

# Final Report for the Quality Enhancement Project

## Conference Title: Exploring Options for the Ed.D. Dissertation

### **Background of the Ed.D. Program at University of West Florida**

The Ed.D. degree at the University of West Florida is administered by the College of Professional Studies and is governed by the Ed.D Program Policies and Procedures Manual (2005). The Manual can be found at the following address: [http://uwf.edu/education/file\\_contribute/Handbook.doc](http://uwf.edu/education/file_contribute/Handbook.doc). The Program Mission can be found on pp. 4-6 of the 2005 policy manual. This section of the document communicates that:

The Ed.D. program is designed to meet the educational needs of regional, full-time employed professionals from a variety of backgrounds. The mission of the program is to prepare empowered professionals who take action in administrative and leadership positions to conduct and evaluate applied research to solve local, regional, and state education issues and problems (p. 5).

The document goes on to describe nine outcomes that are essentially student learning outcomes. The first two learning outcomes on p. 5 give a more specific indication of the intent of the program:

1. Conduct quality applied research that will apply to local, regional, and state issues, concerns, and needs;
2. Interpret, analyze, and develop appropriate educational or public policy.

Among approximately 30 dissertations completed in the past 18 months in the Department of Professional and Community Leadership in 2005-2007, five were qualitative studies and the remaining dissertations conformed to the traditional five-chapter dissertations found at most universities. The typical dissertation at UWF is a research dissertation assessing attitudes toward some issue or educational practice. A few are validation studies. For the most part, these dissertations are modeled after a traditional research dissertation, something similar to the type of research most of the UWF faculty produced for their own dissertations. None have focused on solving local, regional, or state problems, and none have interpreted, analyzed or developed educational or public policy. If the Ed.D. degree is meant to educate and empower professionals to take action to solve local and regional problems, then one might ask: What role does the dissertation play in meeting this outcome? When asked why students conduct these kinds of dissertations, almost all faculty answer with either a statement or question such as: "what else is there?"

### **Work of the Faculty Learning Community**

In an attempt to explore the options of alternatives to the traditional dissertation, in particular for an applied research program with an Ed.D. degree, a Faculty Learning Community ( FLC ) was formed in the winter of 2006 to explore some alternatives. The purposes for the FLC were to address the following

three questions: 1) Are there alternatives to the traditional research thesis and dissertation that could better meet the goals of the program, the needs of the students, and lead to higher levels of scholarship from our students? 2) Do the Boyer criteria (Boyer, 1990) for scholarship provide a useful and broader framework for what constitutes a legitimate focus for thesis and dissertation work? 3) What would these alternatives look like, i.e. what elements would need to be included in the thesis or dissertation “product” that would assure quality and fidelity to the mission of the degree program?

The FLC read various articles on this topic and looked at some of the practices of various other Ed.D. programs. Some interesting alternatives exist. In discussing these alternatives and their suitability for UWF, the FLC suggested the addition of alternatives to the accepted practice for the dissertation. The FLC felt that education of the faculty as a whole would facilitate acceptance of some new alternatives. As a first step to educating the faculty and gaining their involvement and acceptance of some additional alternatives to the traditional dissertation, the FLC suggested a conference. A Planning Committee was formed from the FLC to assist in the development of the conference. This conference would be for both graduate faculty, current Ed.D. candidates and recent Ed.D. graduates. The conference would feature two outside speakers to present the options and the rationale behind the alternatives their program has implemented. The conference would include discussion groups comprised of faculty and students that will evaluate the options presented, formulate ideas for UWF, and present the results of the discussions to the group as a whole. If there is broad acceptance of the idea of expanding the alternatives for the dissertation at UWF, the results of the conference would be either developed further by a subgroup of the conference, or reported directly to the Ed.D. Program Committee as a recommendation for adoption.

