Walden University

Dissertation Guidebook

WALDEN UNIVERSITY

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Introduction

The final phase of study for Walden University doctoral students is completion of a dissertation, which begins with the preparation of a dissertation premise and ends with approval of the final dissertation. Walden does not favor any particular research approach or methodology, but does require that a dissertation reflect a high level of scholarly effort and be an original contribution to knowledge or professional practice. Students should demonstrate knowledge of research design and execution as well as the ability to interpret research findings both orally and in writing. The final product should have the level of detail and sophistication expected of a doctoral level scholar-practitioner in the discipline.

The Walden University Dissertation Statement

This statement is designed to provide a broad vision of the Walden University dissertation and an understanding of the university's dissertation requirements:

The Walden University dissertation embraces and reflects the core values and mission of the university. Walden strives to produce graduates who combine academic credentials with professional skills and leaders whose actions are motivated by informed intellect and educated attitudes. As accomplished practitioners, Walden students bring a wealth of expertise to their studies. Walden's curricula then provide the foundation upon which students build their competence and mold their interests, culminating in the dissertation learning experience. Through this process, Walden graduates are provided the learning necessary to set forth new ideas through enlightened insights and to effect change in individuals, organizations, and society.

Because Walden students and their courses of study vary, the nature and purposes of Walden dissertations also vary. The university's approach to scholarship is flexible. The dissertation can be built upon a foundation of basic or applied research, multidisciplinary perspectives on scholarship, improved teaching, or an appropriate and acceptable combination of different forms of rigorous scholarship. Each suits the Walden dissertation insofar as it relates to the nature and purpose of the inquiry and demonstrates a literate grounding in the relevant fields in which it is written, while maintaining the fundamental elements of quality and integrity required of stewards of the discipline.

The Walden dissertation demonstrates a commitment to improving the caliber of professional practice. It is an inquiry that addresses unanswered questions or issues lacking thorough study and envisions what could happen as a result of the research outcomes. It contributes to professional practice by offering new knowledge or new understanding of existing knowledge arrived at through rigorous application of appropriate research methodology and provides a basis for further research. Therefore, the results of a research study conducted for a Walden dissertation are worthy of publication as a significant contribution to professional practice.

The Walden dissertation demonstrates a commitment to addressing the phenomena of social change and, within that context, exhibits sensitivity to societal conditions and a consideration of social issues.

The Walden dissertation confirms a student's understanding of and commitment to academic honesty and scholarly integrity.

Every dissertation is shaped by the university's core values of integrity and quality, as well as its mission: to provide a diverse community of career professionals with the opportunity to transform themselves as scholar-practitioners so that they can effect positive social change. The dissertation is the unifying culmination of a doctoral student's academic experience at Walden. The most important outcome of all teaching and learning at Walden is to produce graduates with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to:

- Understand and continuously develop and change themselves, the organizations in which they work, and society at large.
- Create new knowledge dedicated to the improvement of social conditions and to impact society positively by putting that knowledge into practice by both modeling their learning through action and by being civically engaged.
- Continue learning across their lifetimes as practitioners, researchers, and scholars and continue to impact social change.
- Achieve professional excellence as active and influential professionals by applying their learning to specific problems and challenges in their work settings and professional practice.
- Be information literate, including knowing the literature of their professional fields and reading it critically.
- Understand the design and methods of inquiry in their professional fields.
- Practice in their professional fields legally and ethically.
- Communicate effectively, particularly in communicating their learning and research to others.
- Appreciate, respect, and advocate for diversity and multiculturalism within their professional fields.
- Function flexibly and effectively in a variety of educational environments, including online and distributed environments.

How This Guidebook Is Organized

The *Dissertation Guidebook* complements other important resources during this phase of students' graduate career, including their dissertation supervisory committee, their academic program leaders, the academic advisors and other university staff members, the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA style manual), and the Walden Writing Center.

The Dissertation Process. Part 1 of this guidebook describes the steps of the dissertation process, including the use of evaluative rubrics. Part 1 also explains the policies and procedures related to ethical standards and use of human subjects in research.

Style: APA and Walden University. Form and style guidelines are provided in Part 2, as an introduction and a supplement to the APA style manual. The APA style manual is students' main source of form and style information when writing their dissertation. References to APA style in this edition of the *Dissertation Guidebook* reflect the sixth edition of the APA style manual. When the university has style preferences for dissertations that supersede APA guidelines, those preferences are indicated in green boxes.

Frequently Asked Questions. Part 3 of this guidebook includes a series of frequently asked questions regarding the dissertation process as well as form and style issues.

Part 1. The Dissertation Process

The processes for dissertations are continually evaluated and updated to make the experience easy for both faculty members and students. The steps are detailed in this guidebook. A shorter description of the dissertation process and relevant forms can be found on the Office of Student Research Administration (OSRA) section of the Walden University website.

Process Overview

If students wish to graduate in a specific term, they must plan their program carefully. They should begin planning for program completion at least 13 months in advance of their anticipated graduation date. The table below provides a quick summary of the steps involved in completing the dissertation. The following sections describe these steps in more detail.

Step	*Description*
Premise	The dissertation **premise** is a short document that ***identifies a preliminary topic*** for the dissertation and supports formation of the dissertation supervisory committee. Students' primary goal for the premise is to narrow their dissertation topic such that they have provided a general sense of the direction of their research.
Committee Nomination	At this time, students also nominate their **dissertation supervisory committee**, following the steps outlined for their program of study and in the *Dissertation Committee Process* document found on the OSRA website. Students nominate a committee chair and a committee member who provide guidance related to the content and research methods appropriate to the study. After approval of the prospectus, a third member serving in the role of the university research reviewer (URR) is assigned by the program director.
Prospectus	The dissertation **prospectus** builds on the premise by helping students organize, delineate, and make decisions regarding their dissertation and appropriate research style. The prospectus serves as an agreed-upon ***plan for developing the proposal*** and finalizes ***the structure of the dissertation supervisory committee.*** The supervisory committee uses the *Dissertation Prospectus Rubric* to give feedback on the prospectus.
Proposal Development	The first three chapters of a dissertation are known as the dissertation **proposal**. The proposal ***establishes the rationale for conducting the study***, including a review and analysis of the relevant literature, and ***describes the design and methodology*** that will be utilized for the study. Students work with their supervisory committee to develop the proposal, consulting the specific university-approved dissertation checklist indicators that will be used to organize the dissertation. When ready, students complete a self-evaluation of the dissertation checklist and a Turnitin report and submit these documents to their dissertation chair. (***Note:*** The dissertation chair may complete a separate Turnitin report, which is submitted to the URR member for review along with the dissertation checklist and proposal). Students' committee members, including the URR member, evaluate the proposal against the *Dissertation Minimum Standards Rubric* using the annotated checklist that students provide to guide their reviews.

Step	Description
Proposal University Research Review	When the supervisory committee is satisfied that the proposal meets all the requirements specified in the minimum standards rubric, the chair submits the proposal, Turnitin report, the dissertation checklist, and completed rubrics from each member to the assigned committee member serving in the URR role. The URR member reviews the proposal, again using the minimum standards rubric, including items relevant to content, methodology, form and style, and ethical procedures. The URR member either approves the proposal, which enables the student to set up an oral conference, or returns the proposal with a set of suggested revisions. Students work with their committee to make any requested revisions.
Proposal Oral Presentation	Following URR approval, students orally present the proposal to their committee via teleconference scheduled with OSRA. Requests should be made 1 week in advance of the meeting. This presentation is used to confirm students' plans for their research, clarify any remaining questions that committee members may have regarding the study, and help ensure that students initiate their research from a sound foundation. After the proposal has been successfully defended, the chair submits the *Proposal Approval* form and the clean, approved copy of the proposal to OSRA. *Note:* Walden provides a conference call service for the oral defense that is toll-free for most countries outside the United States. Students living in areas outside this coverage will be responsible for toll charges associated with this call.
IRB Approval	Walden's **Institutional Review Board** (IRB) reviews each study conducted by Walden students to determine if the anticipated benefits of the study outweigh risks associated with participation in it. While developing their proposal, students should draft the IRB application and submit it to their chair for feedback. After the proposal has received final approval following the presentation, students receive a notice from OSRA to submit their formal application directly to the IRB. *Note:* Please remember that no data may be collected until IRB approval is granted.
Dissertation Completion	Following IRB approval, students can collect and analyze their data and report their findings, complete the remaining chapters of their dissertation, and prepare the abstract. They complete a self-evaluation of the remaining chapters in the dissertation checklist and another Turnitin report to submit to their dissertation chair. *Note:* The dissertation chair may again complete a separate Turnitin report, which is submitted to the URR member for review along with the dissertation.
Dissertation University Research Review	When the supervisory committee is satisfied that the full dissertation draft and abstract meet all the requirements specified in the minimum standards rubric, the chair submits the dissertation, abstract, completed dissertation checklist, rubrics from each member, and Turnitin report to the URR member for review of the abstract and Chapters 4 and 5. Students work with their committee to make any requested revisions.
Form and Style Review	Upon URR approval of the dissertation and abstract, the research service specialist submits the document to a Writing Center editor for a **form and style review**—a final check for errors in APA style, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and related issues.
Oral Defense Teleconference	After receipt of the form and style evaluation, students present their dissertation via teleconference scheduled with OSRA. Requests should be made 1 week in advance of the meeting. This final oral defense is a formal discussion of the scholarly content of the dissertation, followed by an evaluation of the dissertation. At this point, students may need to revise the dissertation based on feedback during the teleconference as well as from the form and style review.
Final University Research Review	After successful completion of the oral defense and committee approval of the dissertation, the chair forwards the final dissertation and abstract to the URR member for a final review to make sure all methodological, content, and writing issues have been addressed. In addition, the URR member reviews the abstract to make sure it meets university guidelines.

Step	Description
Chief Academic Officer Review	After final URR approval, the abstract is sent to the university's chief academic officer (CAO) or designee as a final endorsement of the study. Revisions may be required at this point, and these changes are facilitated through consultation with the chair and others. Upon CAO approval, the dissertation is officially completed.
ProQuest Submission	To graduate from Walden University, students must submit their dissertation to ProQuest for publishing. After this submission has been approved, students have completed all the graduation requirements for the dissertation and their degree can be validated.

Beginning the Process

Students begin the dissertation phase of their program when they complete their premise and then prospectus and nominate the first two members of the dissertation committee: a chair and a committee member. Students can find more guidance in *Starting the Dissertation Process* and in the *Dissertation Premise* and *Dissertation Prospectus* guides. More detailed information on the committee can be found in the *Dissertation Committee Process* document and on the *Committee Member Nomination* form. These documents, forms, and additional supporting resources can be found on the OSRA section of Walden's Center for Research Quality website.

Dissertation Premise

Students' first step to completing the dissertation is developing the *Dissertation Premise*. This document is used to **identify a preliminary topic** for the research and to help **identify the faculty members** who will guide development of the *Dissertation Prospectus*. Students can find more information in the *Dissertation Premise* guide.

The premise consists of four parts: title, problem statement, approach for the study, and references. An annotated outline and sample premise are included in the guide and can be used to create the premise document. Students' primary goal for the premise is to narrow the dissertation topic such that a general sense of the direction of the research has been provided.

