i>
<i>In my opinion, the three theorists are in greatest agreement when...</i> (Your opinion may be right, but the reader is looking for your supporting argument.)	<i>The three theorists are in greatest agreement when...</i>
<i>In my experience as a classroom teacher, social change never occurs when...</i> (A case cannot be made on anecdotal evidence: you and your reader know that you have not lived long enough to experience all the possibilities.)	<i>In a typical classroom, social change is not likely to occur when... because...</i>

At this point, you may be wondering how a reader will recognize that this is your original contribution to the scholarly discussion if all mention of your opinions, beliefs, and experiences is omitted. With scholarly work, a reader will know it is you, the writer, making the claim or argument by the absence of a reference to the writings of another author. That is, you take full credit for all claims not credited to somebody else.

THE DEPTH

What You Can Get Out of the Depth

The Depth provides you the opportunity to do the following:

- Become familiar with significant resources (e.g., journals, databases, reports, texts, and Web-based sources) in your chosen field.
 - Bring yourself up-to-date with current research findings on the topic.
 - Discover the methodologies and instruments adopted by other researchers in this field.
 - Find ways you might improve the practice of your profession.
 - Locate a place in the research literature where you might contribute a study of your own.
-

Writing the Annotated Bibliography

In the Depth component, you will prepare an annotated bibliography of at least 15 current research articles, usually from the past 3 to 5 years, on the topic you have chosen. This bibliography is a significant step toward fulfilling the opportunities listed above and contributing to your dissertation literature review, where current findings are assessed. Here are some suggestions for maximizing the benefits of undertaking an annotated bibliography.

Prepare annotations for journal articles (in print or online) rather than for books or large monographs.

Journal articles are typically brought to public view much more quickly than books. So journal articles bring you up-to-date with the very latest developments.

Furthermore, a journal article is a report on a specific piece of research. Books may draw on current research, but they typically do much more, by including philosophies, theories, conceptual analyses, applications, and other broad sweeps of information. In the case of the annotated bibliography, the focus is on specific research undertakings.

Select a wide variety of journals.

Use this opportunity to familiarize yourself with the range of research sources available on this topic. A search in an appropriate database will be invaluable. Finding relevant articles in a number of different journals is likely to open up the variety of conceptual perspectives and research approaches that have been taken on the topic. The Walden librarians can help you develop strategies for locating and evaluating journal articles. It is a good idea to locate more than the required number of sources and to include in your annotated bibliography only the most relevant and instructive ones.

Select scholarly articles.

The articles you select must meet the quality standards of scholarship. Journals use a variety of methods for evaluating and selecting which submitted manuscripts will be published. The most demanding method is the referee process. Refereed journals send submitted manuscripts for evaluation to more than one expert in the field of study. Because of the rigorous nature of this process, articles appearing in refereed journals are considered to be high-quality scholarly material.

Other peer-review processes that may not be as rigorous may still meet the standards of quality set by scholars and are generally acceptable for doctoral-level writing. In all peer-review processes, submitted manuscripts are evaluated by at least one expert in the field of study before they are published. For suggestions on how to determine if a journal is refereed or peer-reviewed, consult the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) section of this guide.

The most reliable method of identifying scholarly articles is to search scholarly databases that cover your discipline. The material in research databases is selected to support scholarly research, so what you find in these databases will generally meet the standards of scholarship. This does not mean that you can assume every piece of research you find in these databases is without flaws. In all situations, you must critically analyze any material you use. Also, with your assessor's approval, a pertinent newspaper editorial or other non-scholarly piece may be used to round out your bibliography.

Consider what should be included in an annotated bibliography.

The length of an annotated bibliography is not fixed, but it is important to include not only a summary of the article but also your own response to it. The length of the annotations may be determined by the significance of this topic to your dissertation research. To maximize the benefits of preparing an annotated bibliography, you might include the following elements.

FULL BIBLIOGRAPHIC DETAILS

Example

Gathman, A. C., & Nesson, C. L. (1997). Fowler's stages of faith development in an honors science-and-religion seminar. *Zygon*, 32(3), 407–414.

A SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH METHOD AND ITS FINDINGS

Example

The authors described the construction and rationale of an honors course in science and religion that was pedagogically based on Lawson's learning cycle model. In Lawson's model, the student writes a short paper on a subject before presentation of the material, and then writes a longer paper reevaluating and supporting his views. Using content analysis, the authors compared the answers in the first and second essays, evaluating them based on Fowler's stages of development. Examples of student writing are presented with the authors' analysis of the faith stage exhibited by the students, which demonstrated development in stages 2 through 5.

A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE ARTICLE

Here are some questions you might address at this point:

- Was the research question well framed and significant?
- How well was the research related to the existing body of knowledge?
- Did the article make an original contribution to the existing body of knowledge?
- Was the theoretical framework for the study adequate and appropriate?
- Has the researcher communicated clearly and fully?
- Was the research method appropriate?
- Is there a better way to find answers to the research question?
- Was the sample size sufficient?
- Were there adequate controls for researcher bias?
- Is the research replicable?
- What were the limitations in this study?
- How generalizable are the findings?
- Are the conclusions justified by the results?
- Did the writer take into account differing social and cultural contexts?