### **Statement of Purpose and Objectives for the QEP Project**

Long-term and Short-term Goals. It is important to indicate that the conference was planned as an important first step to the achievement of a longer-term goal. Evaluation of this proposal needs to be done in light of the long-term goals. So, the outcomes associated with the conference must be seen in light of the longer-term outcomes associated with developing an increased set of methods for what we currently refer to as the Ed.D. dissertation. Successful development of an expanded set of dissertation alternatives was guided by the following long-term project goals:

- Enhance the quality of scholarship produced by students in the Ed.D. program as evidenced in their capstone project (dissertation) (part of the Ed.D. program goals)
- Broaden the options for the types of projects for student selection that are seen as legitimate for the capstone experience for the Ed.D. program
- Facilitate the selection of capstone project methods that enhance engagement of the student in an effort that the student sees as relevant to their professional goals (part of the Ed.D. program goals)
- Evaluate and demonstrate the applicability of the results of the Ed.D. capstone project to solve local and regional problems (part of the Ed.D. program goals)

- Provide better guidance from faculty to the student about how to select and implement an appropriate project methodology to address the problem of interest and concern: project management
- Develop and implement appropriate assessment strategies for formative evaluation purposes
- Create a partnership between the University and its Ed.D. graduate students with local/regional agencies and organizations to provide an arena for these capstone projects.

The conference, for which this proposal was supported, represents an important step toward achieving these long-term goals. The goals for the conference were:

- Facilitate faculty's ability to describe and articulate the goals and the range of options used by other Ed.D. programs for capstone projects
- Actively engage graduate students in the dialogue to develop more meaningful opportunities for the capstone experience that students perceive as more meaningful: increase relevance to professional goals and focused on local and community problems
- Foster collaboration between faculty and students in determining appropriate alternative methods for capstone experience
- Design and clarify the Student Learning Outcomes that would be achieved with these new capstone project experiences through collaborative dialogue between faculty, doctoral students and community leaders
- Design preliminary assessment strategies for these new capstone projects
- Generate statements of commitment from program faculty to embrace a wider array of methods for Ed.D. capstone projects
- Gain commitment to develop and implement plans to broaden the array of capstone projects used in the Ed.D. program at UWF
- Involve leaders of local/regional agencies and organizations to stimulate interest and commitment from community leaders for collaboration with faculty and students to conduct capstone projects with their agencies and organizations.

## Outline and Description of the Conference Program

The agenda for the conference held on November 9, 2007 can be found in Appendix A. There were four speakers in the morning. The afternoon was devoted to small group discussion and feedback of information.

- A. Morning Session. The morning session contained four speakers, two from UWF and two from outside universities. Thomas Kramer, Chair of Professional and Community Leadership and coordinator of the conference, presented background to the conference, its purpose, agenda, and objectives to be achieved. He then presented an overview of seven different Ed.D. programs, each with a different approach to the dissertation. Some were project oriented, some followed a team approach, while still others focused on the needs of a client organization.

Richard Podemski, Associate Vice President for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies, was the second speaker. His presentation provided some historical background to the Ed.D. program at UWF, the vision, the mission, the student outcomes for the graduates. He also provided a context for the dissertation for this type of program compared to a traditional Ph.D. program.

The third presenter was William Rebore, Associate Dean and Chair of the Department of Leadership and Higher Education at Saint Louis University. Dr. Rebore provided the history of the development of their new approach to their doctoral program in Higher Education. Two very salient features were the use of a cohort model, and the use of a team approach to the dissertation project. He described the competencies that represent the foundation of this program as well as the long development sequence that was required of the faculty to redesign such a program.

The fourth presenter was Diana Pounder from University of Utah. Dr. Pounder provided background to her program. One of the salient features to the dissertations in her program is the focus on the needs of an organization in the community. The dissertation involves a presentation to the community organization as part of the dissertation defense. She presented the methodology and results of several dissertation projects to illustrate the characteristics of dissertations at Utah.

