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DBA GUIDELINES AND RESEARCH PROCESS HANDBOOK

Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)

Cohort 9

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College of Business and Management

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Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the Doctor of Business Administration program. We hope that our DBA students will engage in a transformative experience that will positively impact their lives and the lives of those around them. The aim of the applied Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) program is to prepare successful, ethical business professionals for significant leadership roles in complex and changing organizations. Upon completion of the program, DBA graduates will have accomplished these outcomes:

- Personal/professional empowerment: development of communication, research, analytical, networking, and intellectual skills
- Knowledge accumulation: “state of the art” information and application-oriented research findings and recommendations valuable for practitioners
- Integration of knowledge and skills to generate strategic focus for organizations, clients, or students
- Demonstration of mastery of business common bodies of knowledge at an advanced level

In addition to program outcomes, Metropolitan State University expects students to accomplish the following learner outcomes:

- Higher-order thinking
- Disciplinary knowledge
- Global understanding
- Communication skills
- Responsible citizenship
- Scientific/quantitative literacy

The culminating demonstration of a DBA student’s knowledge, skills, and abilities is completion of the **dissertation research project**, the most important requirement of the program. It serves as a capstone to the formal and informal learning achieved through all other program activities and relationships.

Purpose of Handbook

The purpose of this *Research Process Handbook* (hereafter referred to as the *Handbook*) is to provide essential information and resources for DBA students in planning and completing their dissertation research projects. Dissertation advisors, members of dissertation committees, and the DBA Program Director provide additional guidance. The *Handbook* also offers selected information about DBA program policies and procedures, as they relate to the dissertation process. Please note that while not addressed in the Handbook, all University policies apply to the functions and processes within the DBA program. Students are encouraged to review those policies carefully.

In the following sections, the nature of the applied dissertation research project is described, steps for completing the project are identified, and advice is offered for dealing with required policies and procedures. Appendices contain reference documents and links to valuable online resources. **Please note that this Handbook is subject to change.**

Doctoral Dissertation Research: What is it?

In the Metropolitan State University DBA Program, doctoral dissertations are significant research projects conducted by doctoral students under the supervision of a faculty advisor and with the support of a dissertation committee of doctoral-trained faculty members and other subject-matter experts. Dissertation research is consistent with “good doctoral practice” in most social science and behavioral science fields, including management and related disciplines or fields of study.

Dissertation research projects generally address recognized areas of need for improved knowledge and practice in business and/or management. Such practical research has been defined by Ernest Boyer as the “scholarship of application,” in which the scholar is engaged in asking questions such as, “How can knowledge be applied to consequential problems? How can it be helpful to individuals as well as institutions?” (Boyer, 1990). Building on their strengths and personal interests, DBA students identify consequential problems, then design and conduct research studies that advance the practice of business and/or management within the defined research context. DBA students have recently selected topics such as factors influencing decisions by small businesses to expand, the effect of servant leadership on social justice practices in selected churches, and the use of simulations to teach higher education business courses.

Successful completion and defense of the dissertation is to be considered both a milestone and final gateway for receiving a doctorate. For nearly all students, successful completion of the dissertation research project represents a major challenge of knowledge, skills, abilities, and tenacity. However, with commitment, energy, focus, and support from others, DBA students are meeting that challenge.

The next section of the *Handbook* describes the Metropolitan State DBA dissertation research process¹.

DBA Dissertation Research Process

A student’s dissertation research should build on past academic and professional interests, course studies in the DBA program, and guidance from faculty mentors. Students should also build on their knowledge of needs and opportunities for study documented in the professional business literature and in organizations about which they have first-hand knowledge, such as those in which they have been employed or have volunteered.

The dissertation research project should address a “consequential” problem in business, something that matters in one’s professional field, marketplace, or broader community. It could be an emerging problem or one existing over time that has not yet been fully addressed or approached in an innovative fashion.

The research project must also be something one can accomplish under constraints of time and other resources. Of particular concern are the opportunities individual students have for accessing and capturing data and other information on the topic. Common sources of information include individuals or groups of people, organizations, associations, and existing databases. For example, interviewing or surveying individuals requires that they agree to provide the researcher with time and access. Organizations may

¹ Note: Students have 7 years to complete the DBA program, including coursework and dissertation.

welcome a researcher's presence, or they may try to restrict the researcher's access. As a student researcher, you may encounter both predictable and unanticipated problems in accessing data and should be prepared to resolve them.

Often the search for a research topic is somewhat elusive, unpredictable, and time-consuming. There are often false starts before students make their final selection and before they are wholly comfortable with their choice. The same is true of research design, which often changes as research circumstances unfold.

Taking time for good topic and design selection is important, as dissertation research is a lengthy, involved effort. The final product of a dissertation is either a book-length research project or three scholarly, publishable full-length papers-worth the effort but not something accomplished quickly. Recommended reading to better acculturate yourself to the dissertation experience is *Writing the Doctoral Dissertation: A Systematic Approach* (Davis, Parker, & Straub, 2012), which provides guidance on dissertation research and writing and helps to identify and avoid potential pitfalls in dissertation writing.

Tables 1, 2, and 3 display key steps to dissertation completion. Please be advised that while the coursework described in the Handbook is sequential, dissertation writing is not; there is no substitute for the learning that takes place during the critique and revision process. Also note that other courses and degree requirements must be satisfied in addition to those highlighted in the Handbook; the focus in this Handbook is on development and completion of the dissertation.

Table 1 Research and Dissertation Process Year 1

<i>Task</i>	<i>Product/Outcome</i>
Complete DBA 705 Foundations of Research Inquiry	<i>Research Project</i> <i>Prospectus</i>
Complete DBA 710 Applied Business Statistics and Analysis	<i>Basic knowledge of quantitative methods</i>

Table 2 Research and Dissertation Process Year 2

<i>Task</i>	<i>Product/Outcome</i>
Complete DBA 708 and 709 Advanced Methodology courses	<i>Deeper knowledge of advanced research methodologies</i>
Begin Selection Process: Faculty Dissertation Advisor and Advisory Committee Members, with the Assistance of the DBA Program Director.	<i>Selection of dissertation advisor; creation of dissertation committee</i>
Complete DBA 712 Applied Research Project Design	<i>Development of initial draft of first three dissertation chapters</i>