Example

The authors made no specific effort to support spiritual development in the course. They were interested in the interface between religion and science, teaching material on ways of knowing, creation myths, evolutionary theory, and ethics. They exposed students to Fowler's ideas, but did not relate the faith development theory to student work in the classroom. There appears to have been no effort to modify the course content based on the predominant stage of development, and it is probably a credit to their teaching that they were able to conduct such a course with such diversity in student faith development. However, since Fowler's work is based largely within a Western Christian setting, some attention to differences in faith among class members would have been a useful addition to the study. There was no correlation between grades and level of faith development.

A STATEMENT OF THE VALUE OF THE ARTICLE TO YOU IN PARTICULAR OR YOUR PROFESSION IN GENERAL

Here it is helpful to comment not only on the findings but also on what you might have learned about research methodology, including both research approaches and instruments (interviews, questionnaires, published pen and paper tests, and so forth) that you might adapt for your own research purposes.

Example

Fowler's work would seem to lend itself to research of this sort, but this is the only example found in recent literature. This study demonstrates the best use of the model, which is assessment. While the theory claimed high predictive ability, the change process chronicled is so slow and idiosyncratic that it would be difficult to design and implement research that had as its goal measurement of movement in faith development continuum.

(The above examples were submitted by Diana White as part of the annotated bibliography for the KAM II Depth.)

Writing the Depth Essay

You will also be required to write a Depth essay. The Depth essay is a literature review, similar in style and purpose to a dissertation literature review but smaller in scope. The essay should total at least 25 pages (in addition to the annotated bibliography), but again, the ultimate length of the demonstration depends on meeting the objectives given in the Learning Agreement. Many of the same qualities that characterize a good Breadth essay apply to the Depth essay as well—building a case, demonstrating critical thinking, adopting the appropriate style conventions, and so forth. In addition, you may find the following suggestions helpful.

Take the bird’s eye view.

The Depth essay is a response to all the articles that you have included in the annotated bibliography, when taken as a whole. You need to step back from the individual annotations and take a bird’s eye view of them. What patterns do you see in this group of articles? There may be patterns or themes in the kinds of questions researched, the problems addressed, or the issues examined. These patterns might very well serve to organize the essay into sections.

Also ask yourself what kinds of research methods were used in the studies. Do you see a variety of methods and instruments, or has there been a consistency in the research approach, the kinds of subjects in the studies, or the data collected? What other kinds of research approaches and questions could be adopted to fill in gaps in our understanding of the topic?

Another important question to consider is this: Have these studies built on each other or on an earlier foundational study, constructing and adding to the body of knowledge around a center of understandings or earlier findings?

In an opening introduction to the essay, identify the themes of your essay, laying out how they organize your paper.

Write critically.

Having discovered your themes, write each section by bringing into play all the articles that have addressed the theme. Compare and contrast the articles, show how one built on another or filled in a gap raised by another, or synthesize how they all work together to expand our knowledge.

Remember, you are doing more than just summarizing what is in the articles. Use higher order thinking to do something critical and creative with the studies.

Probe for gaps.

One of the purposes of a literature review is to go beyond a mere summary of what is already discovered about an issue to find where there might be omissions or blind spots in the literature. Have the researchers you examined in your annotated bibliography consistently left out a specific group of subjects, a significant but related research question, or a different research method that would add new understandings if included? You are looking for gaps in the literature that you or some other researcher might fill. The critical responses you have written throughout the annotated bibliography may supply you with ideas.

Throughout your Depth essay, you should be flagging any gaps, thereby building an argument for what you would consider to be important next steps in this research community.

Write a strong conclusion.

There are two significant items to include in the conclusion: a brief summary of the themes and your final recommendations for future studies. In fact, your final recommendations may be based on the summary of themes. You might also consider adding a statement about the significance of either what is already known or what additional understandings should be added to the body of knowledge, especially with regard to making some steps toward positive social change.

THE APPLICATION

What You Can Get Out of the Application

The Application provides you the opportunity to do the following:

- Assess an aspect of your professional world in terms of the theory and research you have examined in this KAM.
 - Use the information garnered in the Breadth and Depth to initiate some element of social change in your professional work.
 - Test the theories and research findings examined in this KAM in a real-life situation.
-

Parts of an Application

The Application component of the KAM should include two parts: a full description of the project and your reflections about the project.

Describe the project you undertook.

Explain why this project was undertaken, what the context was, who was involved, why the project was important, what the project was, and (where appropriate) how successful the project was.

Include any media or other electronic artifacts used.

Describe the ethical considerations involved in preparing for and/or undertaking the project, particularly in dealing with human subjects or in guaranteeing the right to privacy to those involved in the project.

Reflect on the project.

The reflective piece (usually about 10 pages) should show how the project was influenced by the theories studied in the Breadth and/or the research findings discussed in the Depth. In other words, connect the project to the other parts of the KAM.

Indicate future developments of the project, where appropriate. How would you improve it, or what could make it more effective?

Also include a clear statement that indicates how the project can help change the professional field or bring about some aspect of positive social change, whether potential or realized. Speak specifically rather than in general terms about this element.