- B. Afternoon Session. The purpose of the afternoon session was to create the opportunity for faculty, community members, current graduate students, and some alums of the program to discuss issues raised in the morning presentations. Participants were divided into four discussion groups, each with a facilitator, to discuss the following three questions:
1. What are your reflections on the options presented this morning? (Develop three summary statements from these reflections)
  2. What do you see as the strengths and challenges associated with some of these options?
  3. What strategies would be needed to move forward to incorporating a broader set of options for our Ed.D. program?

A summary of the results of the discussions was provided by the two outside speakers, Dr. Rebore and Dr. Pounder.

- C. Saturday Morning. Dr. Carla Thompson had instituted a meeting of doctoral students the first Saturday of every month. To take advantage of the availability of one of the speakers, the meeting was delayed one week to November 10. Dr. William Rebores repeated much of his presentation at this session. There was an enthusiastic reception for what he had to say about the approach to the dissertation project at Saint Louis University.

## Participants

The table below lists the number and types of individuals who attended the conference on Friday and the session for doctoral students on Saturday.

### Conference (Friday)

N= 42 Total Attendees

N= 23 UWF Faculty/Administrators

N= 5 Community Leaders

N= 14 Doctoral Students

### Doctoral R & R (Saturday)

N=29 ED.D. Students

N= 3 UWF Faculty

## Results of the Afternoon Discussion, Friday

Each of four groups was given 20-30 minutes to discuss and then record their collective comments for each question. At the end of the discussion of each item there was a brief presentation from each group to the rest other participants. All of the results presented can be found in Appendix B. Below is a summary of the major themes for each of the questions.

1. What are your reflections on the options presented this morning? (Develop three summary statements from these reflections)

Summary: Alternatives to the UWF dissertation process are not in conflict with current UWF policies. Alternatives can include policy investigations, applied research efforts, and projects that are scholarly in nature rather than the traditional dissertation five-chapter product.

2. What do you see as the strengths and challenges associated with some of these options?

Summary: The options suggested by the speakers and others provide a broad span of scholarly and innovative approaches to the dissertation concept. However, the need for a cohort program and attention to limited numbers of degree programs is essential for the management of an alternative dissertation effort.

3. What strategies would be needed to move forward to incorporating a broader set of options for the UWF ED. D. program?

Summary: Most of the small groups agreed that a cohort program devoted to education majors would be the best direction for moving forward on determining a broader set of options for the dissertation.

## End of Conference Evaluation

A Conference Evaluation form was given to every participant. They were asked to rate several facets of the conference on a 5-point Likert score from 1 to 5: 1 = poor, 5 = excellent. The average ratings are provided below.

	Overall Rating	Content	Communication/Presentation	Length
Podemski	4.2	4.4	3.9	3.8
Kramer	3.9	4.1	4.0	3.6
Rebore	4.0	4.5	3.9	4.1
Pounder	3.1	3.2	3.0	2.8
Small Groups	4.0	4.6	3.8	3.9
Panel	4.3	4.5	4.0	4.2.

### **Conclusions of the Planning Committee**

The Planning Committee for the Ed.D. Dissertation Options Conference met on November 30, 2007 to review the conference and the notes generated from the small group discussion in the afternoon. Below are some observations and conclusions generated by the Planning Committee.

1. Participation in the conference equaled or exceeded our expectation, particularly from faculty. Approximately 60 people attended the conference at some point during the day.
2. There was broad participation from graduate students in the program and from invited community members. Their participation brought a fresh perspective to the topic and enlivened the conversation.
3. The concepts and examples presented in the morning, particularly from our external presenters Dr. Rebore and Dr. Pounder, stimulated a rich discussion in the afternoon and even after the conference.
4. The goal of the conference was to "Initiate a dialogue between UWF faculty, graduate students and community members about expanding the kinds of projects that are seen as appropriate and useful for the Ed.D. dissertation". The committee felt this objective was clearly met.
5. No one advocated dropping the traditional dissertation approach characteristic of the UWF Ed.D. program. Many, but not all, faculty seemed to feel that further exploration of additional dissertation options is worth the time. Virtually all of the graduate students and community members present agreed with this.