Significantly, the foundation for quality in every dissertation is a research question that reflects a high level of conceptual manipulation and a significant and original contribution to knowledge or professional practice. A brief litmus test of doctoral level research problem can be found in the *Dissertation Premise* guide as well as on the Research Resources page of Walden's Center for Research Quality website. These basic indicators will appear throughout the dissertation process.

Every doctoral student's journey is a little different, so it is difficult to say exactly when to start the premise. All students should be sure to check their program of study and consult with the Academic Advising team. Because the premise is used to form their supervisory committee, however, students should plan to start the premise toward completion of their core research sequence and at least 2 quarters before beginning the dissertation prospectus, either in a companion or dissertation course or research form (SBSF 7100 or EDUC 8800). In the quarter prior to starting their prospectus, students submit their premise to the faculty member whom they nominate as chair of their supervisory committee (some Education students submit the premise to their specialization coordinator).

Note: The premise is used to help students form their dissertation supervisory committee, but they will confirm their committee structure and finalize their topic at the end of the prospectus development process.

Dissertation Supervisory Committee

The dissertation supervisory committee is a unique feature of doctoral education. The primary goal of the committee is to provide students with the guidance and support that they will need to conduct an independent research project of the highest quality and relevancy. Walden dissertation supervisory committees are generally composed of three members: a committee *chair*, a committee *member*, and a committee *university research reviewer* (URR). In some rare cases, a fourth, external (non-Walden) member may be added to the committee to provide special expertise.

Finding the first two members of the committee is a student's responsibility. The URR member will be assigned to the committee at the time that the committee is approved, upon approval of the prospectus, or at the time that the committee members have both approved the proposal, depending on the student's program. One resource for finding committee members is the *Faculty Expertise Directory* (available on the [myWalden](#) university portal), which provides information on the diverse experience and expertise found among the Walden faculty. Other faculty members, program leaders, and the academic advisors can assist students with locating faculty members who may be both suitable and available for their committee. As students move through the initial stages of their program, they should be watching for potential committee members as well.

A few guidelines are used to shape committee formation. Between the chair and second member, someone must be designated as the *context expert* and someone as the *methodologist,* although one person can do both. The dissertation chair must be from a student's program. As some academic programs have further requirements for chairing a dissertation committee, students should be sure to confirm with an advisor and/or the proposed chair that he or she is eligible to chair the committee. Students should also be mindful of any department-mandated core courses, pertinent residencies, and prerequisites that must be completed before they can nominate their dissertation supervisory committee members.

To nominate a committee member, a student must send the *Committee Member Nomination* form and a copy of the premise or draft prospectus document to a nominee. After the nominee agrees to serve on the committee and that nominee's service has been approved by the program director, the student begins the process of finalizing the prospectus. Most students find their committee chair first. The timing of when students find the second member, however, depends on a number of factors, including the role he or she will have, the nature of the project, and also the context in which students develop their prospectus. Students should note than an approved chair is only effective at the start of the following quarter, whereas a committee member may become effective immediately, depending on when final approval is given to the committee.

Dissertation Prospectus

The dissertation prospectus builds on the premise and provides more information about the dissertation research. Writing the prospectus will help students organize, delineate, and make decisions regarding their topic and appropriate research style. An approved prospectus serves as an agreed-upon *plan for developing the proposal* and finalizes the *structure of the dissertation supervisory committee*. The *Dissertation Prospectus* guide provides more details on the document and process.

The prospectus consists of several small sections, which are detailed in the annotated outline in the *Dissertation Prospectus* guide. The goal for the prospectus is to create a plan for developing the dissertation proposal. Therefore, a student needs to have more information for the prospectus than for the premise, but does not need to know all the specific details of the study that will ultimately be conducted. That remaining work will occur when the proposal is written. The final draft of the prospectus is assessed against the quality indicators in the *Dissertation Prospectus Rubric.* After both committee members have approved the final version of the prospectus and completed their rubrics, the chair will send the rubrics and prospectus in to the OSRA office, and they will submit a request to the program director for the final approval.

Depending on the academic program, some students work with their chair in a companion course that supports prospectus development. Students in Knowledge Area Module (KAM)-based programs work on their prospectus in the EDUC 8800 or SBSF 7100 - Research Forum with their faculty mentor, who is now their chair. Other students may start their prospectus in a course led by a senior member of the faculty in their area before moving into a dissertation completion course with their chair. Yet other students may directly work with their chair in a dissertation course, during which they complete the prospectus. Students should be sure to check their program of study to know which path they will follow.

As for the proposal and dissertation, for which students will receive feedback on working drafts, prospectus development is an iterative process. When the prospectus is completed, students should follow the submission guidelines for their program. Generally, students should submit a final prospectus to their dissertation supervisory committee for review *after* completion of the core research sequence but *before* taking any advanced research course, and

- *as required in the students' dissertation course,* if students are currently enrolled in this course;
- *toward the end of their time in a companion course,* following the guidance of the chair; or,
- *prior to beginning the dissertation proposal* in the EDUC 8800 or SBSF 7100 -Research Forum, following the guidance of the chair.

Registering for Dissertation Credits

Students enrolled in a *KAM-based program* (Ph.D. in Education or Management) are automatically be placed in EDUC 8800 or SBSF 7100 - Research Forum with the chair of their dissertation supervisory committee. Students cannot register for this course themselves; they will be registered by their academic advisors after the appointment of their dissertation chair is confirmed. Students remain registered in EDUC 8800 or SBSF 7100 until successful completion

of the dissertation. The Office of the Registrar assigns all 20 dissertation credits when the final academic audit is complete.

Students enrolled in a ***course-based program*** (Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision, Criminal Justice, Education, Health Services, Human Services, Management, Nursing, Psychology, Public Health, or Public Policy and Administration, Social Work) must register for a total of 20 dissertation credits (for Counselor Education and Supervision: 12 credits). Registration for the dissertation course (COUN 8650, EDUC 9001, HLTH 9001, HUMN 9001, MGMT 9000, PSYC 9000, PUBH 9001, PPPA 9000, or SOCW 9000) takes place during the regular course registration period. Once registered for the first term, students are then registered automatically for the dissertation course until the dissertation is formally approved by the CAO.

Students enrolled in a ***mixed-model program*** (Ph.D. in Education, Management, or Public Policy and Administration) must register for a total of 20 dissertation credits. Registration for the dissertation course (EDUC 9002, MGMT 9000, or PPPA 9000) takes place during the regular course registration period. Once registered for the first term, students are then registered automatically for the dissertation course until the dissertation is formally approved by the CAO.

Note: Students who have an approved dissertation supervisory committee may register for the dissertation course during any term in which they are working on the proposal and dissertation. Students who have only a committee chair may register for the dissertation course, but they will not be able to submit their proposal for review until they have an approved committee.

All students should check the *Walden University Catalog* regarding their program's prerequisites for enrolling in the dissertation course.

Developing the Proposal

The proposal consists of the first three chapters of the dissertation document and an APA style reference list. The proposal presents a detailed plan of the proposed research for the dissertation and describes a specific idea, the related literature, and the intended research methodology.

Students should consult with their committee chair early and frequently when developing the proposal. With guidance from their supervisory committee, students conceptualize a topic, organize and synthesize the literature, and determine a research methodology appropriate to the subject matter.

Additional details and information on developing and writing the proposal and dissertation are found within this guidebook, on the OSRA website, and at the Walden Writing Center. The Writing Center offers a dissertation template, which can be very useful.

Consult the *Dissertation Checklists* and *Minimum Standards Rubric*

Walden's *Dissertation Checklists* are used to operationalize Walden's Dissertation Statement. Each checklist is designed to assist students, dissertation supervisory committees, and the university's academic leadership to determine whether a dissertation meets Walden's standards.

Students should download the appropriate [dissertation checklist](#) when their committee and prospectus are approved.

Walden's evaluations for dissertations follow a university-approved process, as described below:

- The purpose of the dissertation checklist is to guide students and dissertation supervisory committees as they work together to develop high-quality doctoral proposals and dissertations. The checklist should be shared with students early in their doctoral programs and frequently used in advisement and graduate courses to reflect Walden's expectations for high-quality dissertations. The checklist is designed to help ensure a rigorous reporting across the common components that are used to build the dissertation.

- Specific dissertation checklists have been developed for use with studies employing qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-research designs. As students begin the process of developing a proposal for the dissertation, the specific checklist that best reflects the design of the proposed dissertation study should be used.

- As the proposal is developed and submitted for review to the dissertation supervisory committee, each committee member should use the most current version of the dissertation checklist to communicate his or her evaluations to the student, the chairperson, and any other members of the committee. This process of ongoing evaluation and communication will continue throughout the development of the dissertation.

- Detailed content elements are specified in the checklist for each chapter of the dissertation. The subsections for each chapter are made up of descriptions of substantive characteristics of the dissertation, specifically related to the scholarly quality and integrity of the document. Students annotate the page numbers where these substantive characteristics are found within the dissertation. This documentation serves three important functions: it presents the general consensus of the Walden faculty regarding the specific content areas that should be addressed within each chapter of an acceptable Walden dissertation, it assists students in reflecting on areas for improvement within the document, and it helps guide the committee members' review of the documents.

- A space for comments is provided for each subgroup of substantive characteristics in each chapter. Comments provided by the evaluator (committee member) should refer to praiseworthy aspects of the document and offer specific guidance for revision when needed. Comments should provide formative evaluation for that particular chapter and be useful to the student and other members of the dissertation supervisory committee. The spaces provided for comment are not to be used for communicating line-by-line editing of the manuscript. If the document is in need of editing, the committee member needs to comment to that effect but provide any extensive comments in a separate communication.

- The use of a dissertation checklist is intended to provide ongoing reflection, evaluation, and reevaluation of the specific subcomponents of the proposal and dissertation drafts as they are developed into a comprehensive document that is internally consistent and aligned to serve the purpose of the doctoral level investigation. The minimum standards rubric is applied by the members of the committee to verify that the substantive characteristics of the dissertation guided by the checklist have been adequately demonstrated to meet core quality standards. For the final copy of each document (either the proposal or the dissertation), there must be unanimous approval by the dissertation supervisory committee, including the URR member, before the student proceeds to the oral defense (although revisions may be required following the oral defense).

The checklist and minimum standards rubric will aid students, along with their committee, in writing the proposal for the dissertation. Forms can be accessed via the OSRA website.

Committee Review

To help clarify the research framework for the project, a student's committee chair reviews drafts of the proposal, along with a preliminary draft of the IRB application (see the Getting Approval for Research section for more about the IRB). When satisfied that the documents meet university criteria outlined in the *Dissertation Minimum Standards Rubric*, the chair authorizes the student to submit the proposal and draft IRB application to the other committee member for review.

After the chair has deemed that the dissertation is ready, he or she will submit it for Turnitin review. At the same time, the student completes and submits a Turnitin self-evaluation to the chair, with a plan for revisions if warranted. After the chair has determined Turnitin compliance and believes the dissertation is ready, the chair forwards the dissertation and abstract, dissertation checklist, each committee member's minimum standards rubric, and a copy of the formal Turnitin report to the URR member, copying research@waldenu.edu.