Signs of a Successful Application

The Application section of the KAM demonstration is the design and/or implementation of a project that grows out of the Breadth and Depth, accompanied by a commentary of about 10 pages that makes the

connection between the theory and research previously studied and the project. The project should relate to a genuine need within your profession. It is usually more satisfying to be able to actually implement a planned project, but it is not always possible in the course of doing the KAM. Discuss the matter of implementation with your assessor when you are creating your Learning Agreement so that, together, you can determine whether or not you will carry out the project and report on its implementation as part of the Application.

A successful Application meets the following criteria:

- It is demonstrably informed by theory and/or current research findings.
- It is a practical project that deals with a concrete situation.
- It is oriented toward social change (on an appropriate scale).

Example of Opening Paragraphs of Application

In recent years there has been a significant increase in the recognition of gerontology as a health care specialty area of practice. Gerontological and geriatric professional societies have formed and more research dollars are being directed toward issues in aging (Ferraro, 1997). Because the elderly segment of the population is the fastest growing, it seems a natural progression that a great interest has developed in health care of the elderly.

In 1998, Allegheny University of the Health Sciences performed a needs assessment in the greater Philadelphia region and determined that the local health care community would benefit from the implementation of a graduate-level gerontological nurse practitioner program at the university. Statistics provided by the national nurse practitioner certifying board revealed that proportionally there was a surprisingly low number of nurse practitioners certified in gerontology in this geographic location. As a result, the university decided to implement such a program, and a curriculum was developed. The national certifying body published a program outline, identifying the general areas that should be incorporated into any gerontological nurse practitioner curriculum, and this outline was used as a general reference for developing the curriculum. Development of the specific content was assigned to the board-certified gerontological nurse practitioner on the faculty. After the curriculum was completed, it was reviewed by an advisory board consisting of board-certified geriatricians (medical doctors), a gerontological nurse practitioner, and a gerontologist. The advisory board offered two minor suggestions for change that were incorporated into the course objectives. The final curriculum was approved by the Pennsylvania Boards of Nursing and Medicine and the state Department of Higher Education.

In this Application section, the final curriculum will be analyzed with respect to the theories of aging represented in the Breadth demonstration and the research and scholarly publications discussing normal aging in the Depth demonstration. (Sally Miller, KAM II Application)

Because the Application section is a practical project, you are not asked to write another paper. Instead, you should give a full account of the project (see the curriculum for suggestions) and add a brief paper (up to 10 pages) that reflects on the project, showing how the theories of the Breadth and/or the research studies of the Depth informed and shaped the project.

WRITING AND FORMATTING TIPS

A significant part of the effectiveness of scholarly writing is the style, correctness, and presentation of the scholar's ideas. Here are some basic points about writing to keep in mind.

Keep the writing simple and interesting.

While scholarly writing has style conventions, it does not have to be wordy, stuffy, or dispassionate. You should avoid colloquialisms and slang, but do not strive to sound academic. Sentences should not be long and complex. Your convictions about what you are writing, dynamic evidence, and honest voice should not be lost in tedium. Crispness, curiosity, honesty, and enthusiasm are ingredients of impassioned scholarship.

Check your spelling.

Remember, a word-processing program's spell-checker cannot tell you that the first component of a KAM demonstration is Breadth, not Breath, or that the developmental psychologist is Erikson, not Erickson.

Make sure pronouns agree with their subjects.

For example, "a student should be in regular contact with their faculty mentors" is not correct because "student" is singular and "their" is plural. Correctly stated this should read, "A student should be in regular contact with his or her faculty mentor."

Write paragraphs that contain more than one sentence.

Do not add spaces before or after a dash.

Write "this—that"; not "this — that." Consult the APA manual for additional punctuation examples and other conventions.

Use the proper format and style.

Writing templates for Learning Agreements and KAMs can be found on the [Writing Center website](#). From the Writing Center's main page, under the "Graduate" tab, choose "Learning Agreement (LA)" or "Knowledge Area Module (KAM)" from the dropdown list. Those pages provide links to examples and templates. The templates indicate the parts of the Learning Agreement and KAM that need to be included, as well as their layout and pagination.

Use standard formatting.

- Standard margins are 1 inch: top, bottom, and sides.
- Standard tabs are ½ inch.
- Times New Roman is preferred, with 12-point font size.
- Use double-spacing for the body of the text, both within and between paragraphs.
- Begin a new paragraph with a tab.

Present quotations of 40 words or more in block quotes.

Indent the quote on the left (a ½ inch, the same as a new paragraph) and double-space the entire quotation. Do not use quotation marks with block quotes. The author citation appears in parentheses after the last period. Thus:

While much of the research in social systems has focused on organizational principles, there remains a body of theory that attempts to deal with disorganization or apparent chaos, and yet it still draws on the natural sciences.

Chaos theory represents the most recent effort by social scientists to incorporate theory and method from the natural sciences. Most importantly, chaos theory appears to provide a means for understanding and examining many of the uncertainties, nonlinearities, and unpredictable aspects of social systems behavior. (Krasner, 1990, p. 3)

Yet even here, behind the chaos is another kind of organizational principle, one which looks at repeating levels of chaotic patterns.

Include shorter quotations within the text.

Use quotation marks and place the period after the author citation. Thus:

One of the features of chaos theory that researchers are acknowledging is that “the chaotic processes can occur at the level of individuals and small groups, as well as at highly aggregated levels of analysis” (Kiel & Elliot, 1997, p. 140). This makes the application of chaos theory flexible and seemingly universal.