6. The notes from the small groups indicate that the use of a cohort model received a lot of attention. While some felt using a cohort model would be difficult since our program has students with so many different specializations and professional goals, others thought this was a positive opportunity. Many people, including the Planning Committee, seemed to think that moving to a cohort model has potential. The Planning Committee recommends that the Ed.D. program seriously consider moving to a cohort model.
7. After reflection on the whole conference and a review of the notes from the small groups, the Planning Committee concluded that an examination and clarification of the competencies to be demonstrated through the dissertation is now what is needed. The form the dissertation takes should then be evaluated in light of these competencies. There may be multiple options for the dissertation to allow the student to demonstrate these competencies. The Planning Committee recommends that the Ed.D. program examine and clarify the competencies to be demonstrated through the dissertation.

Names of Planning Committee:

Drs. Kramer, Podemski, Prewitt, Stanny, Thompson, Whinnery

### **Long Term Direct and Indirect Impact of the Conference**

1. Development of a Cohort. One somewhat surprising outcome of the conference itself was the interest and enthusiasm shown for using the cohort model for the Ed.D. Program. While not all faculty are comfortable with this approach, many have expressed interest and support for it. Starting in the fall semester, 2009, we will launch our first Ed.D. cohort. Along with the cohort approach, the faculty involved will work collectively with the students to involve them in the development of their dissertation ideas early in the program starting in the first year. The faculty who will be involved have already discussed interest, willingness and experience in providing a broad array of types of dissertation projects.

Below are some key events that have already been initiated to support this effort.

- Jack Azzaretto, Vice Provost of the Emerald Coast campus, has agreed to sponsor the development of an Ed.D. cohort focused in the Emerald Coast.
- Chula King, Provost, has approved a somewhat different funding model to support this effort.
- The cohort is planned such that all participants can finish their degree in three years.
- Ten faculty have volunteered to be part of working with the students, serving as mentors, serving as dissertation chairs, and teaching the courses.
- The first of several orientations of the faculty was held on May 1.
- A specific curriculum has been developed with a specialization in Instructional Technology and a cognate in Educational Administration.
- The curriculum includes three seminars the first year to introduce the students to the dissertation process, provide support for initial development of ideas, and to build some basic skills needed to complete a dissertation proposal.

- The cohort approach has been announced and advertised, students are applying.
  - The first orientation of perspective students has taken place: a second one is planned for May 29, 2009.
2. The Ed.D. program has developed two important rubrics to help clarify expectations for students in the program. One rubric was developed for use in evaluation the quality of both the dissertation proposal and the final dissertation product (Appendix C). The hope is this will clarify expectations, provide a mechanism to increase the quality of the dissertation proposal, and provide a more formal mechanism for improvement from proposal to final product.

In the spirit of clarifying expectations, a second rubric was developed to clarify expectations for the students concerning what is expected from the written preliminary exam (Appendix D). Use of the rubric should also clarify areas where the student may have need for improvement.

## **Conclusions**

What were the accomplishments stemming from this conference and the support of it.

- Creating an interest on the part of both faculty and students to consider a cohort model for the Ed.D. program
- Create a legitimacy for considering alternatives to the way we have been managing the Ed.D. program
- Validating the idea of looking at alternative dissertation models, although this has already been occurring
- Stimulating the development of a new model of for Ed.D. education at UWF.
- Stimulating the development of two rubrics to clarify expectations about performance in both the written preliminary examination and the dissertation project.

While the conference had the main purpose of considering addition models for dissertation projects, the conference actually had a broader impact than that. The concept that seemed to generate the most interest from both faculty and students was the idea of piloting a cohort approach for the program. While this has been used at UWF for many other programs, it had not been seriously considered at UWF for the Ed.D. program. So, the conference has had a very clear impact on the development of the cohort approach for students who are being recruited at our Emerald Coast campus. Depending on our recruitment success the cohort will start either this fall or the spring of 2010.