The committee members have 14 calendar days to review the proposal draft and preliminary IRB application. Guided by the student's annotated checklist, the committee member uses the minimum standards rubric to evaluate the proposal and shares evaluations with the committee chair. The committee member may assist the chair in providing feedback to the student on revisions requested; an additional 14 calendar days are allotted to committee members for *each* subsequent round of revisions.

After both members of a student's committee completes a minimum standards rubric reflecting that no further changes are necessary, the proposal is ready for review by the committee URR. The committee chair forwards the proposal, a minimum standards rubric from each member, dissertation checklist, and Turnitin report to the URR member, copying research@waldenu.edu. The URR member, form and style editors, and CAO or CAO's designee have 14 days (including the day of submission—except for during the initial review cycle, which begins the day after submission) to complete their review. If the materials are submitted after noon Central time, an extra day will be added. The review cycle cannot begin until all required documents (rubrics, Turnitin reports, clean copies, etc.) are submitted. If the review takes place during any of the official Walden holidays (New Year's Day; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; Memorial Day; Independence Day; Labor Day; Thanksgiving Day and day after Thanksgiving; or Christmas Day), the holiday will not count in the 14-day review cycle.

Gaining URR Approval of the Proposal

Informed by the student's annotated dissertation checklist, the URR member completes an initial review of the proposal using the minimum standards rubric, including items relevant to content, methodology, form and style, and ethical procedures. After the URR member has completed the review, he or she sends the outcome of the review to research@waldenu.edu, copying the student and the chair. At this stage, the URR member can refer the student for mandatory consultation with the IRB office and/or the Writing Center to address ethical or writing concerns,

respectively. The URR member is obligated to make these referrals should he or she note significant ethical or writing concerns.

When the URR member has requested changes, the committee works with the student to make the requested revisions. When the chair feels that the necessary revisions have been made, he or she forwards the revised proposal detailing the revisions that have been made to the URR member, copying research@waldenu.edu. The URR member then reviews the revised materials. This process continues until the URR member approves the proposal as meeting university criteria outlined in the *Dissertation Minimum Standards Rubric*. At that point, the URR member sends an e-mail to research@waldenu.edu and the chair of the student's committee with his or her minimum standards rubric and confirmation of the Turnitin report indicating approval to commence with the oral defense.

Proposal Oral Presentation

The oral presentation may commence only after the URR member has approved the proposal and has notified OSRA. The student presents the proposal via teleconference with the committee members. The URR member will not participate in the proposal oral presentation unless there are compelling reasons that necessitate that the URR member attends. The oral presentation is a formal discussion of the proposal to identify any concerns to be addressed in the final version of the proposal or issues that may arise as the student moves forward with the dissertation. The teleconference, which is paid for by Walden University, is led by the committee chair. *Note:* Walden provides a conference call service for the oral defense that is toll-free for most countries outside the United States. Students living in areas outside this coverage will be responsible for toll charges associated with this call.

The proposal oral presentation must be recorded. Instructions are provided to the committee chair for starting and terminating the recording. Teleconferences are made public within the Walden University community; the e-mailed reservation includes instructions regarding a privacy option. Upon request, the research service specialist can e-mail a link to the recording of the conference within 72 hours of holding the call. Recordings of teleconference calls will be archived for 30 days.

Scheduling the Teleconference

To schedule the teleconference, the student should identify several commonly available dates and times among those participating in the teleconference (student and the committee members). That information should be forwarded to the committee chair who will then use the *Conference Call Reservation* form (which is located on the Walden website) to submit the request to reserve the date and time that is convenient for the participants. *Note:* Reservation forms must be submitted at least 1 week prior to the teleconference date requested.

A confirmation of the request is sent to all participants with instructions for calling in at the appointed date and time. Before the call, the student should ask the chair to clarify any expectations of the content of the conference call, if necessary.

Oral Presentation Outcome

If the committee determines that the proposal needs revision, the committee chair supervises these modifications. When the requested changes have been made, the chair authorizes the student to forward the updated proposal to the committee member for review. The chairperson forwards the revised version to the URR member for approval. The chair then submits the approved proposal to OSRA (research@waldenu.edu), along with a *Proposal Approval* form.

OSRA e-mails the student a formal approval notice and requests submission of the IRB application. See the next section, Getting Approval for Research, for more information about the IRB process.

Getting Approval for Research

All students, faculty members, and staff members who undertake research studies, including a dissertation, that grow out of their affiliation with the university or that involve interviewing, surveying, testing, treating, and/or experimentally manipulating human participants or archival data on human subjects are required to have approval from Walden's IRB prior to beginning their research. All researchers, including students, can download the current version of the IRB application and instructions from the Office of Research Ethics and Compliance section of Walden's Center for Research Quality website.

The IRB reviews all students' applications and determines if their proposed research complies with accepted ethical standards. Walden does not accept responsibility or liability for research conducted without the IRB's approval, and the university will not accept or grant credit for student work where the student has failed to comply with its policies and procedures related to ethical standards in research. *Note:* A repeat of the proposal URR process can be required by the committee, the IRB, or the CAO at any time if ethical or pragmatic concerns necessitate substantial revisions to a URR-approved proposal.

The Purpose of the IRB

The IRB is primarily concerned with ensuring ethical practice and protection of participants in all studies, particularly those involving
- protected classes (e.g., children, elderly, prisoners, or cognitively and/or mentally impaired individuals),
- potential challenges identifying subjects or obtaining informed consent,
- deception of subjects,
- potential coercion, or
- personality, attitude, and gender preference measurements.

The IRB's purpose is to evaluate proposed data collection methods to ensure that the risk to subjects is minimized or eliminated and that the study complies with commonly accepted ethical principles for human subject research.

The IRB's authority is consultative to the CAO, or designee, with regard to the approval of proposed research studies.

IRB Application Process

Students may not initiate data collection until they receive written (e-mail) notification of their approval to conduct research from the IRB. This prohibition includes recruitment of subjects; advertising, mailing, or distributing consent forms; interviewing; surveying; data gathering; and so on.

After the proposal has received final approval, the student receives a notice from OSRA to submit the formal IRB application. The student must complete the *IRB Application* form in its entirety, attach supporting documentation (e.g., copies of consent forms, surveys, and other instruments), and submit all materials to the committee chair. The committee chair reviews and electronically signs the document. The IRB materials are then forwarded to irb@waldenu.edu. The IRB works with the student to ascertain that all necessary materials have been submitted. The IRB has the authority to require revision of the student's request, to ensure compliance with the university's policy on ethical standards in research.

Note: Data collected without IRB review and approval cannot be included in the dissertation. Prohibited activities conducted prior to IRB approval do not fall under the legal protection of the university.

Completing the Dissertation

After the IRB application has been approved, students can conduct their research, collect and analyze the data, report their findings, and draw their conclusions. With the guidance of their committee, students will write Chapters 4 and 5 of the dissertation, as well as the dissertation abstract.

Required Data Storage

Students are required to maintain all raw data—interview tapes, spreadsheets, questionnaire results, and so forth—for no less than 5 years upon completion of their dissertation. For safekeeping, store copies of data in two different locations.

Reporting the Findings

Committee guidance and requirements can vary as to the best way to report findings. For example, some committees ask students to place lengthy portions of interviews—raw data—in Chapter 4 of the dissertation. Other committees request that interview transcripts appear in an appendix; still others do not require raw data to be included in the dissertation at all, but ask that interview notes and tapes be kept in a secure location for later review, if necessary. Students should follow their committee members' suggestions and requirements in presenting and analyzing the data.

As is often the case in scholarship—and most forms of writing, students must first weigh the needs of the audience and publisher with their own because no two situations are alike. Thus, when reporting their research, students should be concerned less with prescribed rules and more with (a) accuracy and integrity, (b) protection of confidential sources, and (c) ease of reading;

however, students will need to adhere to rules related to APA formatting. Several common issues related to confidentiality, interviews, and participant and/or observer notes bear mentioning.

Confidentiality of Sources

Sources may or may not wish to be identified in a dissertation. Students are obligated to notify participants and managers of research sites that all Walden dissertations enter the public arena.

How students refer to anonymous locales and participants can vary. The reader should know the city or state—or at least the region—where the research took place. Students should introduce the pseudonym for an organization with a sentence such as the following: *To ensure confidentiality, the facility will be referred to as XYZ Medical Clinic throughout this dissertation.*

Students may refer to participants who wish to remain anonymous as *Participant 1* or *P1*, by an initial, by any other logical abbreviation, or by a pseudonym. Students should inform their readers in the narrative if pseudonyms will be used throughout.

Note: Consider whether the students' curriculum vitae (CV) offer an astute reader of the dissertation the chance to surmise where the research took place. To protect research sites or sources, it may be necessary to disguise or delete the names of current or past places of employment. Students may also redact the names by highlighting them in black.

For more information about maintaining confidentiality, contact the IRB office at irb@waldenu.edu.

Integrity and Accuracy

A predetermined bias by some writers leads almost invariably to selective use of quotations to support their position. However, as a scholarly researcher, students are obligated to report findings as completely, accurately, and objectively as possible, lest the integrity of the narrative be compromised. The reader expects that the speaker's actual words are reported and portrayed in an honest context, including judicious use of blatant grammatical errors and vulgar language. Students should be prepared to negotiate with the committee and the study participants and stakeholders what the word *judicious* implies.

Use an ellipsis to show that some words have been deleted or brackets to indicate that words have been changed or added. If a substantial portion of an interview is deleted or changed, paraphrase that section of the interview. Students should refer to the APA style manual for more details about maintaining the accuracy of quotations.

Formatting Interview Transcripts

In many qualitative dissertations—particularly in Chapter 4, portions of interview transcripts appear in the narrative. Although the committee members will guide their reporting and analysis of the data, students should remember that an important goal is to help the reader navigate the text. As such, writers must be be consistent, and try to format the text with the reader in mind. APA's 40-word rule for quotations may be helpful here: If an interview excerpt is 40 words or longer, the transcript should be set off in block form. (The Crediting Sources section provides

more detail on formatting quotations.) Establishing a consistent pattern whereby all transcript segments are set off in block form may be helpful.

The committee may require a listing of all interview dates. Here, too, students have choices, depending on how the integrity of the transcriptions is established, while also aiding the reader during what can become a tedious journey. Citing specific dates for each interview may seem obtrusive. Some writers offer in the narrative a summary statement of this sort: *Unless otherwise noted, all interviews took place between May 1, 2012, and May 21, 2012.* If complete transcripts are in an appendix, students could list the actual date of the interview.

The following narrative represents one way to handle these tasks:

Ms. T., a 30-year-old woman who said she needed "welfare" because of an

"emergency," described the atmosphere in the food stamp office as "cold, dreary, and

uninviting." When pressed, Ms. T.'s face became red, revealing the anger that

underscored her words:

> I do not see why I should be treated like a criminal when I seek assistance in a time of need.
>
> Them workers act like they are doing you a big . . . favor by pulling up your case file. Lord knows
>
> that food stamp office is the last place I want to be, waiting 4 hours to talk to my caseworker and
>
> then just hearing all that [nonsense].

The segment included information about the source of the quotation, placed unobtrusively in the writer's introductory paragraph, which led into a smooth transition to the interview excerpt.

Using hanging indents is another method for formatting quotations:

Several participants mentioned the importance of classroom aides to children

learning English as a second language:

Ms. Rodriguez: I do not know what my nephew would get out of school if they didn't have that aide

there helping. How is he supposed to understand history if he cannot speak the language?