Know the rules for citing more than one author.

When referring to two authors, always cite both surnames.

When referring to three to five authors, include all the names the first time. Thereafter, refer to the first author only, followed by *et al.* and the date of publication, as in (Smith et al., 2008). Within the same paragraph, refer to the first author only, followed by *et al.* (no comma or date). You would then continue to use this *et al.* format throughout your entire KAM; citations used in the Breadth and then used in the Depth or Application sections would still use *et al.* in these subsequent sections.

When referring to six or more authors, cite only the name of the first author and use *et al.* and the year in all references. See APA section 6.12 for further information and for examples.

Include Application projects.

Since completed KAMs are submitted as one document, as much as possible, include the Application project within the document. If your project includes a PowerPoint presentation, there are directions at the [Writing Center](#) for uploading and viewing a PowerPoint presentation within a Word document.

Use the correct organizational structure.

For the KAM, include these parts in this order:

Title Page (no page number)

Abstract for Breadth (no page number)

Abstract for Depth (no page number)

Abstract for Application (no page number)

Table of Contents (begins on page i, with pagination centered at the bottom)

List of Tables (if applicable; pagination continues)

List of Figures (if applicable; pagination continues)

Breadth Component (begins on page 1, with pagination at the top right)

Depth Component (pagination continues from Breadth)

 Annotated Bibliography

 Literature Review Essay

Application Component (pagination continues from Depth)

 Project Description

 Reflection on Project

References (pagination continues from text)

Remember, a KAM template is available through the [Writing Center](#) to ensure you know the proper structure.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Which KAM should I begin with?

You may begin with any of the first three KAMs, referred to as the core KAMs. In planning your work, keep in mind that the first component of the research methodology sequence, RSCH 8100, should be completed within the first year of your program along with your first KAM.

Beyond that, some students simply start with the first KAM and work consecutively, knowing that in the end, they need to do them all. Others prefer to start with the one they may know a little about already (for instance, an AMDS student may start with KAM III: Principles of Organizational and Social Systems or an Education student may begin with KAM II: Principles of Human Development). This approach allows students to master KAMs without also dealing with an unfamiliar knowledge area at the same time. Others make their choice dependent on which KAM has a certain timeliness. For instance, they know there is a project they are about to embark on that would be a relevant application for one particular KAM. Another factor that needs to be taken into consideration is the amount of support you find through the SBSF 7100 course documents that will help you decide where to start. In the end, in consultation with your faculty mentor, you make the choice.

Can I change my Learning Agreement once it is approved?

Once work begins on a KAM demonstration, you can revise the Learning Agreement to better meet your learning needs, although this rarely happens if the Learning Agreement has been well prepared. You may want to change your Learning Agreement if you find yourself in one of the following situations:

- You now have more relevant references than the ones you listed.
- You had planned on covering too little or too much of the knowledge area.
- You have thought of an even more compelling application project than the one you first proposed.

Any changes to the Learning Agreement must be approved by your faculty assessor. Submit a revised Learning Agreement the same way you submitted the original. That is, use the drop box of SBSF 7100 if your faculty mentor is also your KAM assessor; if not, send it as an e-mail attachment to the assessor. You will receive an e-mail stating your revised Learning Agreement has been approved and received by the registrar's office. Once your most recent Learning Agreement has been approved and processed, you are ready to begin the KAM evaluation and submission process.

Who assesses my Learning Agreement and KAM demonstration?

See the KAM Policies and Processes section of the student handbook for a detailed explanation of assessor policies. This section also includes information about the submission and evaluation of Learning Agreements and KAM demonstrations.

Can I change my KAM assessor?

Yes, you can change your assessor, but these requests are rare. Unusual circumstances may lead you to consider such a request. If you are not able to resolve differences with your assessor and want to request a change, contact an academic advisor. A change may mean a considerable delay in completing the KAM, so do so only after making every effort to work out issues with the assessor.

The university encourages students and instructors to discuss problems or differences in expectations in a frank and open manner. When students and instructors address problems promptly, they can often resolve issues with minimal disruption to the learning experience. However, in some cases, differences are not easily resolved. Should you want to request a change in assessor, you must contact an academic advisor, who will consult the associate dean or the associate dean's designee. Any change in faculty services can be made only during the add/drop period of each term.

If an amicable resolution of any problems between students and instructors cannot be reached, the party requesting a change of arrangement may be advised to submit a formal written request to the associate dean, or designee, who reviews the request, consults all appropriate parties, and renders a decision within 21 calendar days of receiving all related information. The associate dean or designee communicates this decision to all affected parties.

Once I have submitted my Learning Agreement, how long do I wait before I start writing?

Each assessor has 14 calendar days to evaluate a student submission. You will know your Learning Agreement is approved when you receive official notification by e-mail from the Office of the Registrar. However, in the meantime, you should begin to research your topic and may start the writing process. Keep in mind, however, that you might have to make some changes after you hear from your assessor.

How should I submit the Learning Agreement and KAM to my assessor?

The Learning Agreement and later the KAM are sent to the assessor electronically, either by using the drop box feature in SBSF 7100 (if the assessor is your faculty mentor) or as an e-mail attachment (if the assessor is not your faculty mentor).

How do I submit my approved Learning Agreement and KAM demonstration?