Table 3 Research and Dissertation Process Year 3 and Beyond: DBA 795

<i>Task</i>	<i>Product/Outcome</i>
Successfully Complete the Comprehensive Examination	<i>Passing the examination</i>
Conduct Dissertation Research and Write Dissertation Proposal: Register for DBA 795 at this time.	<i>Must have successfully completed all coursework and all portions of comprehensive exam before registering for DBA 795</i>
Deliver the Oral Proposal Presentation	<i>Successful presentation of research project proposal, with written approval by committee members</i> <i>Submission of dissertation proposal rubric and signature page from dissertation advisor</i>
Complete HSRB application (note: this task may take place earlier in the research process)	<i>HSRB approval and/or exemption</i>
Conduct Dissertation Research and Write Dissertation Report	<i>Completion of research and preliminary approval of dissertation</i>
Present the Final Oral Dissertation Defense	<i>Final approval of dissertation report</i> <i>Submission of dissertation rubric and signature page from dissertation advisor</i>
Upon approval, submit final, bound dissertation copies (2) to DBA Director; Submission to ProQuest	<i>Dissemination of dissertation work</i>

Completion of Research Coursework, including DBA 705, 708, 709, 710, and 712

Throughout program coursework, it is expected that students will be in the process of thinking about potential research topics. Beginning with *DBA 700: Doctoral Seminar in the Development of Management Thought* and all subsequent core courses, students should seek to grasp the culture of scholar-practitioners in business and management. Questions such as the following may be helpful in defining one's dissertation topic: *Who are the key thinkers and their thoughts, both historic and contemporary? Across the many facets of business and management—especially those of interest—what areas are especially intriguing? What ideas and practices are emerging? What has been tried and found wanting?* However, of special relevance to the research project are the five DBA research courses—DBA 705, 708, 709, 710, and 712—which focus on research design, methodology, and methods. In *DBA 705: Foundations of Research Inquiry* students will be introduced to the assumptions, theories, and processes of qualitative and quantitative research inquiry. Major topics include an overview of business research methods and design; the evaluation of research in academic and professional journals, with an emphasis on applied, practical approaches, research design, and the synthesis of secondary data into a cohesive

literature review; and general principles of writing research reports. Ethical issues in research are also addressed.

In DBA 705, students will complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) course on human subjects research policies and procedures that will provide students with guidelines for social science research, including information on the appropriate and humane treatment of research participants.

Note: Students must successfully complete CITI training at least one time, before the dissertation process. Current CITI certification must be held by those students currently performing research, except for those whose research project is considered exempt and/or excluded under HSRB definitions.

DBA 708, 709, 710, and 712 build on the knowledge gained in DBA 705. *DBA 710 Applied Business Statistics and Analysis* focuses on statistical and analytical techniques and methods needed to conduct applied research. Major topics covered include primary data collection, statistical treatments and strategies, use of statistical analysis software, interpretation of findings, and communication of results. *DBA 708 and 709* are an extension of DBA 705 and cover methodologies at a deeper level. Students must have successfully completed DBA 705 to register for DBA 708. Students must have successfully completed DBA 710 to register for DBA 709. Knowledge from these three courses supports activities of *DBA 712 Applied Research Project Design* in which students are expected to select a research topic and design a dissertation-level research plan. Students *must* successfully complete all research coursework (DBA 705, 708, 709, 710 and 712) in order to advance to their dissertation.

Students should use each of the methodology courses, but DBA 712 particularly, as a stepping-stone for developing a workable, methodologically sound research project which has *the potential* to eventually be used as a dissertation plan. Students are encouraged (but not required) to find a research topic early in the research course sequence that can be used as a dissertation topic later in the program. Note that students must complete coursework from within the DBA program; no transfer, PLA or other course substitutions are allowed.

Other DBA Milestones

Comprehensive Examination

After a student has passed *all* DBA courses, they will be required to pass an examination on the following core courses: DBA 700, 720, 725, 730, 745, and 760. This exam is typically scheduled early in the third year of the program, generally the fall semester after the completion of coursework.

In accordance with university graduate policy, students must receive a passing grade of B- or above in *all* DBA courses in order to take part in the comprehensive examination; the program will otherwise follow the College of Business and Management Graduate Academic Standing Policy. The DBA Director must be notified at least 48 hours before the start of the examination, in writing (via communication from the instructor or update to student transcript), of any change in grade that may impact a student's comprehensive examination status.

For the comprehensive examination, faculty who taught the appropriate core courses, or a suitable, academically qualified substitute, will prepare and evaluate students' responses on course concepts, knowledge, and/or practices. Details regarding the format and administration of the comprehensive examination will be provided during the spring semester of the cohort's first year in the program.

Students *must* pass all sections (courses) of the exam to pass the examination. A student is allowed *one* retake on any section (course) they do not pass. Comprehensive examination may be provided two times per year, as needed: once during the fall semester, and once during the spring semester. Any student needing to retake an exam can do so during the following semester's scheduled examination period. Non-participation in any portion of the examination will be considered a failure of the corresponding section(s). As with any grading dispute, a student may appeal a comprehensive exam grade to the College of Business and Management Dean. In the event that the Dean is not an appropriate administrator to review the appeal, the appeal process will go to the next highest academic administrator. The appeal process *must* be completed before comprehensive exam retakes. *You must pass all sections of the examination before you may begin collecting the research data for your dissertation.* **Passing this exam is a milestone in the DBA program.**

Dissertation Advisor and Reader Selection

A student's dissertation committee must consist of at least three members. 1) The *dissertation advisor* should be a full-time, doctorally trained faculty member of Metropolitan State University. If a faculty member from another regionally accredited institution has special interest and expertise in the research, they may be added as a co-advisor, working with the dissertation advisor. 2) The *first reader* must also be a doctorally trained faculty member, either full- or part-time, at a higher education institution; this may, but need not, be a faculty member at Metropolitan State University. This person could be a faculty member in any college in Metropolitan State University, the MinnState System, the University of Minnesota System, a private college, or a for-profit higher education institution; this person should have knowledge of the subject area or expertise in the methodology used. 3) The *second reader* may be an expert practitioner outside of higher education who is an able manager or specialist in one's field of research, but need not hold a doctoral degree (master's degree required). In the event that a willing expert practitioner cannot be identified, a third faculty member can serve in this capacity.

Working with the DBA Director, students will select a faculty dissertation advisor, who will serve as committee chair, and two readers. The DBA Director will maintain a list of faculty members interested in various topics; students are also encouraged to search for dissertation committee members with appropriate credentials and expertise in their research domain. A student's committee is official when the DBA Director approves the student's committee.