## References

Boyer, E. L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

## Appendices

## **Appendix A**

### **Outline of the Day**

- 8:30 - 8:45 Welcome: Tom Kramer, Associate Dean, COPS
- 8:45 – 9:05 Ed.D. Program history, mission, vision, purpose, outcomes:  
Richard Podemski, Dean of Graduate Studies
- 9:05 – 9:30 What are other programs doing? Tom Kramer
- 9:30 – 10:30 First presenter: William Rebore, Chair, Educational Leadership  
and Higher Education, Saint Louis University
- 10:30 – 10:40 Break
- 10:40 – 11: 40 Second Speaker: Diana Pounder, Chair, Educational Leadership  
and Policy, University of Utah
- 11:40 – 11:55 Questions for presenters
- 12:00 – 12:45 Lunch
- 12:45 – 2:10 Discussion group (assigned tables, mixed groups): three questions  
to address
- 2:10 – 2:20 Break
- 2:20 – 3:00 Large group readout
- 3:00 – 3:30 Panel: Q and A from the audience
- 3:30 – 3:50 Reactions, summary from presenters
- 3:50 – 4:00 Next steps

## Appendix B

### Full Results from the Discussion Groups

#### **I. What are your reflections on the options presented this morning? (Develop three summary statements from these reflections.)**

##### **A. Group One**

1. We need to look at cohorts.
2. Look at limiting the scope of our program. We need to focus on one or two areas and do that well. Revisit serving the whole university.
3. Cohort is not practical in the way we do our business. We should do a better job in scheduling people during the dissertation process.
4. Administering course work is an issue due to the staggering number of students.
5. How do you take people from completely different areas and form a cohort to work on one common project?
6. We need to consider numbers in the program.
7. The university currently does not give the students the tools needed to complete the program.
8. The cohort will lend support to students, but each person could do an individual dissertation at the end.
9. Their programs had faculty training and consistency among faculty that deal with doctoral students.
10. Students in the current Ed. D. program are more isolated.

11. There should be no difference between a Ph. D. and an Ed. D. when it comes to rigor. It is important that the quality is the same and that the students have a degree of freedom when they complete.

12. The programs presented today do not appear to have the diversity within the student population as we do.

13. **Summary**

**a. Explore the cohort process.**

**b. Explore the options of offering either an individual dissertation or a team project.**

**c. Explore the need for alternative faculty structures to meet dissertation needs.**

**B. Group Two**

1. Possibilities of both individual/team capstone experiences.
2. Teams – possible to organize in academic specialization areas as an option--3 would be a good number.
3. What are the implications of alternative dissertations for future career opportunities?

**C. Group Three**

1. Excitement of the possibilities of research options to provide mission and purpose to research, culmination in worthwhile work for Ed.D. students.
2. Would like to have degree options.

3. Option of being individual or group driven projects.
4. Earlier initiation of final project.

#### **D. Group Four**

1. Play to the expertise of the faculty that you have. (Conceptual, methodological and practitioner).
2. Options are fine as long as standards are maintained.
3. It is a different degree, not a second class degree.

## **2. What do you see as the strengths and challenges associated with some of these options?**

#### **A. Group One**

1. A strength is to have a standard process for everyone. A challenge with that is that some people can't take two classes per semester. Some students live a greater distance away and need an alternative means of taking a course.
2. Both a strength and a weakness is diversity. We have diversity in that we reach a broad area (all walks of life). Most are working professionals in some area.
3. There is limit to the number of students being accepted into their program (strength)
4. The culminating activities built into their program ensure that they still have an individual degree (strength). The team

projects work because they are all work in the field of education.