When your assessor approves the Learning Agreement or KAM demonstration, he or she will prepare an evaluation using a [rubric](#). The rubric lets you know what your assessor is looking for; therefore, you can use the rubric to help you improve your work while it is in process. When your assessor is ready to approve your work for final submission, he or she will use the same rubric for the final evaluation.

If the assessor determines that changes are necessary to the Learning Agreement or KAM, the assessor electronically returns the evaluation form and/or any additional comments and questions to you so that you can revise and resubmit the Learning Agreement and/or KAM.

When your Learning Agreement and later your KAM are final, your assessor will forward them to the registrar along with the completed rubrics, with a copy to you.

How long should a KAM demonstration take to write?

The honest answer is that a KAM demonstration takes as long to write as it takes to write. A month's release time from work responsibilities can obviously shorten the time. Moving to a new house, changing jobs, having a baby, or taking on additional responsibilities can obviously lengthen the time. You might make your calculated guess at the timeline by allowing 4 to 8 months for the first KAM, and 2 to 4 months for subsequent ones, if you are able to devote up to 20 hours a week to the task. Do not be

discouraged if your first KAM demonstration takes longer and requires more revisions than you anticipate. Treat the initial KAM as a training ground. Focus your energies on the learning process, but don't procrastinate on completing the written demonstration.

What is “doctoral-level writing”?

Doctoral-level writing is characterized by the following:

- An original contribution informed by higher order thinking (e.g., analysis, comparison, contrast, synthesis, integration, and evaluation)
- Integrity of scholarship (e.g., acknowledging sources and reporting results honestly)
- Correct applications of the conventions of scholarly writing (e.g., referencing, formatting, punctuation, spelling, and grammar)

While none of these characteristics is sufficient in itself to define doctoral-level quality, each of them is necessary.

When should I consult with my faculty mentor?

Your faculty mentor will visit with you via SBSF 7100 Research Forum through the two Community Forums and during the first week of the quarter when you submit your Quarter Plan and the last week of the quarter when you submit your Quarter Report and your updated Plan of Study. The faculty mentor is also available via e-mail whenever you have a question or want to discuss something. When you are working together on a KAM, you will have more contact.

If this is your first KAM, you may want to arrange weekly contact, or you may want to share rough drafts of parts of the KAM demonstration for feedback, or you may prefer to submit a finished draft. The faculty mentor may also have some preferences for a contact schedule. Later KAMs may require less close contact. It would be ideal to talk with each of your KAM assessors to establish a contact schedule.

If my KAM looks different from somebody else's KAM, who is right?

In some respects, all KAM demonstrations will look alike. The conventions of style, for instance, apply to every piece of scholarly writing. In many demonstrations, the same key writings may be discussed and the same essential theories or research may be examined. Beyond these few elements, however, every KAM demonstration will be different because each represents the particular thinking, purposes, and efforts of a different scholar.

What is APA style?

The American Psychological Association (APA) has developed a set of style conventions used in scholarly writing and adopted by many universities, including Walden University. You will find these conventions fully explained and described in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th edition, 2010). For additional information, consult the [Writing Center website](#).

What is a scholarly database?

A scholarly database is an electronic index of scholarly materials. Most of the scholarly databases provided by Walden University also contain full-text electronic copies of materials, including journal

articles, dissertations, books and book excerpts, conference papers, and reports. You can access, read, print, and save these full-text documents directly from the databases.

However, databases may offer only the citations and abstracts for some sources. If you identify a citation as appropriate for your work in a database that does not offer the full text, you may be able to locate the full text in another Walden library database. Otherwise, you may need to obtain the material from your local library, through Walden's [Document Delivery Service](#), or via the World Wide Web or commercial resources.

In general, materials indexed by scholarly databases are selected because they meet the quality standards of scholarly research. Still, you should always apply your own critical-thinking skills to determine the quality of research, regardless of where you found the material.

Explore the Walden Library website to learn more about our databases. The "[Research Databases](#)" section of the site contains the links to access the databases. Use the "[Databases by Subject](#)" page to find the resources recommended for your area of study.

The development of scholarly database searching skills is vital to your success at Walden University. The Walden librarians are eager to assist you in developing these skills. Contact the librarians early and often for tips on searching for scholarly material on your topic. They can guide you through the use of specialized searching tools and strategies to optimize your efforts. You can contact the librarians by e-mailing waldenlb@waldenu.edu.

Where do I get books and articles?

The first place to check for obtaining articles is the online Walden Library research databases. The library offers more than 45 databases that contain millions of full-text articles. You might also obtain articles from the library's Document Delivery Service or from other online sources. Academic local libraries are an excellent resource for photocopying journal articles that are not available through the Walden databases. Explore the library's journals by clicking on "[Journal Articles](#)" in the top navigational menu of the Walden Library website.

The Walden Library also offers a growing electronic book collection containing thousands of online titles. For locating printed books, making use of local libraries can be the most cost-effective and time-efficient approach. Visit your local libraries' websites or contact them to determine what access you have to their collections, resources, and services. You may also want to consider purchasing books that will be central to your research, from online and local bookstores. Explore the "[Books](#)" section of the Walden Library website for more information.

If all the above resources fail, contact the Walden librarians to explore other possible options.

How do I know if a journal is refereed?