Choosing a Dissertation Advisor. Dissertation advisor selection is an important step in the dissertation process. It is important that students choose an advisor with whom they have or can establish an effective working relationship. "Working" is a meaningful term. The research project requires substantial, sustained effort, thus making the quality of the guiding, supporting, and mentoring relationship crucial. Therefore, in addition to knowledge of and interest in the research topic, interpersonal compatibility is important.

Choosing Dissertation Readers. Students should consider dissertation readers who can bring content and methodological expertise to the committee. In addition to being the evaluators of the dissertation project, they will also serve as expert resources and may be networked with others who can provide consultation at key points. For a description of the typical duties of the dissertation committee advisor/chair and committee members, see the *Duties of a DBA Dissertation Advisor* (Appendix A) and *Duties of a DBA Dissertation Committee Reader* (Appendix B) documents for further information.

The Purpose of Mixed Committees. Academic and practitioner committee members bring complementary perspectives and skills to the research effort, enhancing the likelihood that the research project will both be of high quality and applied in nature, with findings and recommendations that are helpful to “real world” professionals, whether academics or managers/leaders in the larger business world.

Committee Formation. Students are encouraged to begin approaching faculty members early to discuss the student’s topic of interest and the faculty member’s possible participation as an advisor or reader on the dissertation committee. Some students know what their dissertation topic will be when they begin the program, and others decide later. Ideally, students should attempt to develop their committees in the fifth semester of study. This will allow the student to work with both their dissertation advisor and the instructor for DBA 712 when drafting the first three chapters of their dissertation.

For some students, final confirmation of committee membership may occur in the sixth semester of the program or even later. What is most important is finding the key mix of committee members - earlier may be better but is not a requirement; committees *must* be in place before proposal defense is scheduled, and with ample time for all members to thoroughly review and provide feedback on dissertation materials. Once committee members have agreed to serve, the student should obtain the approval of the DBA Director.

Choosing a Dissertation Topic

Early in the research process, students prepare a preliminary research project prospectus—generally in DBA 705. The assumptions and perspectives that drove one’s thinking in developing the prospectus may still be relevant as they enter the phase of making a final determination on a dissertation topic. Some students continue to focus their research on a single topic throughout the DBA program; however, for a variety of reasons, many students change topics—sometimes multiple times. In either case, when exploring and selecting a research topic, the following questions may be helpful to consider:

- Does this research topic have demonstrable managerial/business significance?
- Is this a research topic in which I am truly interested?
- Can I identify a research problem of importance related to the topic of interest?
- Is this original?
- What questions about the problem can I and should I research?

- Who are likely to be users of the findings of my research study?
- Will I be able to find faculty and practitioners interested in and supportive of my research topic?

Choosing Literature on the Topic. In considering a topic, students will explore, analyze, and summarize the academic literature about it. A literature review that relates the problem under study to conceptual thinking in the field must be prepared. The Metropolitan State University Library carries a breadth of literature in all management fields, most of it accessible online.

During the literature review process, the following questions may be helpful to consider:

- From which mix of disciplinary or study fields shall the literature be drawn?
- How relevant is the literature to my topic?
- How current is the literature?
- What are the limitations of the literature?
- What important findings related to my topic can be found in the literature, and what do authors suggest as next steps for research in this area?
- What apparent need is there for research on my topic?

Research Design. Students' very best thinking is required to design a research project that is meaningful, achievable, and in accordance with professional standards. A thorough description of the approaches that are proposed for use in examining the problem under study, including a coherent rationale, any hypotheses that are appropriate, anticipated data sources, and plans for data collection, analysis and treatment are required.

In designing the research project, students should consider the following objectives:

- To develop a research project of appropriate scope and depth
- To be familiar with the resources available to conduct research, including online resources, newspapers, government documents, databases and other relevant available materials
- To be able to find, evaluate, and summarize secondary research data
- To select, explain, develop and/or adapt a research method for the research study

In developing the first three dissertation chapters, students may consider using the format described in *Traditional Dissertation Outline* (Appendix C); students should work closely with their dissertation advisors during manuscript development.

Alternative Dissertation Formats. An alternative dissertation format that has gained wide acceptance in academia is the three-essay dissertation. This format incorporates three publishable articles that are

related to each other in a dissertation, together with an overview discussing the research program from which the students have extracted their publishable papers. Detailed instructions and a suggested format are available in Appendix D. If a DBA student wishes to use the three-essay dissertation format, they and their advisor should work with the DBA Director to agree on a format and specifications.

Dissertation Persistence and Progression

It is imperative that throughout the dissertation process students make discernible efforts toward both persisting and progressing toward dissertation completion. Therefore, DBA students in the dissertation stage of their program are required to register for a minimum of 3 credits of DBA 795 each year until they reach the maximum number of DBA credits allowed, which is 12 credits. After the student has registered for 12 credits, they should continue working on their dissertation until it is completed.

Students sometimes have experiences that make the demands of dissertation work arduous. Thus, the following policies are designed to create accountability, while also providing students with a mechanism for short-term disengagement under difficult circumstances.

1) Step-in/Stop-out mechanism:

In an effort to develop flexibility during the dissertation phase, a stop-out mechanism is available for the dissertation phase of the DBA program. This mechanism is particularly important for helping students to build flexibility into their program in order to respond to personal issues, while also providing faculty members with some flexibility in choosing and continuing advisement. Note: This mechanism does NOT preclude the 7-year time limit for program completion—students must still complete within the 7-year time limit irrespective of any stop-out(s).

Student choice to stop-out: If a student finds that they are unable to make adequate progress on the dissertation, they may choose to suspend their dissertation work. This *must* be done as a formal, written request to both the dissertation advisor and the DBA Director and must be completed at least one month prior to the start of a given semester. This process officially relieves the dissertation advisor from any duties related to the student and/or the dissertation process; the student *may* need to find a suitable replacement advisor upon return to the program.

Requirement for substantive progress and/or student effort: Students are responsible for the completion of their respective dissertations; advisors provide guidance, support, and critique of this substantial work in an effort to facilitate its completion. It is the responsibility of the student to make *substantive* progress on the dissertation in a timely and judicious manner; ample progress is expected, and it is anticipated that students work toward that end. It is the right of a faculty member to step aside from their role as advisor or reader in various scenarios including, but not limited to, the following:

- a) Lack of substantive progress toward dissertation completion as agreed upon during the semi-annual review process,
- b) Substantial changes to the dissertation topic,
- c) An erosion of the student-faculty relationship.