Ms. Torres: The aide, she's so underpaid. She's the one doing the most for my kid.

Participant and/or Observer Field Notes

First person point of view may be used as appropriate, as guided by APA and as discussed on the Writing Center website.

Committee Review

The committee chair reviews preliminary drafts of the complete dissertation manuscript. When satisfied that the manuscript sufficiently meets university criteria, the chair authorizes the student to submit the dissertation, including abstract, to the other committee member for review.

After the chair has deemed that the dissertation is ready, he or she submits it for Turnitin review. At the same time, the student completes and submits a Turnitin self-evaluation to the chair, with a plan for revisions if warranted. After the chair has determined Turnitin compliance and believes the dissertation is ready, the chair forwards the dissertation and abstract, dissertation checklist, each committee member's minimum standards rubric, and a copy of the formal Turnitin report to the URR member, copying research@waldenu.edu.

Committee members have 14 calendar days to evaluate the dissertation. Guided by the students' annotated dissertation checklist, a committee member uses the minimum standards rubric to share evaluations with the committee chair. Committee members may assist chairs in providing feedback to students on further revisions requested; an additional 14 calendar days are allotted to committee members for **each** subsequent round of revisions. The URR member, form and style editors, and CAO or CAO's designee have 14 days (review cycle beginning the day after initial submission) to complete their review. The review cycle cannot begin until all required documents (rubrics, Turnitin reports, clean copies, etc.) are submitted. If the review takes place during any of the official Walden holidays (New Year's Day; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; Memorial Day; Independence Day; Labor Day; Thanksgiving Day and day after Thanksgiving; or Christmas Day), the holiday will not count in the 14-day review cycle.

Gaining URR Approval of the Dissertation

Informed by the student's annotated checklist, the URR member reviews the full dissertation (primarily focusing on Chapters 4 and 5) and abstract, using the minimum standards rubric, including items relevant to content, analyses, reporting and interpreting results, form and style, abstract, and ethical issues related to reporting results. After the URR member has completed the review, he or she sends the outcome of the review to research@waldenu.edu, copying the students and the chair. (Again, URR members can refer students for mandatory consultation with the IRB office and/or the Writing Center to address ethical or writing concerns, respectively.)

When the URR member has requested changes, the committee works with the student to make the requested revisions. When the chair feels that the necessary revisions have been made, he or she forwards the revised dissertation, detailing the revisions that have been made, to the URR member, copying research@waldenu.edu. The URR member then reviews the revised materials. This process continues until the URR member approves the dissertation.

After the URR deems the dissertation ready for form and style review, he or she sends an e-mail to research@waldenu.edu indicating this information, along with the URR-approved dissertation, minimum standards rubric, and Turnitin report confirmation.

Optional Pre-Oral Teleconference

At the request of the URR member or committee chair, an optional pre-oral conference can be scheduled to discuss recommendations of the URR member and reach agreement about changes that are necessary before the oral defense of the dissertation. It is recommended that the pre-oral conference be held if the URR member has raised serious concerns and/or if the committee requests the opportunity for discussion and clarification. The purpose of the pre-oral conference is to prevent multiple submissions and reviews of the dissertation and thus facilitate the process of completion.

Scheduling the Teleconference

To schedule the teleconference, the student should identify several commonly available dates and times among those participating in the teleconference. That information is forwarded to the committee chair who will then use the *Conference Call Reservation* form (which is located on the Walden site) to submit the request to reserve the date and time that is convenient the participants. *Note:* Reservation forms must be submitted at least 1 week prior to the teleconference date requested.

A confirmation of the request will be sent to all participants with instructions for calling in at the appointed date and time. Before the call, the students should ask the chair to clarify any expectations of the content of the conference call if necessary. A pre-oral conference will not be recorded.

Form and Style Review

A dissertation goes to form and style review before the oral defense teleconference. The URR member notifies OSRA that the student's dissertation is ready for form and style review and sends a copy of the completed dissertation along with the Turnitin report confirmation to research@waldenu.edu. The research service specialist sends the dissertation to the editor at that point. The editor has 14 calendar days to process the document. The 14-calendar-day review cycle begins the day after submission. Manuscripts are reviewed in the order in which they are received.

Submissions that are missing any basic required component (e.g., abstract, CV, reference list) or that still contain editing marks may be returned by the editors as incomplete and not ready for review until the appropriate items are included and comments or edits from previous reviewers have been addressed and no tracked changes are present. In these cases, the 14-calendar-day period afforded the editor for the review will not begin until the complete and a clean document is received by the editor.

Note: Dissertation documents must be submitted for the form and style review as a single Microsoft Word document. Form and style guidelines are found in Part 2 of this guidebook.

Outcome of the Form and Style Review

After the dissertation has been submitted for the form and style review, students may work with their chair to schedule their oral defense (see the Dissertation Oral Defense section below). Students may collect convenient dates and times for their dissertation teleconference while their paper is being reviewed; however, the teleconference may not be held until *after* the paper has been received back from the form and style review. Therefore, students should not attempt to schedule an oral defense within the 14 calendar days afforded the editor to complete the review.

Upon receipt of the completed form and style evaluation, and in consultation with the committee chair, the student needs to address the editor's revisions.

If questions concerning academic integrity arise as a result of the review, the form and style editor will contact the committee chair, URR member, and program director with his or her concerns. Please refer to the guidelines in the *Walden University Student Handbook* concerning academic integrity.

Dissertation Oral Defense

The oral defense is a formal discussion of the scholarly content of the dissertation and an evaluation of the paper. Students present their full dissertation via a required teleconference with their committee members. The teleconference, which is paid for by Walden University, will be led by the committee chair. All committee members except the URR member are required to participate in the oral presentation.

Note: Walden provides a conference call service for the oral defense that is toll-free for most countries outside the United States. Students living in areas outside this coverage will be responsible for toll charges associated with this call.

The oral defense may commence only after the committee members have reviewed the current draft of the student's dissertation and have reached consensus as to its level of development by using the guidelines of the *Dissertation Minimum Standards Rubric*. The teleconference may not be held until after the student's paper has been received back from the form and style review; however, edits suggested during the form and style review do not have to be made before the teleconference.

Note: Walden asks that both committee members receive a copy of the most recent version of the dissertation at least 3 days before the teleconference takes place.

The oral defense of the dissertation must be recorded. Instructions are provided to the committee chair for starting and terminating the recording. Teleconferences are made public within the Walden community; the e-mailed reservation includes instructions regarding a privacy option. Calls are recorded and a link to the recording is e-mailed to the student, if requested. Recordings expire in 30 days.

Scheduling the Teleconference

The student should identify several commonly available dates and times among those participating in the teleconference (the student and the committee members). The student should forward that information to the committee chair who then uses the *Conference Call Reservation* form (which is located on the Walden site) to submit the request to reserve the date and time that is convenient for the participants. *Note:* Reservation forms must be submitted at least 1 week prior to the first teleconference date requested.

A confirmation of the request will be sent to all participants with instructions for calling in at the appointed date and time. Prior to the call, the student should ask the chairperson to clarify any expectations of the content of the conference call if necessary.

Oral Defense Outcome

During the oral defense, the committee may determine that revisions to the dissertation are needed. In such an event, the committee chair will supervise the student in making the stipulated changes. When all requested changes have been made, the chair authorizes the student to forward the revised manuscript and approval forms to the committee member for a final review.

The committee member determines if the revisions have been made to his or her satisfaction and notifies the committee chair. The chair then submits the final version of the student's dissertation manuscript along with a quality rubric from each member to the URR member.

Final Approval and Submission

Following the successful completion of the oral defense and committee approval of the final dissertation, the chair forwards the dissertation along with a *Dissertation Quality Rubric* from each member to the URR member for a final review, copying research@waldenu.edu. At this time, the URR member conducts a final review to make sure all methodological, content, and writing issues have been addressed. In addition, the URR member reviews the abstract to make sure it meets university guidelines. The URR member conducts any additional reviews that are necessary until the final copy, including abstract, meets full approval. Each member of the committee indicates full final approval of the dissertation independently by his or her submitting the *Dissertation Quality Rubric* to research@waldenu.edu.

After approval from the URR member has been received, the research service specialist sends the abstract of the dissertation to the university's CAO or to the CAO's designee. The CAO review takes 14 calendar days. The results of the review are communicated to the research service specialist, who then forwards the results to the student, the URR member, and the committee chair. If changes are necessary and a resubmission to the CAO is required for approval, an additional 14 calendar days are allotted to the CAO for each subsequent review.

After the university's CAO, or designee, approves the dissertation and notifies the research service specialist, the research service specialist sends the student a congratulatory letter and copies the committee. CAO approval of the dissertation must be received by the close of business (5 p.m. Central time) on the last business day of the student's intended term of

graduation. The student can graduate in the following term if approval is received after this deadline.

ProQuest

After approval from the CAO has been communicated via e-mail, students receive instructions for online submission of their dissertation to ProQuest. ProQuest produces microfilms of dissertations and publishes the abstracts online and in its monthly publication, *Dissertation Abstracts International*. **To be validated for graduation from Walden University, students must submit and have their dissertation approved to be published in ProQuest.**

The research service specialist completes one last form and style check on the submitted document to ensure that it conforms to APA formatting. The dissertation may be sent back to students for requested revisions if errors are found.

Here are some aspects of the ProQuest process that students should keep in mind:

- Students may opt to have ProQuest file an application for copyright on their behalf. If students choose this option, they must note it when completing the electronic submission form.
- Fees for abstract publication and copyright application are included in the Walden University student graduation and commencement fee.
- For an additional fee, students may request bound copies of their dissertation from ProQuest. Publication may take 3–6 months.

Students are notified when OSRA formally accepts their submission to ProQuest.

Degree Validation

After the ProQuest submission is accepted, a request is sent to the Office of the Registrar (graduation@waldenu.edu) to complete students' final audits and validate their degrees. Students will know the audit is complete when they receive their final bill from the Bursar's Office.

Students' tuition charges stop as of the date they receive CAO approval of their dissertation. If students receive CAO approval within the first 7 days of a term, they are not charged tuition for that term. If students receive approval later in the term, they will be charged prorated tuition.

Students who want to participate in the summer commencement ceremony must have their dissertation approved no later than the last business day of the spring term. Students who want to participate in the winter commencement ceremony must have their dissertation approved no later than the last business day of the fall term. *Note:* Students are not automatically registered for commencement. If students want to attend a commencement ceremony, they can register online.

Survey of Earned Doctorates

Upon acceptance of the ProQuest submission by OSRA, students will receive a *Survey of Earned Doctorates*. They should complete this survey from the link provided in the e-mail.

The National Science Foundation and four other agencies sponsor the *Survey of Earned Doctorates.* The purpose of this survey is to evaluate graduate education programs at the federal, state, and university levels. By submitting the completed survey to Walden, students add to the university's visibility among national graduate institutions. Completion of the survey is not required, but it is strongly encouraged.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Walden University regards academic honesty to be essential to the entire academic enterprise and treats academic integrity violations very seriously. No student shall claim credit for another's work or accomplishments or use another's ideas in a written paper or presentation without appropriate attribution through proper documentation. The consequences of plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to providing false information or altering documents submitted to the university, are discussed in the *Walden University Student Handbook* (Select Handbook from the drop down menu, then select University Policies and Code of Conduct).