Most of the databases give information on refereed articles and journals. You can often get more information about a source found in the databases by clicking on the article or journal title. Also, most journals post their submission policies and review procedures on the Web.

How do I set the margins on my computer?

Technical questions such as this should be directed to the Student Support Team.

Is my KAM demonstration graded?

KAM demonstrations do not receive a letter grade. Rather, they are treated the same way as other scholarly contributions. They are reviewed by an expert—in this case, the assessor of your KAM demonstration—revised until they satisfy the expectations of doctoral-level writing, and accepted. On your transcript, you will be awarded an *S* for satisfactory, which is equivalent to a *B* or better. On the rubric form, your assessor will have indicated a rating for each component of the KAM demonstration as well as an overall rating for the KAM. This rating is not noted on the transcript. Satisfactory completion of all KAMs is required before a draft of the dissertation can be submitted for review by your dissertation committee.

May I reuse parts of my own previous writing?

It is permissible to quote from your own previous work, as long as you do so in small doses and give full citation references. However, scholarship is a developmental process, and each time previous work is revisited, it should show growth of thought and expression. Treat your own previous work as you would treat the work of others, both in terms of how you cite it and in terms of critically evaluating it. It is not permissible to cut and paste whole paragraphs or sections from one KAM demonstration to another or from a KAM demonstration to your dissertation.

Are essays required demonstrations?

Extended written papers are the most common means of communication among scholars. Mastering this skill is an important outcome of a doctoral program. However, an alternative to a written paper (for instance, a video, a PowerPoint presentation, an audio recording, or a Web presentation) may be substituted for at least part of a KAM demonstration, particularly in the Application component. Consult your KAM assessor for more information.

Should I submit my KAM demonstration online?

All Learning Agreements and KAM demonstrations are to be submitted as electronic documents.

How do I know if my KAM demonstration has been approved?

You will receive the assessor's evaluation as a graded rubric and notification of acceptance of your KAM demonstration from the Office of the Registrar. If you have submitted your work and have not heard back, contact your KAM assessor. Be sure to keep copies of all your documents and acknowledgments.

Where can I get help with my writing?

Apart from the APA manual on style, you can consult Walden's online [Writing Center](#). You should check the Writing Center's site for tips as well as for editorial services if you need assistance.

What if I still have questions?

The faculty chairs and academic advisors in your program as well as the Walden University librarians are all available to answer questions you may still have. You are encouraged to avail yourself of the support services offered through Walden.

THE RUBRICS

Rubric for Developing and Evaluating Learning Agreements

Purpose: The purpose of this rubric is to guide students and assessors as they work together to develop high quality Learning Agreements (LAs) for Knowledge Area Modules (KAMs). The rubric is designed to provide faculty assessors the opportunity to offer both formative and summative evaluation of the Learning Agreement.

Rating Scale: A 2-level rating scale is used for scoring each of the quality indicators in the rubric. A satisfactory rating (*S*) indicates that the component of the Learning Agreement appears adequate for successful KAM writing. An unsatisfactory rating (*U*) indicates that the component needs more work to provide an adequate plan for the KAM. Not applicable (*NA*) is indicated when an indicator on the rubric is not relevant to the KAM.

Note: Learning Agreements are not graded other than being recorded as satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

Constructive Feedback: Providing constructive feedback plays a major role in a student's ability to develop a KAM, master a unit of study, and use the KAM process to make progress toward satisfactory completion of the Ph.D. program. A space for comments is provided for each quality indicator. This space can be used to provide specific guidance for revision and to provide positive feedback for high-quality efforts and noteworthy improvements.

DEFINITIONS OF RATINGS FOR QUALITY INDICATORS

- S = Acceptable as written: all crucial elements are included and adequately described
- U = Must be revised and resubmitted because one or more required element(s) are missing or inadequate
- NA = Not applicable: this quality indicator does not apply to the Learning Agreement

Categories Evaluated	Check One
<p>Form:</p> <p>The cover page of the LA lists the KAM number and title; the student's name, identification number, and e-mail address; the program name and specialization; the KAM assessor's and faculty mentor's names and e-mail addresses; and the date of submission. The layout and pagination follow the writing template for Learning Agreements.</p> <p><i>Comments:</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> U <input type="checkbox"/> NA
<p>Overview:</p> <p>The overview summarizes briefly (one paragraph is usually sufficient) what is planned for each component of the KAM and how the components are related.</p> <p><i>Comments:</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> U <input type="checkbox"/> NA
<p>Breadth:</p> <p>Outcomes are few, clear, appropriate, and demonstrate higher order thinking in the acquisition and integration of theory-based knowledge. Key themes and authors are identified. The reference list supports the outcomes, uses primary sources as much as possible, and is written in correct format. The description of the Breadth demonstration indicates the length of the paper (approximately 30 pages) and describes how it will demonstrate the student's learning.</p> <p><i>Comments:</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> U <input type="checkbox"/> NA
<p>Depth:</p> <p>Outcomes are few, clear, appropriate, and demonstrate critical thinking in the acquisition and integration of research-based knowledge. The theme of the Depth is drawn from the Breadth and relates to the student's professional interests. The reference list supports the outcomes, identifies at least 15 current (preferably from the last 3–5 years) and relevant research articles for examination, and is written in correct format. The planned demonstration includes both an annotated bibliography and critical literature review paper (approximately 25 pages).</p> <p><i>Comments:</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> U <input type="checkbox"/> NA
<p>Application:</p> <p>Outcomes are few, clear, appropriate, and identify a practical application of the theories and research of the earlier components. The reference list is included where appropriate. Unless a different format is suggested by the project being pursued and is permitted by the assessor, the planned demonstration includes both the project and a critical analysis (approximately 10 pages) that connects the project to the theories and research examined in the earlier parts of the KAM.</p> <p><i>Comments:</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> U <input type="checkbox"/> NA