In cases such as those described in a) and c) above, the student will have the following semester to address any concerns related to dissertation completion progress as directed by the advisor—the advisor must communicate those concerns to the student. If the student does not adequately address noted concerns, an advisor may remove themselves from the dissertation committee and move away from advisement. Additionally, in the case of b) above, a faculty member can relinquish their place on the committee if substantial topic changes are made; the choice to remain on the committee is at the discretion of said advisor. Thus, it is imperative that students make continuous, sustained effort toward completion or risk losing momentum due to loss of advisement.

- 2) Student progress reporting structure: As noted above, students will be required to make substantive progress and report that progress to the advisor and the DBA Director each semester of their dissertation work. The reporting mechanism must include *at least* a 1-2 page written summary of work performed *in that semester*; further evidence of that work may be requested. This report is due to the advisor and the DBA Director within the last 4 weeks of the fall, spring, and summer semesters. If, during any semester, an advisor determines that substantive work has not been performed and reported, the student must make substantive progress in the following semester as noted in the step-in/stop-out procedure reviewed above. If substantive progress is not made within the second semester, an advisor may choose to stop-out from advisement at that time.
- 3) Periodic student presentations among peers and advisors: Once per year, students will take part in a prescheduled event in which all current ABD students will present the progress made on their dissertation work. It is expected that all ABD students will present their work and progress. Students are *not* expected to present any information that would be considered proprietary or otherwise would put their project or data at risk. Rather, this event is intended to promote helpful ideas, stimulate thinking and collaboration among students, and illustrate the progress that has been made in dissertation research.

Dissertation Research Proposal Writing: Coursework Component

The dissertation research proposal will be evaluated with a rubric developed for the DBA Program (see Appendix E, *DBA Dissertation Proposal Rubric*). Students may use this rubric as guidance when preparing the proposal chapters and, ultimately, the oral proposal presentation.

Expectations for the proposal are high and are intended to serve students in important ways. 1) Excellence is the standard expected in doctoral research by students, faculty members, other subject-matter experts, and business and management practitioners. *All work should match that standard.* 2) A carefully managed proposal development and review process can protect students from investing effort in an impractical or poorly planned research project. 3) The level of rigor in dissertation research is new for most students and is generally challenging for both novice and experienced researchers. Students may benefit from consultation with DBA course instructors, dissertation committee members, the DBA Director, and others having expertise in the topic and/or research methodology of the study. Insights come from expected but sometimes unanticipated sources.

Any draft of the first three chapters written in DBA 705, 708, 709, or 712 is considered an initial effort, subject to change and improvement suggested by one's advisor. Students may, in fact, have to significantly revise their chapters to warrant the approval of their advisor or readers. Expect that revisions are the norm.

Dissertation Proposal Writing: Requirements and Processes

When a student and their dissertation advisor agree that the three chapters have been adequately developed, they should share the proposal manuscript with other members of the committee. Committee members should be provided with ample time to review and critique the work; at least two weeks should be provided for that purpose.

Each committee member should review and evaluate the manuscript using the *Dissertation Proposal Rubric* (Appendix E). Advisors will work with committee members to determine whether changes need to be made before the oral proposal defense can occur. Dissertation advisors should provide guidance on proposal modification and should be the primary point of contact regarding issues related to the manuscript. If all committee members agree, the DBA Director should be notified and the dissertation proposal defense scheduled. Because the dissertation proposal defense is a public event, a notice of the event will be sent to members of the College of Business and Management and DBA communities.

DBA students proceed at different rates of speed in preparing the first three chapters. For some, the proposal defense will occur soon after completion of DBA 712; for others, it may be accomplished after significant paper revision—*what is important is that progress continues to be made*. The key factor is the quality of the chapters, not the speed with which they are prepared.

Human Subjects Review Board. If a student's research involves human subjects/participants, which most do, the research must be reviewed by the Metropolitan State University Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB). Board members, who are drawn from throughout the University, will evaluate the proposed research to determine whether the proposed methodology adequately safeguards participants from harm, including adequate confidentiality of data and information, protection of participants' privacy, and assurances of the ethical conduct of the study (see Appendix H, *Human Subjects Review Board Information*). Dissertation advisors can help to prepare the HSRB application form and respond to any questions raised by HSRB members; however, primary responsibility for HSRB application remains with the student researcher. HSRB uses IRBNet.org to handle HSRB approvals and as a repository of proposals. The dissertation advisor will need to be listed as the principal investigator in IRBNet for the DBA student's dissertation research.

Depending upon the nature of one's research methodology, a student may seek HSRB approval before or after the oral proposal defense. Just as for any other researcher at Metropolitan State University, *students cannot begin to gather their research data until they have secured HSRB committee approval or exemption*.

Oral Proposal Presentation and Defense. Students will be expected to prepare and deliver a presentation at a formal meeting that includes all committee members, plus guests. The presentation should summarize the major ideas in the first three chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, and

Methodology. Dissertation advisors can provide guidance as to expectations for the proposal defense event; however, here are some generally accepted practices: 1) Students should deliver a presentation. 2) During and/or after the presentation, expect questions from committee members. 3) Upon completion of the presentation and discussion, the advisor will ask the student to leave the room. 4) Committee members will further discuss the presentation and decide, generally by voting, whether the student has passed the defense. 5) Upon final decision, the student's advisor will communicate the results immediately, also indicating whether committee members have further questions, recommendations, and/or modifications to the proposed work.

Acknowledgment of successful completion of the dissertation proposal defense should be made via the *DBA Dissertation Proposal Form* (see Appendix G), which should be provided to the DBA Director.

This is a milestone accomplishment in your pursuit of your doctoral degree. If a student does not pass the dissertation proposal defense, the student should work with their advisor to reevaluate the research design and resulting manuscript in preparation for a second presentation.

Data Collection and Manuscript Development

Upon acceptance of the dissertation proposal and HSRB application, students may begin to carry out their proposed research. The primary purpose of the next phase of research is to complete all remaining chapters of the dissertation. This process may also include revision of the first three chapters, if necessary.