Walden uses a service provided by Turnitin.com to check manuscripts for plagiarism. Any content that may not have been cited and/or appropriately paraphrased and synthesized will be further examined and may slow completion of the dissertation process. Please review the Walden Turnitin and Academic Integrity Online Tutorial at the Writing Center for instruction on how to identify and avoid plagiarism.

The Crediting Sources section of this guidebook provides more information regarding plagiarism. To review Walden's official policy on plagiarism, students should visit the *Walden University Student Handbook*. For a detailed discussion of the ethics of scholarly writing, Chapter 1 of the APA style manual is another resource.

Walden understands that progression through the dissertation process can be a demanding endeavor and that students can often find themselves feeling stressed or frustrated during the dissertation process. However, the university expects that students will continue to maintain a high level of professionalism when communicating with their committee, academic leadership, and staff. Behavior that is not consistent with the university's expectations may result in a Code of Conduct referral. Students are encouraged to respond appropriately to constructive feedback and follow up unresolved concerns by seeking assistance from their academic leadership.

Part 2. Style: APA and Walden University

Students writing dissertations must use the sixth edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA style manual). Additional specific requirements for Walden University dissertations, above and beyond APA style, are included in this guidebook. In rare instances where Walden's requirements conflict with the APA style manual, the university style standards prevail. These items are indicated in this guidebook by green boxes.

Students are encouraged to download the dissertation template from the Walden Writing Center website.

The following sections are intended to supplement guidelines and instructions that appear in the dissertation template, *Dissertation Checklist*, *Dissertation Minimum Standards Rubric*, and other information sources.

Overall Structure

The Walden dissertation consists of the following sections, in this order:

1. Abstract title page

2. Abstract

3. Title page

4. Dedication page *(optional)*

5. Acknowledgments page *(optional)*

6. Table of contents (including list of tables and list of figures pages, if necessary; begin the pagination of the preliminary pages with *i* centered in the footer of the first page of the Table of Contents)

7. Body of the paper (begin the pagination with *1* in the upper right corner of the first page of Chapter 1; paginate consecutively on every page to the last page of the CV)

8. Reference list

9. Appendices *(optional)*

10. CV

Abstract

Concise and well-written abstracts highlight the richness of the students' research. A complete abstract primer can be found in the OSRA section of Walden's Center for Research Quality website. The following summary outlines important points to keep in mind:

Abstract Content

- In the first couple of sentences of the abstract, describe the overall research problem being addressed and indicate why it is important (i.e., who would care if the problem is solved). *Note:* Students can include a general introduction of the issue in the first sentence, but they need to quickly move to a clear statement of the research problem being addressed.
- Identify the purpose and theoretical foundations, if appropriate.
- Summarize the key research question(s).
- Concisely describe the overall research design and methods.
- Identify the key results, one or two conclusions, and recommendations that capture the heart of the research.
- Conclude with a statement on the implications for positive social change.

Form and Style Tips

- Limit the abstract to a single paragraph, with no indentation, contained on one page.
- Maintain the scholarly language used throughout the dissertation.
- Keep the abstract concise, accurate, and readable. Use correct English.
- Make sure each sentence adds value to the reader's understanding of the research.
- Use the full name of any acronym and include the acronym in parentheses; students can thereafter refer to the acronym.
- Do not include references or citations in the abstract.

- The abstract title page is the cover page of the Walden dissertation. It is identical to the main title page, except the word *Abstract* appears at the top of the page, centered.
- The Walden abstract cannot exceed one page.
- It is double-spaced, with the text the same point size and font as in the dissertation body text, is one block paragraph, and has the same margins as the dissertation body.
- No page number appears on the abstract page.

Common Abstract Problems

The following issues could delay the approval of the abstract:

- There are grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors.
- Identified abbreviations have not been used more than once in the abstract.
- The research problem, research question, or purpose of the study is unclear.
- The question "So what?" has not been answered. Students need to indicate why the research is important. Who would care if the problem is solved?
- The research methods, data analyses, and results are not adequately described.
- Social change implications are inadequate or missing.
- The abstract exceeds one page.

Appendices

The APA style manual addresses appendices and supplemental materials in section 2.13 (pp. 38–39) and on pages 229–230. The appendices follow the reference list. They are lettered A, B, C, and so forth. Figures and tables in the appendices are labeled A1, A2, B1, and so forth, according to the appendix in which they appear. *Note:* If there is only one appendix, no letter is given.

A blank divider page is unnecessary between appendices unless it lends to readability or if a heading cannot be placed on the first page of an appendix. (Typically, this could happen when you insert a scanned document that takes up an entire page.) The materials in the appendix must not extend beyond the margins of the rest of the dissertation: Reduce the appendix materials as needed.

Curriculum Vitae

The CV is the final item listed in the table of contents, and a copy must be included at the end of the dissertation. The CV may be formatted in either basic outline form, as a résumé, or in full-sentence form. It must conform to the same margin specifications as the dissertation and be included in the pagination. For privacy reasons, do not include personal addresses or phone numbers in the CV. Permanent e-mail addresses may be included.

Definitions of Terms and Glossaries

Many dissertations include a brief listing of key terms that are interpreted and clarified for the readers' benefit. In general, students should not define a common term such as *teenager* ("a person between 13 and 19 years, inclusive"). They should list only ambiguous, controversial, or operational terms used throughout the dissertation. Technical terms are usually defined in the text, if necessary. Definitions must be explicit, specific, and scholarly. More information on defining terms and further instruction on words used as words is provided below.

When defining a term, students need to determine whether the definition belongs in a list or in the text. Walden suggests the following three options for defining key terms:

- List key words or phrases in a section called *Definition of Terms,* in the first chapter.
- List all key terms in a glossary, in an appendix.
- Define more common terms, particularly acronyms and technical terms with only immediate application for the reader, upon first usage. (Per APA 4.21, remember to italicize key terms on first usage.)

Consult the committee chair about what is most appropriate for the reader's comprehension.

Definition Examples

Note that it is important to give proper credit to the originator of the definition.

The following examples illustrate different approaches to this issue. The first two examples might well appear in a section called *Definition of Terms*.

Dialects: Language varieties that initially and basically represent various

geographic origins (Fishman, 1972, p. 5).

This writer might have chosen an entirely different definition, depending on how the term was used in the dissertation.

Dialects: Differences between kinds of language that are differences of

vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation (Trudgill, 1974, p. 17).

The writer might have decided, for purposes of this dissertation, that the reader is best served by defining the term in the text, as below, rather than in a list of terms in a Definition of Terms section.

Fishman (1972) used the term *dialects* to mean "varieties of language that initially

and basically represent divergent geographic origins" (p. 5).

Words Defined and Words Used as Words

To introduce a new, technical, or key term or label or a word used as a word, set it in italic type on first reference. After the first reference, use plain type. This use of italics most often occurs in the context of defining a word, term, or phrase:

The term *networking* refers to creating relationships and saving contact

information for a specific situation, usually a job search.

Copyrights and Permission To Use

Copyrighting the Dissertation

A statement of copyright ownership to a dissertation is not necessary because, by federal law, a copyright exists once a work is "fixed in tangible form" (APA 1.15). If students wish to add a copyright notice, place this wording at the bottom of the acknowledgments page, or if there is no acknowledgments page, on a blank page after the main title page:

© [year] by [author's name]. All rights reserved.

Permission To Use Copyrighted Material

As discussed in APA 6.10, if copyrighted material is used in the dissertation beyond "fair use," written permission to reproduce the material by the copyright owner is required. To determine if something is within or beyond fair use, consider these four issues:

- The purpose and character of the use.
- The nature of the copyrighted work.
- The amount and substantiality of the portion used.
- The effect of the use upon the potential market for, or value of, the copyrighted work.

In Copyright and Your Dissertation or Thesis, ProQuest offers guidance to authors for avoiding copyright infringement. Such mistakes may include, among other potential problems, the following:

- Long quotations. There is no legal requirement, but authors should avoid long quotes in nearly all instances.
- Reproduced publications. This includes standard survey instruments or questionnaires and articles, such as newspaper or magazine articles, included in an appendix.
- Music or lyrics.
- Graphic or pictorial works.
- In general, permission to reproduce tables and figures reproduced or modified from published works not in the public domain must be demonstrated, most often by a copy of a letter of permission in an appendix (see APA 5.06). Permission to reprint is usually indicated on the first page of a copyrighted document, following the wording requested by the copyright holder.
- ProQuest also reminds authors that Web-based sources are copyrighted just as print materials. That is, beyond plagiarism, be careful not to violate copyright laws by reproducing Web-based materials without permission.

Note on Copying Test Instruments, Surveys, and Questionnaires

Gaining permission to reproduce a survey instrument for participants in a study is necessary when such a document is not in the public domain. However, that is not the same as permission to reproduce it in the dissertation. If the committee asks the student to include a published copyrighted document in the dissertation itself, specific authorization must be obtained from the copyright holder. The authorization granting permission to reproduce must be included in an appendix. For more information on copyright law and graduate research, visit the ProQuest website.

Crediting Sources

In-Text Citations

APA style uses the author–date citation system. Authors' names and year of publication are given within the text or at the end of block quotations. The author name may appear as part of the narrative text with the year of publication in parentheses, or both the name and year appear in

parentheses, separated by a comma. These citations are reflections of items in a reference list placed at the end of the paper and arranged alphabetically by the authors' last names and chronologically within lists of works by a single author.

Consult APA Chapter 6 for detailed instructions on how to properly credit sources.

Block Quotations

Quotations of 40 or more words must appear in a free-standing block, indented 0.5 in. from the left margin (in the same position as a new paragraph). The right margin remains the same as the rest of the text, with a ragged border. The final punctuation is at the end of the final sentence; no punctuation follows the citation at the end of the block quotation (APA 6.03). The Walden Writing Center encourages minimal use of block quotes.

> Note in this example of a block quote that the left margin is indented about five
>
> spaces. There are no quotation marks, although they would be used to quote
>
> words within a block quote, such as the "hyperbolic tendencies" of a speaker.
>
> The right margin is flush with the rest of the manuscript. The first word can be
>
> capitalized even if the original is not. It is double spaced per APA sixth edition.
>
> (Taylor & Fife, 2009, p. 46)

When To Cite Page Numbers

When directly quoting an original source, use quotation marks to set off the quoted text or format it as a block quotation, as described above. Per APA 6.04, Walden strongly encourages students to provide page numbers when citing an idea or when paraphrasing. The reader will appreciate knowing the exact location of all references, and it will clarify the origination of the ideas, whether they are the author's or from another source.

Plagiarism

As discussed in the section on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism, Walden University does not tolerate plagiarism and uses a service to detect plagiarism in student work.

In *The Craft of Research* (University of Chicago Press, 1995), Booth, Colomb, and Williams offered a useful definition of plagiarism:

> You plagiarize even when you do credit the author but use his exact words without so indicating with quotation marks or block indentation. You also plagiarize when you use words so close to those in your source, that if your work were placed next to the source, it would be obvious that you could not have written what you did without the source at your

elbow. (p. 167)

The following excerpts, based on *The St. Martin's Guide to Writing* by Axelrod and Cooper (St. Martin's Press, 2010), show the difference between plagiarism and paraphrasing.