<p>Overall:</p> <p>The planned KAM shows a development of ideas/theme(s) from theory to research to practice. The plan is designed to satisfy the student’s professional interests and encourage original thinking. The Learning Agreement reflects creative thinking around some aspect of social change and respects the diversity encountered within the student’s profession. The Learning Agreement is free of grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors and has a professional appearance.</p> <p><i>Comments:</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> U <input type="checkbox"/> NA
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Rubric for Developing and Evaluating KAMs

Purpose: The purpose of this rubric is to guide students and faculty assessors as they work together to develop high-quality Knowledge Area Modules (KAMs). The use of the rubric is intended to provide ongoing and flexible evaluation and reevaluation of KAMs as they are developed. The rubric is designed to provide an opportunity for faculty assessors to offer both formative and summative evaluation of the KAMs.

Quality Indicators: Quality indicators are specified in the rubric for five general categories: (1) Overall Organization of KAM, (2) Breadth Component, (3) Depth Component, including the Annotated Bibliography and Depth Narrative, (4) Application Component, and (5) Overall Structure and Writing of KAM. Quality indicators are intended to relate to the scholarly quality and integrity of each part of the KAM. Although some of the quality indicators are categorized according to Breadth, Depth, and Application sections, it is recommended that each KAM be considered as a unified, integrated project during both its development and evaluation. There is also an opportunity to reflect on the student’s work in the light of the university’s goals and mission.

Rating Scale: Two types of scoring are used to reflect the purposes and developmental nature of the KAMs:

1. **Quality Indicators:** A 5-level rating scale is used for scoring each of the quality indicators in the rubric. In general, ratings of 3 or above are considered satisfactory (although further revision may be needed), and ratings of 1 or 2 do not achieve minimal standards for passing. An NA (Not Applicable) category is used when an indicator on the rubric is not relevant to the KAM. Definitions of each level of the rating scale are provided below.
2. **Overall KAM Evaluation:** To reflect the design of each KAM as a unit of study in a specific subject area, a unified evaluation of satisfactory or unsatisfactory is assigned. Criteria for these evaluations are provided below.

Note: No ratings are used for the reflective section at the end of the rubric, but comments are encouraged.

Constructive Feedback: Providing constructive feedback plays a major role in a student’s ability to develop a KAM, master a unit of study, and use the KAM process to make progress toward satisfactory completion of the Ph.D. program at Walden University. A space for comments is provided for each quality indicator. Commenting on each quality indicator is optional and is not expected. Primarily, this space can be used to provide a summary of specific guidance for revision and to provide positive feedback for high-quality efforts and noteworthy improvements. More extensive comments can be submitted as a separate attachment or embedded within the KAM copy.

DEFINITIONS OF RATINGS FOR QUALITY INDICATORS

- 5 = Approved with commendation: the level of scholarship is exceptional in this section of the KAM
- 4 = Acceptable as written: all crucial elements are included and adequately described
- 3 = Approved, although revisions are strongly suggested in one or more important component(s) that are of markedly lesser quality than the rest of the quality indicators in this section (Comments on how to enhance quality are provided for revision.)
- 2 = Must be revised and resubmitted because one or more essential component(s) are not satisfactorily described (Comments related to revision are provided.)
- 1 = Does not meet the required level
- NA = Not applicable: this quality indicator does not apply to the document

CRITERIA FOR FINAL OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE KAM

- S = Satisfactory: A grade of *S* is equivalent to a cumulative grade of *B* or better. Students receiving a grade of *S* are awarded 14 quarter credits.
- U = Unsatisfactory: Student did not meet the criteria for a cumulative grade of *B* or better. Students who receive a grade of *U* are not awarded any credits. With permission from their associate dean, or designee, these students may repeat the KAM demonstration once.

I. OVERALL ORGANIZATION OF KAM

<p>1. Title Page:</p> <p>Identifying information is correct (i.e., the title page for the entire KAM contains the KAM number and title; student’s name and identification number; program name and specialization/concentration; assessor’s and faculty mentor’s names and e-mail addresses; and date).</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>2. KAM Layout (in this order):</p> <p>Abstracts for each component appear on separate pages after the title page. Each abstract is no more than 120 words, in a single paragraph, with no paragraph indentation. No pagination.</p> <p>Begin page numbering with the Table of Contents, numbered i at bottom center of the page. Pagination begins again at the beginning of the Breadth section, which is labeled as page 1, in the upper right-hand corner of the page.</p> <p>Each component of the KAM (Breadth, Depth, Application) begins on a new page. Page numbers are counted continuously from the beginning of the Breadth.</p> <p>Identifying information is accurately provided in the heading for each component of the KAM including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KAM component: Breadth, Depth, Application in title case, centered. • Walden course prefix, number, and title, centered. <p>Headings are correctly displayed according to the writing template for KAMs.</p>	