5. The various types of projects can be incorporated to suit other areas other than just those people who work in the educational field.
6. Cohort eliminates some problems with class cancellation.
7. Why shouldn't we start the dissertation during the course work process?
8. We should have a separate track for those people who can only take one class at a time.
9. 75% of our support is generated from the state through FTE's. We have a great deal of pressure to accept lots of students and to accept those who do not qualify in the name of diversity.

## **B. Group Two**

1. Challenge of creating teams (both faculty and students) that can pursue the capstone experience (faculty development issues and turnover of faculty).
2. Creation of a format/rubric for output for the different options.
3. Alignment of faculty to options/topic; need of faculty expertise to manage different options.
4. Team support assists in retention, graduation, motivation, accountability, problem solving, and time to completion.
5. Increase cohesiveness of students.

6. Integration of capstone activity into program of student may have curricular implications with milestones identified to help students complete.
7. Time commitments if capstone experience isn't integrated into coursework (or student changes topic).
8. How (or will) will capstone experiences be transferred to "real" life? Will students be able to transfer research methodology/techniques to work?
9. What competencies should students/graduates have upon completion? Defining the elements of what/where we want students to be at the end of their program of study. Are there different competencies for a "traditional/alternative" programs?
10. What should the dissertation/capstone experience demonstrate (to faculty, to community)? What should the "package" be? What should the level of expertise be?
11. Defining what the experience is (field science/ ... ? ... ?).
12. Defining how the capstone experience is aligned to the curriculum.
13. How to manage a proliferation of options.
14. Should faculty determine the problem/context/area?
15. Changing of "hot" topics.
16. Alignment of student and faculty interests.
17. What is the philosophy of/expectation for the review of literature? Directed or unstructured reading of literature in the field?

### **C. Group Three**

1. Assist local agencies in researching specific topics to build cooperative partnerships with the agency, university and constituents.
2. Groups finishing at same time can assist in completion rate and assist university in developing course schedules and setting instructor class loads.
3. Convince faculty that project options are acceptable scholarly work.

### **D. Group Four**

1. Challenges
  - a. Appears to be very similar to the master's thesis. Is there enough difference?
  - b. Getting the faculty behind it.
  - c. In group work – getting everyone to carry the load.
  - d. There are alternatives, but how will we design the methodology to implement it?
  - e. How do you bring new faculty into the fold?
2. Strengths
  - a. Students tend to be more engaged and will persevere.
  - b. More of a structure for finishing.
  - c. Practical applications in a smaller environment.

- d. Projects would be a good alternative for those in non-educational settings (military, etc.).
- e. Gives you legitimacy in the community by doing community projects.

### **3. What strategies would be needed to move forward to incorporating a broader set of options for our Ed. D. program?**

#### **A. Group One**

1. Clearly define the procedures and mission
2. Focus on a couple of things and do them well.
3. Have unity among faculty and administrators.
4. Explore other avenues for other professional doctoral programs.
5. Need continuity for the professors who mentor the doctoral students.
6. Examine the dissertation process by examining the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the Ed. D. program at UWF.
7. Provide professional development for faculty to learn new strategies in development to implement the use of technologies, programming, etc.
8. Dissertations could be aligned with community, organization, business, or military issues and collaborate/partner to finish the project.

## **B. Group Two**

1. Examining the outcomes of what the dissertation/capstone experience should entail.
2. Determining the evaluation constructs.
3. Defining what the options could be.
4. Determination of what and alignment of appropriate curriculum is.
5. Faculty development strategies in mentoring/different option.

## **C. Group Three**

1. Faculty and community buy in.
2. Quality strategies and leadership to move in a new direction.
3. Resources in place to insure a legitimate chance of success.
4. Staff development to ensure training is a team effort and all players have the opportunity to provide input in the process.
5. Advisory group to identify projects.