Original **Page 172 of Guterson (2008)**	**Plagiarism Example 1** [per Axelrod and Cooper]	**Acceptable Paraphrase** [per Axelrod and Cooper]
Bruner (1968) and the discovery theorists have also illuminated conditions that apparently pave the way for learning. It is significant that these conditions are unique to each learner, so unique, in fact, that in many cases classrooms cannot provide them.	Apparently, some conditions, which have been illuminated by Bruner (1968) and other discovery theorists, pave the way for people to learn. **Plagiarism Example 2** According to Guterson (2008), Bruner (1968) and other researchers have also identified circumstances that seem to ease the path to learning (p. 172).	Guterson (2008) wrote that the "discovery theorists" have found that certain conditions may help learning to take place. Because each individual requires different conditions, not all children can learn in the classroom (p. 172).

In Plagiarism Example 1, the student changed Guterson's (2008) original material slightly, but there is no mention of Guterson—only Bruner (1968), whom the student did not even read firsthand.

In Example 2, Guterson is credited and so is Bruner; however, the student didn't read Bruner. And again, the wording is almost identical to the original. Because of the conventions of documenting sources, the reader cannot distinguish who originated the ideas and words.

In the acceptable paraphrase, the student attributes the point to Guterson (2008) and changes the language more substantially. The student did not read Bruner firsthand and does not mention Bruner, so the source is clear.

Reference Lists

Note that each source in the *reference list* provides information on works that specifically support the dissertation. A *bibliography* cites works for further reading. As such, dissertations require reference lists but not bibliographies. The following information regarding references is taken from Chapters 6 and 7 of the APA style manual. Review both of these chapters thoroughly before developing a reference list. Pages 198–215 provide examples by the specific type of source and can be a helpful resource after you have read the chapters.

Some general guidance for creating a reference list is as follows:
- Paginate the reference list pages.

- Use the first and middle (if any) initials of all authors; do not write out the first name. Place a character space between the initials. With two or more authors, use *&* rather than *and* before the last author. Separate the names with a comma:

  Foyt, A. J., & Andretti, M. P. (APA 6.27)

- When a reference has up to seven authors, spell out all authors' names. When a reference has eight or more authors, spell out the first six, then put ellipses and the last author's name:

  Zuckerman, J., King, M., Cook, A., Timmerman, B., Patterson, J., Ball, T., . . . Kubista, A. (2009).

- If two or more of the works by a single author or set of authors have the same publication date, assign the dates the letters *a*, *b*, *c*, and so on.

- For the titles of books and journal articles, capitalize only the first word of the title, the first word of the subtitle (if any), and any proper nouns. Capitalize the titles of journals in title case (APA 4.15). Italicize titles of books and journals. Do not use quotation marks around titles of journal articles.

- Do not use the abbreviations *Vol.* and *No.* in reference to journals. Italicize the volume number. Indicate the issue number only if the journal is paginated separately by issue. Follow the volume with a comma and the page numbers:

  American Political Science Review, 37(2), 17–32.

- Do not precede page numbers of journal articles by *p.* or *pp.*

- In reference lists, use U.S. postal code abbreviations for all state names.

Electronic Sources

The APA style manual (6.31–6.32) provides extensive guidance on citing sources from databases and other electronic publishers, including a discussion of the DOI system used for journal articles on the Internet. (If there is a DOI provided, you will find it somewhere on the first page of the journal article. It might appear hidden behind a database button.) References to various electronic materials are included in the Examples by Type section (pp. 198–215). See also the APA website or Walden's Writing Center website for additional rules.

Footnotes

APA does not allow for endnotes or source footnotes. Content footnotes, used sparingly, may assist the reader. In general, however, something important enough to appear in a content footnote is important enough to appear in the narrative text.

Point of View

Appropriate use of first person is acceptable (APA p. 69), as discussed on the Writing Center website.

Verb Tense

A significant portion of the dissertation *proposal* will be written in future tense, as shown here:

The study will address four questions.

One hundred nurses will be surveyed.

Once the study has been completed, the ***dissertation*** will appear in present and past tense as appropriate.

As a general rule for social science writing, ongoing issues and current realities should be reported in present tense. What has occurred, what has been reported, and what the writer and sources have accomplished should be reported in past tense. For example, writing the statement "There were 50 states in the country" is ungrammatical and illogical since there are now 50 states in the United States. Similarly, do not write in the problem statement that "managing healthcare costs was a big problem in the United States" unless the problem no longer exists. If healthcare costs no longer are a problem, past tense works; otherwise, as an ongoing reality, this example should be described in present tense.

In the review of literature, use the past tense when reporting past research. "Jenkins (2013) observed three reasons why victims of abuse do poorly in school." Note here that what Jenkins observed is a present tense clause. Of course, if Jenkins reported a historical fact, the entire sentence would appear in past tense: "Jenkins (2013) found four reasons that AIDS spread through the gay population in the 1980s."

Some writers refer to past research in present tense. "Jenkins (2013) reports that there are three main reasons that victims of abuse do poorly in school." But if this same writer decides to refer to Merton (1950) or Watson (1920), he or she will have difficulty staying consistent: "Watson (1920) argues that..." Watson is long dead and, therefore, it is awkward to report his 90-year-old research in the present tense. In fact, APA specifically requires that the literature be presented in the past tense: "Watson argued that ... ."

Inclusive Language

Language used in scholarly writing should be inclusive. Most writers know the gender-restrictive nature of words like policeman, mailman, or fireman. Accordingly, writers should employ words that are not sexist and more accurately describe American society.

Some ethnicity and nationality titles require sensitivity due to historically racist usage: Oriental, American Indian, and Eskimo, for example. The APA style manual, in Chapter 3, offers an informative discussion of this issue at length (pp. 70–77). Check any of several dictionaries devoted to this subject to learn more. The director of the Walden Writing Center suggests the university of New Hampshire's *Guidelines for the Use of Nonsexist Language*.

One of the most troublesome issues related to sexist language for writers revolves around the pronouns *he* and *she*. The combination *he or she* is common, if cumbersome; some readers resent *he* always preceding *she*. Some writers choose as a matter of course to use only the word *he* and then add a note of apology at the beginning of a manuscript. This is dated and seen as a poor

solution by many readers. Some writers go back and forth between *he* and *she*—also cumbersome, but effective in certain instances.

One frequent solution is changing the singular third-person pronoun to the plural *they*. Thus, replace "A junior high school teacher spends much of her day just maintaining order" with "Junior high teachers spend much of their day just maintaining order." In this example, another solution is to use the passive voice: "A junior high school teacher's day is spent, to a large extent, maintaining order."

> Walden University's preferred usage for groups of people whose ancestors can be traced to Africa is *African American*. The usage should be consistent:
>
> African Americans make up the largest minority in America, while European Americans compose the majority.
>
> Above all, students are asked to be sensitive to the terminology of racial, ethnic, and religious groups.

Type

A serif font such as Palatino, Century Schoolbook, Book Antiqua, or Times New Roman is required. ***Do not use*** `Courier` or `New Courier`. All text copy must be in the same point size: 12 point is preferred. A sans serif font, such as Arial, may be used for tables and figures if its use improves readability and format. The font size used in tables and figures may be smaller than that used in the text; however, for legibility, choose a point size no smaller than 8 points and no larger than 12 points.

The title of the dissertation should not include chemical or mathematical formulas, symbols, superscripts, subscripts, Greek letters, or other nonstandard characters. Words must be substituted for any such characters.

Words such as those being defined on first reference and titles of books, journals, newspapers, and magazines, must appear in *italics*.

Line Spacing

- Double-space between all text lines throughout the manuscript, including the table of contents, block quotations, and the reference list.
- Double-space the text on the Acknowledgments and Dedication pages, and use regular paragraph indents.
- Never use single-spacing or one-and-a-half spacing except in tables or figures.
- Begin each chapter on a new page.

- Do not begin each section or subsection on a new page. Sections should follow one another immediately in order to avoid large blank spaces.
- One-line *widows* and *orphans* are acceptable at the top and bottom of a page; however, for increased readability, two lines are preferred. Do not leave a heading *floating* at the bottom of a page without accompanying text.

- Double-space lines between tables and figures and subsequent and preceding text. (See the Tables and Figures section for more information.)
- End-of-line hyphenation is acceptable in Walden dissertations. For improved readability, avoid two consecutive end-of-line hyphenations.

Margins and Page Numbers

The Walden dissertation template is preformatted with correct margins. The margins of the dissertation must conform to the following guidelines. This includes the appendices, tables and figures, and the CV. Set the document's margins at these measurements:

- Left margin: 1.5 in.—to allow for binding.
- Right margin: 1 in.
  Note: Text at the right margin must be ragged—not justified—throughout the dissertation.
- Top margin: 1.3 in.—to allow space between page number and first line of text (see below).
- Bottom margin: 1 in.
- Header and footer: 1 in.

On table of contents pages (including list of tables and list of figures pages), page numbers are indicated in lowercase Roman numerals placed 1 in. from the bottom of the page, centered, beginning with *i* on the first page of the table of contents.

Starting with the first page of Chapter 1, an Arabic page number must appear 1 in. from the top edge of the page and 1 in. from the right edge. The first line of text appears 0.3 in. under the page number, or 1.3 in. from the top edge of the paper. To accomplish this, set the top margin to 1.3 in. and the header to 1 in.

Note: Some versions of Microsoft Word are defaulted to set the page number at 0.5 in. from the top edge of the paper. The margin must be changed for Walden dissertations.

Although manuscripts submitted to the American Psychological Association for publication must contain a brief manuscript running head, Walden dissertations do not have a running head.

Pages containing tables and figures may be formatted in landscape page setup. The bound margin must still be 1.5 in. Page numbers should be placed consistently with the rest of the manuscript.

Nothing can appear in the margins of the page. All page numbers, text, tables, figures, and so forth must be contained completely inside the area bounded by the margins.

Headings

Headings must be worded identically in the table of contents and the text. Do not strand a heading at the bottom of a page. Headings should not be labeled with letters or numbers.

Per APA, double-space between a subheading and the preceding text.

> The sixth edition of the APA style manual does not show specifically how to format chapter headings. Walden has matched the hierarchy in the sample paper in the manual and incorporated a plain, centered Level 0 heading for chapter headings, in title case (mixed uppercase and lowercase), like this:
>
> <div align="center">Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study (Level 0)</div>
>
> <div align="center">**Background of the Problem (Level 1)**</div>

APA's heading levels, positions, and formats for a dissertation with five heading levels are listed below, with the addition of Walden's chapter heading (Level 0).

<div align="center">Centered Uppercase and Lowercase Chapter Heading (Level 0)</div>

<div align="center">**Centered Uppercase and Lowercase Heading, Bold (Level 1)**</div>

Flush Left, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading, Bold (Level 2)

    Indented, bold, lowercase. (Level 3)

    Indented, bold, lowercase, italics. (Level 4)

    Indented, plain, lowercase, italics. (Level 5)

Lists: Seriation

Seriation refers to lists of items (APA 3.04). Two of the most important aspects of formatting lists are readability and consistency. The reader needs to keep track of the listing.