<p>Combined reference list for each component appears at the end of the document.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>3. Evidence of Integrated KAM:</p> <p>In the abstracts, the integration of the KAM components is identified and reflects the interconnections across the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theoretical perspectives discussed in the Breadth component • The in-depth focus and knowledge of current research reflected in the Depth component • Application of theories and research to practice <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>4. Social Change:</p> <p>The Walden mission of positive social change (i.e., improvement of human or social conditions by promoting the worth, dignity, and development of individuals, communities, organizations, institutions, cultures, and/or societies) is reflected in the abstracts.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	

II. BREADTH COMPONENT

Focus: Acquisition, Integration, and Critical Analysis of Theory-Based Knowledge

<p>5. Grasp of the Domain of Knowledge:</p> <p>An introductory section defines the topic and outlines its boundaries, major components, limits, and scope.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>6. Mastery of Knowledge Base:</p> <p>An understanding of major theoretical perspectives is demonstrated, specifically the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of the knowledge area focused on in this KAM.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>7. Critical Analysis:</p> <p>Going beyond descriptive discussion, it critically compares and contrasts, analyzes, synthesizes, and/or evaluates the assumptions and contributions of major theories, models, and conceptual frameworks.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>8. Summary and Transition Statement:</p> <p>The Breadth ends with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A summary and/or conclusion of the major points discussed in the Breadth component • A brief transition statement connecting the Breadth and Depth components <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	

III. DEPTH COMPONENT

Focus: Acquisition, Integration, and Critical Analysis of Research-Based Knowledge

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

<p>9. Annotations:</p> <p>Annotations are presented for a minimum of 15 scholarly articles (i.e., generally in the last 3–5 years, although classic articles may be included) from a variety of international peer-reviewed/refereed scholarly/professional journals (not magazines). References are presented in correct APA format.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>10. Analysis:</p> <p>Each annotation includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A summary of the study—research question(s), theoretical framework, research method, major findings and implications (where appropriate)• A critical analysis (at least one paragraph) assessing the merits of the article, citing strengths and limitations, and analyzing the article’s major thesis• A statement of the relevance of the article for the student’s profession or research interests <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	

DEPTH NARRATIVE

<p>11. Introduction:</p> <p>An introduction outlines the organization and rationale of the Depth narrative as a literature review.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>12. Literature Review Essay:</p> <p>Themes in the current research literature are categorized, synthesized, and analyzed around the topic of the Depth.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>13. Evaluation of Research Contributions to Topic:</p> <p>The research methods employed in the reviewed studies are described and critically evaluated in terms of purposes, utility, and validity of findings generated, and possible alternatives. (When relevant to the focus of the KAM, the student provides an overview of varied ways to probe the subject.) Contributions of research to the issues are discussed and critically evaluated.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>14. Summary:</p> <p>Major points made in the Depth narrative are summarized, with particular focus on suggestions for further research.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	

<p>15. Transition Statement:</p> <p>The Depth ends with a clear integrative transition statement for the next section of the KAM: the Application component.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

IV. APPLICATION COMPONENT

Focus: Practical Application of Theory-Based and Research-Based Knowledge to the Profession

<p>16. Presentation of Project:</p> <p>An introductory section indicates or describes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The context, scope, purpose, development, and potential impact of the project • The project and, where applicable, an analysis of the results of implementing the project <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>17. Discussion of Project:</p> <p>Reflections on the project integrate relevant theoretical perspectives and research findings. Comments on the effectiveness, implications, or possible future developments of the project are included as appropriate. (Approximately 10 pages)</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>18. Ethical Considerations:</p> <p>Ethical considerations related to the professional context of the application project and to this specific application project are outlined. Steps taken to ensure ethical practice (e.g., IRB approval for research studies or district approval of a school-based project) are described.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>19. “Change in the Profession” and Social Change:</p> <p>Potential or actual “change in the profession” related to the application project reflects the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walden University’s mission of positive social change (i.e., improvement of human or social conditions by promoting the worth, dignity, and development of individuals, communities, organizations, institutions, cultures, and/or societies) • The focus of this specific KAM <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	

V. OVERALL STRUCTURE AND WRITING OF KAM

<p>20. Organization:</p> <p>The KAM is logically and comprehensively organized with connections established between ideas.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>21. Quality of Presentation:</p> <p>Sources are accurately interpreted. Quoted and paraphrased material is discussed and interpreted rather than merely reproduced. Important points are developed, rather than merely asserted. Unsupported opinions are avoided.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>22. Form:</p> <p>References are accurately cited, and the reference list is comprehensive and includes all and only sources found in the narratives (with an integrated reference list that appears at the end of the document). The KAM is free from grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors; sentences are well-formed and have well-chosen words; statements are free of contradiction; and gender-inclusive language is reflective of global diversity.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	
<p>23. Doctoral-Level Work:</p> <p>The KAM is of scholarly effort equivalent to that of doctoral-level seminars. The content of the KAM is consistent with the body of knowledge of the KAM's topic area and the approved Learning Agreement. There is evidence of critical/scholarly thinking, careful research, and critical analysis of scholarly literature. Writing is original, clear, succinct, and academically persuasive.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i></p>	

www.WaldenU.edu