Obstacles to completion. In implementing research procedures, students may find that they face unforeseen obstacles such as delays in capturing survey data from study participants, poor functionality in software applications, or results from statistical treatments that suggest weak or initially confusing relationships. Adjustments to the research design or procedures should be done in consultation with one's advisor to ensure good practice and shared understandings. *Students must work with their advisors to establish and maintain a schedule for the completion of data gathering and the preparation of the dissertation chapters; students should plan to get regular feedback from their advisor.*

Because the completion of the dissertation is ultimately *the student's* responsibility, students must maintain a schedule that provides adequate time for completion of research and dissertation work, along with attention to professional work and personal responsibilities. A student's advisor may provide guidance and support, but the student will determine the pace at which they proceeds through dissertation-related activities.

As students develop their dissertation chapters, they should work with their advisor to establish a guideline for expectations. This may include, but is not limited to, the elements described in the DBA Dissertation Rubrics (see Appendix F), depending upon the nature of the research or project. The resulting dissertation manuscript must be written clearly, concisely, and in accordance with APA style; see Appendix H for more information.

Once a student and advisor agree that work has been amply completed on the dissertation, the manuscript and related rubric should be distributed to other members of the dissertation committee for review. Again, ample time should be provided for committee review and critique, generally two weeks or more.

Committee members may suggest changes or raise questions before they approve the work and/or agree to hold the final dissertation defense. Students are expected to respond adequately to comments from committee members; the dissertation defense should not take place until agreement by all committee members exists. Faculty expectations for the quality of the dissertation are high; the dissertation must match the standard established for doctoral work, nationally, for final approval. It must be rigorous, relevant, and practical.

Final Dissertation Presentation and Defense

Upon dissertation approval by committee members, the advisor will work with the DBA Director to schedule the final dissertation defense. Since this is a public event, reasonable notice will be given to the CBM and DBA communities so that interested parties can attend; they may ask questions but are not part of the deliberation process. In addition, students may wish to invite professional colleagues, or others interested in the research; additional invitation is at the discretion of the dissertation advisor.

Prior to the defense, students should assess their manuscripts and resulting defense presentations based on the evaluation available in the *Dissertation Defense Rubric* (Appendix F).

Expectations. Students will be expected to prepare a presentation and present that at a formal meeting that includes all committee members, plus guests. The presentation should summarize all major aspects of their research, as described in the dissertation chapters, including topic selection, the need for the study, the research methodology and its application and issues, data analysis and interpretation, major findings of the study, and conclusions and recommendations. Students should highlight contributions of the study to business literature and management practice, and be prepared to field questions on the work, including but not limited to questions related to literature on the topic, sampling procedures, analyses applied, and results; everything is admissible.

As with the dissertation proposal defense, dissertation advisors can provide guidance as to expectations for the defense event; however, here are some generally accepted practices: 1) Students should prepare a presentation of approximately one hour; 2) During and/or after the presentation, expect questions from committee members; 3) Upon completion of the presentation and resulting discussion, the advisor will ask the student to leave the room; 4) Committee members will further discuss the manuscript and presentation and decide whether the research was defensible and successfully defended; they will decide whether the student has passed the defense; 5) If the student has passed, the advisor will inform the student immediately, indicating also whether committee members have further questions, recommendations, and/or modifications to the work. If committee members indicate that the student has passed but suggest modifications to the dissertation, students must make those changes before final signatures are secured; final dissertation approval shall be issued via the *DBA Dissertation Defense Approval Form* (Appendix G), along with the *Dissertation Defense Rubric* (Appendix F). **If you have passed, you have accomplished a significant milestone in the DBA program and in your professional life.**

Bound Copies. A finalized version of the dissertation, including all requested changes and/or modifications, must be submitted to the DBA Director in electronic format along with two bound copies. In addition, an electronic copy of the dissertation must be submitted to ProQuest Digital Dissertations, a

national clearinghouse for dissertation dissemination. It is recommended that the DBA student place a two-year embargo on the dissertation so that the results can be published before the dissertation is made public. The abstract for the dissertation can be made public immediately, but the dissertation itself should not be available for two years. Also, if desired, copies of the dissertation may be bound for personal use. Details on binding guidelines can be found in Appendix J.

Graduation

At the beginning of the semester of planned completion, students *must* register for and complete the Graduation Workshop; notify the DBA Director once the Graduation Workshop materials have been completed. A graduation fee will be billed to your student account at that time. The online workshop will guide students through the appropriate steps toward graduation processing with the Registrar's Office and Graduation Office. Students must schedule and complete all dissertation requirements *at least 2* weeks prior to the end of the semester in order to have graduation included in your transcript.

Plan to participate in the Metropolitan State University Commencement ceremony where your work will be acknowledged publicly. Receiving a degree through the "hooding ceremony" by University academic leaders is a memorable, worthwhile experience. Plan to celebrate the achievement with family members, friends, and colleagues who offered support. Contact the DBA Director to discuss appropriate regalia.

Other Key Information

Throughout the program, the utmost academic integrity is expected. In addition to any academic integrity policies established by the University or individual instructors, plagiarism, copyright infringement, and/or use of generative AI for the development of materials related to coursework or dissertation work, such as data or manuscript development, is prohibited unless expressly approved by the instructor or advisor.

Appendix A: Duties of a DBA Dissertation Advisor

- Chairs the dissertation committee and manages its agenda: advises on the selection of dissertation committee readers; communicates with the student and dissertation committee readers; coordinates with staff in the scheduling of the dissertation proposal defense and the final dissertation defense; facilitates discussions/decision-making of committee.
- Completes and submits appropriate forms for dissertation proposal and final dissertation defense scheduling and approval.
- Advises the student on dissertation content issues.
- Reviews the summary and first three chapters of the dissertation draft in preparation for the student's oral presentation of the research proposal. Schedules dissertation proposal defense via the *DBA Dissertation Proposal Scheduling Form*.
- Participates in the student's oral presentation of the research proposal, asks questions, evaluates the student's performance using the *DBA Dissertation Proposal Rubric* and signs the rating form. Administers proposal approval via completion of the *DBA Dissertation Proposal Form*.
- Reads all drafts of the student's dissertation, evaluates them using the *DBA Dissertation Defense Rubric*, and signs the rating form. Upon acceptance, schedules final dissertation defense via the *DBA Dissertation Defense Scheduling Form*.
- Participates in the student's final oral presentation of the dissertation, asks questions, and evaluates the student's performance using the *DBA Dissertation Defense Rubric*. Administers final completion and approval via completion of the *DBA Dissertation Defense Form*.
- Provides support to the student, serving as a significant "cheerleader" throughout the dissertation process.