Formatting Lists in Text

For listed items within a paragraph like this (a) use letters, not numbers, in parentheses; (b) separate each item with a comma; or (c) separate each item with a semicolon, as shown in this example, if there is already a comma in one or more of the items.

When listing items vertically, use the numbered format below:

1. When listing items vertically, or breaking them out of the paragraph format, use 1., 2., 3., and so forth, and continue to double-space.

2. Indent the number the same as for a paragraph, usually 0.5 in.

Bulleted lists are formatted the same as a numbered lists. Use a bulleted list when there is no need to indicate a certain order or chronology.

Formatting Lists in Block Quotations

If copying from text that already appears in list form in the original source, determine if the entire quotation needs to be included. The text may be better served with a paraphrase. If the quotation of a list is required, indent the entire set of items in the list. By properly punctuating at the end of the text, the reader will identify this as a block quotation. Further instructions on block quotations are provided in the [Crediting Sources](#) section of this guidebook. See the example below:

Hosmer (1982) offered three statements typical of psychological egoism:

1. People always look out for No. 1 first.

2. People act so as to benefit themselves, whether or not they also benefit others.

3. People always do what they want to do, or if that is impossible, what they dislike doing the least. (p. 70)

Punctuating Lists

Properly punctuating lists is a bit of an art and a bit of a science. APA allows the use of periods at the end of items in lists, even if the item is not a complete sentence. To determine the proper punctuation, writers must consider the syntax of the introductory phrase.

Sometimes writers introduce lists with a phrase just like this:

1. End each item in a list like this with a period, even if it is not a complete sentence.

2. Item 2 in a list per APA.

3. Item 3 in a list per APA.

In the above example, the clause that introduces the list could end as a sentence. That is, the items in the list do not complete the introductory clause. In this case, end the clause with a colon, and, per APA, capitalize the first word in each numbered item, and use periods at the end of the items.

On the other hand, see this example:

Sometimes, however, writers introduce lists with a clause that concludes with

1. item 1 in a list per APA that completes the introductory clause,

2. item 2 in a list per APA that completes the introductory clause, and

3. item 3 in a list per APA that completes the introductory clause.

In this case, the three items in the list complete the introductory clause. Per APA, separate the items with commas if there are no other commas in the items or with semicolons if there are. Start each clause with a lowercase letter.

Tables and Figures

In the body of the dissertation, information that does not appear in textual form must be formatted and labeled as either a table or figure. APA does not allow for the words *graph*, *illustration,* or *chart*. Refer to them as either a *table* or a *figure*. To learn how to correctly display data in tables and figures, carefully review the text and examples in APA Chapter 5. Below are a few helpful tips:

- Ensure that all tables and figures fit within the margin specifications.
- Do not separate a title or caption from the table or figure it identifies.
- Number all tables and figures without a suffix or indicator of the chapter in which they appear: Table 1, Table 2, Table 3; Figure 1, Figure 2, Figure 3, and so on. In the appendices, tables are labeled Table A1, Table B1; figures are labeled Figure A1, Figure B1, and so forth.
- In the text, capitalize the word *table* or *figure* when referring to the data (e.g., *see Table 12*). Refer to the specific table number, not to the page number on which the table appears or to "the table below."

Tables

Place the word *Table* and the table number **above** the table, flush left. The title of the table appears double-spaced below the table number, flush left in italics, in title case. If the title runs over one line, single-space the two lines of the title, leaving the double-space between the table number and the first line of the title. Double-space before and after the table. Use the same font and point size for table numbers and titles as the narrative text.

Information regarding abbreviations or symbols used in a table, copyright information, and probability must be located in a note below the table. See APA 5.16 for information about formatting table notes.

Figures

Place the word *Figure* and the figure number **under** the figure, flush left in italics. The title of the figure (which APA includes in the figure's *caption*) goes next to the number in sentence case. Use the same font and point size for figure numbers and captions as the narrative text. If the figure caption exceeds one line of type, single-space the continuing line(s). In dissertations, do not type captions on a separate page. See APA 5.23 for more information about figure captions.

- In dissertations, tables and figures are inserted into the narrative as close to the text that introduces them as is practical.
- Do not split a table unless it is too large to fit on one entire page. Placing a table on its own landscape-oriented page is permissible. Do not place any other text on a page if a table or figure takes up three-fourths or more of the page.
- The point size used in tables and figures may be smaller than that used in the text; however, for a professional appearance and legibility, type should be no smaller than 8 points and no larger than 12 points.
- Grayscale (shading) and color used in figures is acceptable; however, they often will not reproduce well in black and white. Avoid color except where its use improves the presentation of data (APA 5.25). Instead, consider using crosshatching, broken lines, and so forth.

Numbers and Percentages

The APA style manual has an extensive section (4.31–4.38) dealing with the nuances of presenting numbers. Always check the manual if unsure of the proper style. Examples of APA style for numbers can be found on Walden's Writing Center website.

Abbreviations

Here are some tips regarding commonly used abbreviations:
- Lowercase should be used for Latin abbreviations, such as *a.m., p.m., i.e.,* and *e.g.*

- Latin abbreviations such as *e.g.*, *etc.*, *i.e.*, and *cf.* should be used only in parenthetical materials. Use the English translation of these abbreviations in nonparenthetical material (APA 4.26). Roman, not italic, type should be used for these abbreviations. An exception is made for the term [*sic*], which is always italicized and set in square brackets, as shown here.
- The plural of the abbreviation *p.* is *pp.* Such abbreviations are rarely used when not within parenthetical elements.
- In text copy, spell out the names of states and countries. (See APA pp. 88 and 187 to learn when and how to abbreviate locations.)
- *United States* should be written out when referred to in noun form. It is abbreviated with periods when used as an adjective: the *U.S. economy* (p. 88).

APA has many additional rules regarding abbreviations. See APA 4.22–4.30 and consult the index of the style manual for more information.

Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (2005) is the authority for matters of spelling in Walden dissertations. APA has some additional conventions regarding spelling and hyphenation (4.12–4.13) and provides guidance regarding grammar (3.18–3.23) and punctuation (4.01–4.11). Carefully reviewing these sections of the APA style manual and applying them to the dissertation manuscript will help dissertation reviews go more smoothly.

Following are some items to supplement the APA style manual and highlight some common errors:

1. Only standard American English is acceptable in Walden dissertations. Naturally, cited material from previously published sources should be left in the original form, including British or archaic spelling and excessive punctuation or lack of punctuation.

2. Do not use contractions. For example, write *cannot* rather than *can't* and *I will* rather than *I'll.*

3. In most cases, make the possessive form of proper names ending in *s* by adding an apostrophe and *s*: Jones's, Grimes's, Wilks's, Sanchez's. *The Chicago Manual of Style* notes several exceptions: Moses', Jesus', Xerxes'.

4. Do not add an apostrophe when forming the plural form of a number:

    Most of you scored 1s and 2s.
    The 1950s was a decade of great social homogenization.

5. If a compound adjective cannot be misread or if its meaning is established, a hyphen is not necessary:

    covert learning conditions

day treatment program
sex role differences
grade point average

6. In general, compound adjectives that end in *-ed* are hyphenated when they precede the noun they are modifying:

   client-centered service
   group-oriented process
   self-described phenomena

   but

   Billie is quick tempered.

7. Check the style manual for the appropriate hyphenation of combinations of words like *high school, follow up,* and *well being* (4.13) and the spelling of such words as *appendices* (4.12).

8. Many prefixes do not require hyphens, including *anti*, *non*, *inter*, *intra*, *semi*, *mini*, *pseudo*, and *under*. (See APA 4.13 for detailed guidance regarding hyphenation.)

9. Academic degrees are spelled as follows in lowercase, unless following a person's name:

   doctorate
   doctoral degree
   bachelor's degree
   master of science
   master's degree
   Sam Beam, MFA
   Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

10. As discussed in APA 3.19, the subject and verb must agree in number (i.e., singular or plural). *Data* and *media* are plural nouns. ("The data were misleading, but the media were reporting the erroneous information anyway.") *Datum* and *medium* are singular nouns.

11. Pronouns must agree in number and gender with the nouns they replace.

12. A comma must be used between items (including before *and* and *or*) in a series of three or more items (e.g., trains, planes, and automobiles).

13. No comma appears between the month and year when used alone (without an exact date), for example, December 1957.

14. Use *double* quotation marks for quotations. Use *single* quotation marks within double quotation marks only. For a quotation within a block quotation, the internal quotation gets double quotation marks. (APA 4.08)

15. Quotation marks nearly always go outside the final punctuation.

> The title of the article was "A Day in High School." One respondent noted, "My boss is a source of great joy at my job."

> **but**

> As Hernandez (2008) observed, "Nothing is more important than financial integrity in higher education" (p. 26).

16. Use a single space after end punctuation (e.g., periods, colons).

17. The proper format for a dash (4.06) is an "em dash" or two hyphens with no space between them or on either side: like this—or--like that. This is automatic in some software programs. Other programs leave spaces around a hyphen, requiring adjustment or an override of that function: In Microsoft Word, use *Tools/AutoCorrect/AutoFormat as You Type.* Consult the APA style manual (p. 97) for more on dashes and hyphens.

Capitalization

The following items supplement the APA style manual's coverage of capitalization (4.14–4.20):

1. Do not capitalize the names of job titles unless they immediately precede a person's name.

> The vice president of the United States is the second in command.

> Vice President Nelson Rockefeller came from a wealthy family.

2. Do not capitalize words related to schools when they are used generically. Capitalize such words when used with the name of a school.

> the junior high school
> Churchill Area Senior High
> this university
> Walden University

> Terms designating academic years are lowercase: freshman, junior.

3. Proper names associated with topographical features, geographical locations, and names of organizations are not discussed at length in APA. Walden recommends *The Chicago Manual of Style*'s extensive sections on such terms. In general, follow these examples:

> the state of Washington; Washington State; New York State

the East Coast; the West Coast

the South; the southeastern United States

the Columbia River; the Columbia River valley

the Allegheny, the Monongahela, and the Ohio Rivers; the Mediterranean and the Caspian Seas

a senator; Senator Barbara Mikulski

the Congress; congressional; the Senate; the House

the Supreme Court; the court; juvenile court

the Democratic Party; a Democrat; communism

Sample Pages

The sample title and manuscript pages that follow are not from an actual approved dissertation; they serve as examples for form and style purposes only. The sample abstract is from an approved 2010 dissertation for a Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration. See the dissertation template on the Writing Center website for additional guidance.

Sample Abstract Title Page: Proposal

Abstract

The abstract title page is identical to the main title page, only it has the word Abstract *at the top.*

Title of the Study

by

Author Name

MA, Name of University, 2007

BS, Name of College or University, 1999

This information about previous degrees is optional on title pages.

Proposal Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Name of Walden Program

At the proposal stage, indicate Proposal *on the title page; for the final dissertation, change the word* Proposal *to* Dissertation. *Include the name of the program here.*

Walden University

February 2011

Include the last month of the expected graduation term.

Sample Abstract: Dissertation

The abstract should not exceed one page. The text must be double-spaced with no paragraph breaks. Details on writing both the proposal and final dissertation abstract can be found in the [abstract primer](#).