Appendix B: Duties of a DBA Dissertation Committee Reader

- Reviews and critiques the first three draft chapters of the student's dissertation upon advisor approval.
- Works with the advisor to identify questions about the research project.
- Participates in the oral presentation of the research proposal, asks questions, evaluates the student's performance using the *DBA Dissertation Proposal Rubric*, and signs the rating form.
- Reads the final draft of the student's dissertation and evaluates it using the appropriate dissertation defense rubric. Shares reactions with the dissertation advisor and signs the rating form.
- Participates in the final oral presentation and defense of the dissertation, asks questions, evaluates the student's performance using the *DBA Dissertation Defense Rubric*, completes and signs the rating form.
- Completes and signs the *DBA Dissertation Defense Form* upon final approval.

Appendix C: Traditional Dissertation Outline

Acknowledgments

Abstract

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

- Purpose of the study
- Statement of the research problem
- Questions/hypotheses of the study
- Overview of the research design
- Need/justification for research
- Significance of research for professional practice
- Contribution to professional literature
- Limitations of the study
- Chapter summary

Chapter 2: Literature Review

- Focus of review
- Integrated discussion of major theories/models/concepts related to the topic area
- Connection between theory and study problem
- Chapter summary

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

- Description of research design/methodology
- Rationale/justification for selection of design
- Identification of data gathering tools and sampling procedures
- Human subjects and data privacy issues
- Explanation of data sources/format/treatments
- Limitations of study design/discussion of validity and reliability
- Chapter summary

Chapter 4: Summary of Data Results: Narrative, Tables, Figures

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, Recommendations, and Implications: Links to Research Questions/Hypotheses and Literature

- Explanation of the results and their application to theory
- Explanation of the results and their application to practice
- Key conclusions
- Suggestions and critical issues for further research and practice

- Recommendations

Appendices

Bibliography

Appendix D: Three-Essay Dissertation Outline

Some general guidelines: The three-essay dissertation is intended to be an alternative to the traditional long-version dissertation process. However, like a traditional dissertation, it requires a great deal of effort, time, and thought. If you believe that the three-essay format would be useful for your project, please weigh the following: First, the three-essay format requires the development of three distinct yet related papers that are of publishable quality in a reputable journal in your field (as deemed by your committee). Each of these papers must stand on its own merits and should be developed and written with a specific scholarly journal target in mind. The overall dissertation product should include an introduction (in addition to the three papers) that helps readers understand how the three papers are related, as well as a final conclusion (in addition to the three papers) that helps readers understand the implications of all three papers and how those implications relate to the body of your work.

Each of the papers should follow generally accepted practices for manuscript development, and therefore will likely include a statement of the problem, a literature review, methodology, results, and discussion; at least one of the papers should be empirical in nature and derive results from empirical data collection and a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method analysis process. At least one of the papers should include a thorough systematic/integrative review of the literature (remember, a literature review has its own type of methodology, which describes your review process). It is imperative that your dissertation committee, and your dissertation advisor in particular, approves the use of the three-essay format, as well as the topics and direction of all three papers. Changes in scope or direction for any of the papers must be approved.

Papers developed for this process should be of appropriate length for the field of study. Each paper should be a free-standing manuscript that can be submitted on its own merits. You (the student) should be the main contributor to, and primary author of, each paper; it is imperative that the work you submit is your own. Collaboration with your advisor is acceptable, but not necessary; the decision on co-authorship is at the discretion of the advisor. Co-authorship with anyone else, including other students, is not allowed.

While you may have entered the DBA program with ideas or insights related to your dissertation, all papers should be the result of work that began, was performed, and was completed during your tenure at Metropolitan State University. If one or more of your three-essay manuscripts is based on work completed in a course, it must be substantially updated, changed, and improved (75% or more) for submission as a portion of your dissertation work; using ideas that were derived from your coursework may be appropriate; however, the use of a paper that was the result and/or product of previous coursework is not.

Three-Essay Dissertation Proposal:

For the proposal, three extended abstracts are required. The proposal should begin with an Introduction Section that includes a brief description of the three papers/manuscripts and include information on how each of the three papers relates to your topic of interest and to each other.

Each of the three extended abstracts should be 3-5 pages long and include the following:

1. Purpose of the study
2. Statement of the research problem
3. Questions/hypotheses of the study
4. Overview of the research design
5. Need/justification for research
6. Significance of research for professional practice
7. Contribution to professional literature

Three-Essay Dissertation Outline:

1. Preliminary Pages:
 - a. Title Page
 - b. Copyright Page
 - c. Signature Page (typed signatures – physical signature page filed with DBA Director)
 - d. Abstract
 - e. Preface and/or Acknowledgments
 - f. Table of Contents
 - g. List of Tables
 - h. List of Illustrations
2. Introduction Section
 - a. Description of the three papers/manuscripts
 - b. Description of how each of the three papers relates to your topic of interest and to each other.
3. Three papers section: include subsections as appropriate – see example below
 - a. Description of research program, including literature review
 - b. Essay 1: Nature of the Problem and theoretical background
 - i. Nature of the Problem
 - ii. Lit Review
 - iii. Methodology
 - iv. Results
 - v. Conclusion
 - vi. Appendices
 - vii. References
 - c. Essay 2 Title
 - i. Nature of the Problem
 - ii. Lit Review
 - iii. Methodology
 - iv. Results
 - v. Conclusion
 - vi. Appendices
 - vii. References
 - d. Essay 3 Title
 - i. Nature of the Problem
 - ii. Lit Review
 - iii. Methodology
 - iv. Results
 - v. Conclusion
 - vi. Appendices

vii. References

4. Conclusion section
 - a. Describes how the results of the three papers are related and inform each other.
 - b. Provides implications for theory and practice for all three papers, in conjunction with each other.
 - c. Provides suggestions for future research for all three papers, in conjunction with each other.
5. Appendices
6. References

Appendix E: DBA Dissertation Proposal Rubric

Dimensions	Exceeds Expectations: Exemplary	Meets Expectations: Proficient	Does Not Fully Meet Expectations: Developing
Problem Statement	Statement is well focused and described very clearly and concisely	Statement is focused and clearly described	Statement lacks focus and/or clarity
Purpose of Research	Purpose is very clearly identified and linked to problem	Purpose is identified and linked to problem	Purpose is inadequately identified and linked to problem
Questions / Hypotheses	Questions are very original, creative, and very well defined	Questions are original, creative, and adequately defined	Questions lack originality, creativity, and adequate definition
Need	Need is very well documented and persuasively argued	Need is documented and persuasively argued	Need lacks documentation and is inadequately argued
Significance of Research	Research is exceedingly significant and relevant to professional practice	Research is significant and relevant to professional practice	Research has little significance or relevance for professional practice
Contribution to Literature	The study will make an exceptional contribution to the theory in the field, enhancing previous research	The study will make a contribution to the theory in the field, enhancing previous research	The study will make a limited contribution to the theory in the field
Review of Literature	Review demonstrates deep understanding of significant amount of relevant literature in the field	Review demonstrates understanding of important literature in the field	Review insufficiently demonstrates understanding of literature in the field
Description of Research Design and Methodology	Design is especially appropriate for the research problem and is described very clearly	Design is appropriate for the research problem and described clearly	Design lacks appropriateness for the research problem and/or is not described clearly
Rationale / Justification for Selection of the Design	Rationale is extremely persuasive	Rationale is persuasive	Rationale lacks sufficient persuasiveness
Comments:			

Dimensions	Exceeds Expectations: Exemplary	Meets Expectations: Proficient	Does Not Fully Meet Expectations: Developing
Data gathering Procedure	Data collection procedure is very thorough, original, and efficient	Data collection is thorough, original, and efficient	Data collection procedure lacks thoroughness, and/or efficiency
Data gathering Instruments	Data gathering instruments are described in detail	Data gathering instruments are adequately described	Data gathering instruments are inadequately described
Human Subjects/Data Privacy Issues	Existing policies, requirements, standards are met exceptionally well	Existing policies, requirements, standards are met	Existing policies, requirements, standards are inadequately met
Data Formats/Treatments	There is a very appropriate use of formats and treatments of research data	There is an appropriate use of formats and treatments of research data	There is an inappropriate use of formats and treatments of research data
Limitations of Study Design	There is a fully adequate identification of the limitations and weaknesses of the design	There is an adequate identification of the limitations and weaknesses of the design	There is an inadequate identification of study limitations and weaknesses
Quality of Presentation - Organization	Presentation is very clearly, consistently, and cohesively structured	Presentation is clearly, consistently, and cohesively structured	Presentation is insufficiently clear, consistent, or cohesive in structure
Quality of Presentation - Delivery Techniques	Delivery techniques make presentation compelling	Delivery techniques make presentation understandable and interesting	Delivery techniques make presentation insufficiently understandable
Quality of Presentation - Supporting Materials	Materials significantly support the presentation	Materials adequately support the presentation	Materials minimally support the presentation
Publication/Dissemination of Results	Study has high potential for publication in an academic or practitioner journal, for dissemination in a professional setting, or to be marketed as a product	Study has potential for publication in an academic or practitioner journal, for dissemination in a professional setting, or to be marketed as a product	Study has little potential for publication in an academic or practitioner journal, for dissemination in a professional setting, or to be marketed as a product
Comments:			

Appendix F: DBA Dissertation Defense Rubric

Dimensions	Exceeds Expectations: Exemplary	Meets Expectations: Proficient	Does Not Fully Meet Expectations: Developing
Problem Statement	Statement is well focused and described very clearly and concisely	Statement is focused and clearly described	Statement lacks focus and/or clarity
Purpose of Research	Purpose is very clearly identified and linked to problem	Purpose is identified and linked to problem	Purpose is inadequately identified and linked to problem
Questions / Hypotheses	Questions are very original, creative, and very well defined	Questions are original, creative, and adequately defined	Questions lack originality, creativity, and adequate definition
Need	Need is very well documented and persuasively argued	Need is documented and persuasively argued	Need lacks documentation and is inadequately argued
Significance of Research	Research is exceedingly significant and relevant to professional practice	Research is significant and relevant to professional practice	Research has little significance or relevance for professional practice
Contribution to Literature	The study will make an exceptional contribution to the theory in the field, enhancing previous research	The study will make a contribution to the theory in the field, enhancing previous research	The study will make a limited contribution to the theory in the field
Review of Literature	Review demonstrates deep understanding of significant amount of relevant literature in the field	Review demonstrates understanding of important literature in the field	Review insufficiently demonstrates understanding of literature in the field
Description of Research Design and Methodology	Design is especially appropriate for the research problem and is described very clearly	Design is appropriate for the research problem and described clearly	Design lacks appropriateness for the research problem and/or is not described clearly
Rationale / Justification for Selection of the Design	Rationale is extremely persuasive	Rationale is persuasive	Rationale lacks sufficient persuasiveness
Comments:			

Dimensions	Exceeds Expectations: Exemplary	Meets Expectations: Proficient	Does Not Fully Meet Expectations: Developing
Data gathering Procedure	Data collection procedure is a very thorough, original, and efficient	Data collection is thorough, original, and efficient fashion	Data collection procedure lacks thoroughness, and/or efficiency
Data gathering Instruments	Data gathering instruments are described in detail	Data gathering instruments are adequately described	Data gathering instruments are inadequately described
Human Subjects/Data Privacy Issues	Existing policies, requirements, standards are met exceptionally well	Existing policies, requirements, standards are met	Existing policies, requirements, standards are inadequately met
Data Formats/Treatments	There is a very appropriate use of formats and treatments of research data	There is an appropriate use of formats and treatments of research data	There is an inappropriate use of formats and treatments of research data
Limitations of Study Design	There is a fully adequate identification of the limitations and weaknesses of the design	There is an adequate identification of the limitations and weaknesses of the design	There is an inadequate identification of study limitations and weaknesses
Data Results	The study provides very relevant data from multiple sources for the research questions	The study provides relevant data from multiple sources for the research questions	The study omits relevant data for the research questions
	Results are very well organized, critical to the study, and exceptionally significant	Results are organized, critical to the study, and significant	Results lack organization, are not critical to the study, and are minimally significant
Discussion and Analysis	Analysis is especially comprehensive and convincing	Analysis is comprehensive and convincing	Analysis is limited and not convincing
Conclusions	Conclusions are wholly consistent with data results and analysis	Conclusions are consistent with data results and analysis	Conclusions are not fully consistent with data results and analysis
Comments:			