Abstract

School resource officers (SROs) are police officers responsible for the daily task of keeping schools safe. The extent to which this goal is achieved depends in part on how SROs identify, assess, and respond to student threats of violence. This task is complicated by the lack of knowledge regarding the most effective ways of handling a threat so that violence is avoided. The purpose of this research was to analyze the decision-making processes of SROs and identify both best practices and impediments in handling student threats. Street-level bureaucracy theory was the conceptual lens used for the study because it is a practical framework for analyzing how SROs use discretion in making decisions. This qualitative case study used criterion sampling to select 12 SROs from middle schools and high schools in a county in a western U.S. state. All evidence that contained text was coded; analyzed to identify themes and patterns; and subjected to data triangulation, external auditing, pattern matching, and member checking. Insights from examination of artifacts and nontext documents were compared with themes and patterns derived from the interviews. The findings illustrated best practice strategies, which included building relationships with students to learn about threats; identifying potentially violent students and proactively intervening; and using responses like the youth court that imposed consequences, such as community service or writing a research paper that did not hurt students' academic futures or impose financial burdens. The findings will help SROs make better decisions when confronted with student threats of violence and allow them to create safer learning environments for all students.

Sample Title Page: Dissertation

This sample title page and the dissertation pages that follow are not from an actual dissertation. The student information and research are fictional, provided for example purposes only.

Absence of Television on Family Patterns, Values, and Child-Rearing Practices

by

M. G. Krebs

MA, Penn State University, 2007

BS, University of Minnesota, Duluth, 1999

Note that the committee chair's name and signature do not appear on the dissertation title pages. They appear on a separate approval page.

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Human Services

Walden University

November 2013

Include the last month of the expected graduation term.

Sample Manuscript Pages

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Background of the Study

Until the age of 13, children come into contact with television more than with any other medium (Billingsley, 2012). During its first decade of widespread use in the 1950s, TV displaced radio, comic books, playmates, and babysitters as the greatest source of entertainment for children (Mondello & Whitney, 2009). On the average, television is on over 7 hours a day in American homes (Bates, 2012, p. 460). In addition to the offerings of the networks, 61% of American homes in 2010 also had access to cable television; more than 70% had a VCR (Bissell-Turner, 2012b). Bates (2009) noted that "more than 98% of all households own at least one TV and that the average child between the ages of 2 and 5 spends over 25 hours a week in front of the TV set" (p. 144).

At least in part as a response to this overwhelming contact with the television tube, several authors of popular literature have warned parents of the perils of television, and in two cases proposed either the total or temporary elimination of television from people's lives. Mander (1978) suggested in his *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television* that television, for the most part, cannot be completely blamed for all the . . . .

(Manuscript page examples continue.)

Effects of Television on Children

A meta-analysis by Foster, Rogers, and Hensler (2010) debunked nine common

assumptions of television effects, including that television mesmerizes children and that

they are not cognitively active during viewing. Foster et al. concluded:

> That there is an association between viewing violence on television and
>
> aggressive behavior among some children is clear. Yet despite all of the research
>
> that has been done, we cannot wholeheartedly state that viewing violence in
>
> itself necessarily leads to violence or aggression—or, for that matter, that viewing
>
> television in itself creates or distorts deeply held values. (p. 192)

Sexism on the screen. Doright (2008) studied Saturday morning television and

found that male characters outnumber female characters by a 5:1 margin and that

females were more likely to be seen as victims by young viewers (see Table 2). Fudd

(2013) concluded . . . .

Male hero Female hero Male victim Female victim
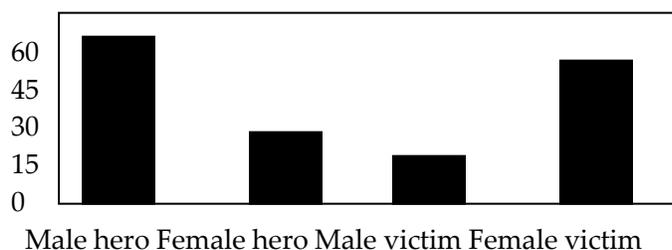
Figure 2. Incidence of sex role identifiers on Saturday morning television. From "Saturday Morning Sex" by D. Doright, 2008, *Popular Media, 4,* p. 198. Copyright by PMStudies, Inc. Adapted with permission of the author.

Note that the dissertation writer had permission to use the figure and cited that permission under the figure. Copyright permission must be sought for the dissertation but not for the proposal.

Part 3: Frequently Asked Questions

This section of the *Dissertation Guidebook* contains some typical questions asked by doctoral students while in the process.

Questions About the Dissertation Process

How do I nominate someone for my dissertation supervisory committee?

To nominate your dissertation supervisory committee members, follow the process outlined in the *Dissertation Committee Process* document found on the OSRA website.

How do I set up a teleconference? How much does it cost?

After you have received approval to hold an oral conference, you should work with your committee members to identify possible dates and times. (Several alternatives should be requested, in case your first choice is not available.) Your committee chair will submit the scheduling form to the research service specialist, and the chair will be responsible for managing the phone call. The conference line and recording service are provided for you free of charge. International toll-free phone numbers may be available. *Note:* Walden provides a conference call service for the oral defense that is toll-free for most countries outside the United States. Students living in areas outside this coverage will be responsible for toll charges associated with this call.

At what point does tuition stop?

Tuition stops when your dissertation is approved by the CAO (or designee). If you receive approval within the first 7 days of a term, you are not charged tuition for that term. If you receive approval later in the term, you will be charged prorated tuition.

My dissertation has been approved. When is my official graduation date?

Graduation dates fall at the end of the term. Your official graduation date will be the end of the term in which you finish your degree. You are finished when all prerequisites are met; your dissertation is written, approved, and accepted by ProQuest for publishing; and your tuition is paid in full. You must have officially graduated *before* you can attend graduation ceremony in either the winter or summer.

When can I refer to myself as a "doctoral candidate"?

You may use the designation "doctoral candidate" after you have completed all the expectations for doctoral candidacy, including completing all required coursework and the core research sequence, successfully completing your first three academic residencies, and having an approved prospectus after rubric review on file with OSRA.

When can I use the title Dr. or Ph.D.?

You may use the doctoral title only after your degree has been validated.

If I want to participate in the commencement ceremony, when do I need to finish?

Your dissertation must be approved by the CAO (or designee) no later than the last business day of the spring term to participate in the summer commencement ceremony or the last business day of the fall term to participate in the winter commencement ceremony. You are not automatically registered for commencement; to attend a commencement ceremony, register online.

Questions About Form and Style

What is the correct style to use? Is there a manual that explains it?

Walden University endorses and uses APA style, as explained in the sixth edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. The APA style manual is your primary source for style guidance. Throughout this guidebook, the few Walden style preferences that supplant APA recommendations are indicated in green boxes.

What font should I use to type my dissertation? What point size?

A serif font such as Palatino, Times New Roman, Century Schoolbook, Book Antiqua, or Garamond is required. Do not use Courier or New Courier. Tables and figures can use a sans serif font, such as Arial, to help improve readability and appearance. Particularly for Times New Roman, 12-point font size is preferred. (APA pp. 228–229).

Which is right: italics or underlines? Can I use bold?

Italics are correct, rather than underlines. Use bold only in heading levels (APA 3.03), for certain mathematical copy (APA 4.45), and in tables and figures, sparingly, to improve readability.

How do I format citations of electronic sources?

APA changed its rules for electronic citations in 2009. See APA 6.31–6.32 for overall guidance and review examples of references to electronic sources (pp. 198–215). For up-to-date information about proper formatting of Web references and other online documentation, visit the Walden Writing Center or the APA website.

Can I single-space block quotations and reference lists?

No. The sixth edition of the APA style manual specifies double-spacing for block quotations (p. 171) and reference lists (p. 229).

How far down should the page number and first line of text appear?

The Walden dissertation template is preformatted with correct margins. The page number must appear 1 in. from the top edge of the page and 1 in. from the right edge. The first line of text appears about 0.3 in. under the page number, or 1.3 in. from the top edge of the paper. Caution: Students have run into problems with Microsoft Word's page number placement. Be sure your page layout is adjusted correctly. Set the top margin to 1.3 in. and the header to 1 in.

Do all the tables and figures come at the end of the dissertation? What about table titles and figure captions?

In dissertations, tables and figures (and their titles and captions) are inserted in the text as close to where they are referred to as possible. If you plan to publish your dissertation results in a journal, please see APA's many requirements for papers submitted for publication (Chapter 8).

What do I do if a table goes longer than one page?

Always try to fit the table on one page. If the table must run over onto the subsequent page, type the phrase *table continues* in parentheses flush right at the bottom of the table on the first page. Repeat the column headings, but not the table number or title, at the top of the subsequent page.

If including a long table or figure, can I format it in landscape instead of portrait?

Yes. The "top" of the page needs to have a margin of 1.5 in. to allow for binding. The page number is placed in the same spot as the rest of the manuscript. This formatting can be accomplished electronically in Microsoft Word.

Do I need a running header on my dissertation?

No. Walden does not use running headers on dissertations.

Does it matter if I write Chapter Two, Chapter II, Chapter 2, or CHAPTER 2?

Yes, it matters. Per APA, only the form *Chapter 2* is correct in chapter headings. Note that in the narrative text, *chapter* is capitalized when followed by a number (e.g., In Chapter 2, ...).

Do I need to get permission from the copyright holder to reprint a table or figure or some text in my proposal?

For the proposal, it is unnecessary, although you may as well go ahead and obtain permission. You will need that permission for your dissertation—unless the item you wish to use is in the public domain or under the rules of fair use (APA 6.10). Contact ProQuest at 1-800-521-0600, ext. 77020, for more specific information than what is provided in the Copyrights and Permission to Use section of this guidebook.

Should the references or the appendices come first? When should page 1 start? Should preliminary pages (such as acknowledgments, abstract, etc.) be numbered with small Roman numerals?

Per APA (pp. 229–230), the references come before the appendices. For the preliminary pages starting with the first page of the table of contents, use lowercase Roman numerals, centered, at the bottom of the page. (Any pages before the table of contents are not counted in the pagination.) The first page of Chapter 1 is page 1—using Arabic numerals, not Roman.

May I use British spelling of English in my dissertation?

Walden follows APA style for dissertations, which allows only standard American English. Most word-processing software programs have spell-check features that convert British English to

American English. The exceptions to this rule are direct quotes and titles of publications that use British spelling.

Do the key terms go in a glossary or in the first chapter?

You and your committee chair should decide how the reader is best served by placement of a Definition of Terms section.

Am I supposed to use one or two spaces after periods and colons?

Use a single space after periods and colons (APA 4.01).

What is the format for my CV?

A copy of your CV must be included at the very end of your dissertation. The CV may be formatted in either basic outline form, as a résumé, or in full-sentence form. Most students limit the CV to one or two pages.

Can Walden Writing Center staff members review my proposal? Can they look at my dissertation when I'm starting out?

Yes, you may make a reservation with one of the dissertation editors to review early drafts of your proposal chapters or your final dissertation chapters. Follow the instructions on the Writing Center website for making a reservation to have your work reviewed.

Is there software that can do the APA formatting for me?

Yes. Check the Walden Writing Center for information about software packages that automatically format reference lists in APA style, as well as set up pages, maintain a running database of references, and offer other useful features.

Are there templates for formatting the premise, prospectus, and proposal and dissertation?

Yes. The Walden Writing Center website has a template available for all these documents.