Dimensions	Exceeds Expectations: Exemplary	Meets Expectations: Proficient	Does Not Fully Meet Expectations: Developing
Critical Issues for Further Research	All critical issues have been identified and clearly defined	Key critical issues have been identified and defined	Some critical issues have been identified and defined
Recommendations for Professional Practice	Recommendations are especially significant and persuasively argued	Recommendations are significant and persuasively argued	Recommendations have little significance for practice and are argued unpersuasively
Quality of Presentation - Organization	Presentation is very clearly, consistently, and cohesively structured	Presentation is clearly, consistently, and cohesively structured	Presentation is insufficiently clear, consistent, or cohesive in structure
Quality of Presentation - Delivery Techniques	Delivery techniques make presentation compelling	Delivery techniques make presentation understandable and interesting	Delivery techniques make presentation insufficiently understandable
Quality of Presentation - Supporting Materials	Materials significantly support the presentation	Materials adequately support the presentation	Materials minimally support the presentation
Publication/Dissemination of Results	Study has high potential for publication in an academic or practitioner journal, for dissemination in a professional setting, or to be marketed as a product	Study has potential for publication in an academic or practitioner journal, for dissemination in a professional setting, or to be marketed as a product	Study has little potential for publication in an academic or practitioner journal, for dissemination in a professional setting, or to be marketed as a product
Comments:			

Appendix G: Forms



DBA Dissertation Committee Approval Form

Student Name:

Dissertation Topic:

Committee Chair/Advisor:

Committee Member 1:

Committee Member 2:

Approved by DBA Director: _____



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

DBA Dissertation Proposal Scheduling Form

Student Name:

Dissertation Proposal Title:

Current Human Subjects/CITI Training: ☐ Yes ☐ No

The above student is now ready for dissertation proposal defense.

Committee Chair/Dissertation Advisor Signature: _____

This form is a signal that the DBA student is ready for proposal defense. It is to be completed and signed by committee chair before a student can move forward in the dissertation process. Any proxy signatures (via email) must be attached to this form and all signatures must be obtained in order to validate this form. Please return signed form to DBA Director.

(Form 1 of 4)



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

DBA Dissertation Proposal Form

Student Name:

Dissertation Proposal Title:

Proposal Hearing date:

Current Human Subjects/CITI Training: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Note: The above student has successfully completed the DBA Dissertation proposal and may now move forward in the dissertation process.

Committee Chair/Dissertation Advisor Signature:

Committee Member Signature:

Committee Member Signature:

Notes:

This form is to be completed and signed by committee members before a student can move forward in the dissertation process. Any proxy signatures (via email) must be attached to this form and all signatures must be obtained in order to validate this form. Please return signed form to DBA Director.

(Form 2 of 4)



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

DBA Dissertation Defense Scheduling Form

Student Name:

Dissertation Title:

The above student is now ready for dissertation defense.

Committee Chair/Dissertation Advisor Signature: _____

This form is to be completed and signed by committee members before a student can move forward in the dissertation defense process. Any proxy signatures (via email) must be attached to this form and all signatures must be obtained in order to validate this form. Please return signed form to DBA Director.

(Form 3 of 4)



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

DBA Dissertation Defense Form

Student Name:

Dissertation Title:

Dissertation Defense Hearing Date:

____ Pass

____ Pass with revisions

____ Fail

Committee Chair/Dissertation Advisor Signature:

Committee Member Signature:

Committee Member Signature:

Note regarding revisions and/or changes:

This form must be completed and signed by committee members before a student can move forward in the dissertation process. Email signatures are acceptable only if hard copy is attached to this form. All signatures must be obtained in order to validate this form. Please return signed form to DBA Director.

(Form 4 of 4)

Appendix H: Human Subjects Review Board Information

Consistent with state and federal regulations, all Metropolitan State University human subjects research is subject to review by the University Human Subjects Review Board. Review must be completed before data collection related to one's dissertation research may begin. To access information on HSRB policies, procedures, and forms, go to the Metropolitan State University web page, <http://www.metrostate.edu>, and search for HSRB using the Search link.

Appendix I: APA Style

As defined by the Academy of Management rules for publication, all dissertation materials should be written within American Psychological Association's APA guidelines, using APA formatting, citations, and style. The purpose of the APA Style Guidelines is to establish a simple set of procedures, or style rules, that would codify the many components of scientific writing to increase the ease of reading comprehension. Use APA Publication Manual, 7th Edition.

As with other editorial styles, *APA Style* consists of rules or guidelines that a publisher observes to ensure clear and consistent presentation of written material. It concerns uniform use of such elements as

- selection of headings, tone, and length;
- punctuation and abbreviations;
- presentation of numbers and statistics;
- construction of tables and figures,
- citation of references;
- many other elements that are part of a manuscript.

Appendix J – Dissertation Binding Requirements

Number of copies:

Bound: Two (2) submitted to DBA Director

Electronic: One (1) submitted to DBA Director

Content:

1. Title page (See Appendix A)

Note: A copyright must be placed within the bottom header of this page, centered. An example is available below. Students may also consider registering their dissertations through the US Copyright Office at: <http://www.copyright.gov/help/faq/faq-register.html#register> and/or adding a copyright page as noted in 4 below.

2. Dissertation Signature Page (Note: Do not include in bound copies)
3. Abstract
4. Copyright Page
5. Acknowledgments/Dedication page
6. Table of Contents
7. List of Tables
8. List of Figures
9. Dissertation Chapters/papers
10. Appendices
11. References

Formatting:

Margins

Left: 1.5"

Right: 1"

Top: 1"

Bottom: 1"

Font

Times New Roman

Size: 12

Spacing

Double

Print

Single-sided

Pages must be numbered in succession beginning with the Abstract page; title page should not be numbered.

Binding Requirements:

Cover Color: Black

Lettering: Gold

Spine: See below. Please note the lettering is vertical

DBA Thesis (space) YEAR (space) Full Name

Front: Blank

Paper: 24 lb. white, acid-free

Binding options:

FedEx Office (several metro locations)

Several online binding services

Please note that we do not endorse these binderies, they are simply examples of options.



Updated 8/15/2026

[Title Page Example]

Doctoral Dissertations:

A Long Journey

by

Phil. O. Sofer

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree of

Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)

College of Business and Management

Metropolitan State University

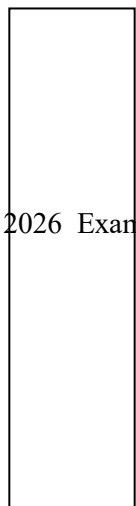
St. Paul, MN

October 10, 2024

© Phil. O. Sofer

[Spine example]

DBA Thesis 2026 Example O.
Student



References

Boyer, E. L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. Carnegie Foundation: Princeton, NJ.