## **D. Group Four**

1. More dialog or learning communities.
2. Get faculty behind it.

## Appendix C.

### Rubric for Evaluation of Ed.D. Proposals and Dissertations

The purpose of this form is to communicate your impression of the quality of the dissertation identified below. Please fill out the form by using the attached descriptions. Please use the attached description to **check** the characteristics that best describe the quality of the dissertation. Then, indicate your overall rating of the dissertation below: Outstanding, Very Good, Acceptable, or Unacceptable. The candidate will be given feedback about these ratings.

## The Characteristics of Different Quality Dissertations

Quality	Characteristics
Outstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Very well written and very well organized</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Synthetic and interdisciplinary</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Connects components seamlessly</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Exhibits mature, independent thinking</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Has a point of view and a strong, confident, independent, and authoritative voice</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Asks new questions or addresses an important question or problem</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Clearly states the problem and why it is important</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Exhibits command and authority over the material</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Argument is focused, logical, rigorous, and sustained</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Is theoretically sophisticated and shows a deep understanding of theory</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Has an excellent research design</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses or develops new tools, methods, approaches, or new types of analyses</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Is thoroughly researched</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Data are rich and come from multiple sources</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Analysis is comprehensive, complete, sophisticated, and convincing</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Conclusion ties the whole thing together</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Is publishable in top-tier journals</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Is of interest to a larger community</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Has the potential to change the way people think</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Pushes the discipline's boundaries and opens new areas for research</li></ul>
Very Good	<p data-bbox="264 1241 477 1270"><b>Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Solid</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Well written and well organized</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Has a good question or problem</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Is the next step in a research program (good normal science)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Shows understanding and mastery of the subject matter</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Argument is strong, comprehensive, and coherent</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Research is well executed</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates (technical) competence</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses appropriate, standard theory, methods, and techniques</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Obtains solid, expected results/answers</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Makes a modest contribution to the field but does not open it up</li></ul>
Acceptable	<p data-bbox="264 1812 477 1841"><b>Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Workmanlike</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates (technical) competence</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Shows the ability to do research</li></ul>

Acceptable Con't

- Writing is pedestrian
- Question or problem is not exciting
- Literature review is adequate
- Can sustain an argument, but argument is not imaginative

- Is not very original or significant
- Is not interesting, exciting, or surprising
- Displays little creativity, imagination, or insight

- Has spelling and grammatical errors

- Results are obvious, already known, unexplained, or misinterpreted
- Interpretation is unsupported or exaggerated
- Fails to make a contribution
- Analysis is unsophisticated - does not explore all possibilities and misses connections

## Appendix D.

### Written Preliminary Examination Rubric

#### Day 1 Rating Form

Please use the following rating scale to evaluate the student's work. Use each of the dimensions within the three categories for each of the five questions. Then provide your best estimate of a rating for the three categories.

5 = Excellent    4 = Very Good    3 = Adequate    2 = Needs Improvement    1 = Needs Significant Improvement

#### Rating Categories

##### Adequately addresses the topic

- \* Focuses on relevant points
- \* Reflects accurate principles of theory and research
- \* Offers related example(s) that address important concepts
- \* Does not confuse facts or theory for an expression of personal opinion

##### Demonstrates expert knowledge of the topic

##### Quality of written communication

- \* Important points are stated clearly, concisely and cohesively but with adequate depth
- \* Writing is consistent with professional standards
- \* Follows APA format

##### Overall Rating for this Question

Student Name:

Faculty Evaluator Name:

5 = Excellent    4 = Very Good    3 = Adequate    2 = Needs Improvement    1 = Needs Significant Improvement

### Day 2 Rating Form

#### Rating Categories

Question #1    Question #2    Question #3    Question #4    Question #5

#### Adequately addresses the topic

Rate:	Rate:	Rate:	Rate:	Rate:
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- \* Focuses on relevant points
- \* Reflects accurate principles of theory and research
- \* Offers related example(s) that address important concepts
- \* Does not confuse facts or theory for an expression of personal opinion

#### Demonstrates expert knowledge of the topic

Rate:	Rate:	Rate:	Rate:	Rate:
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- \* Demonstrates sufficient knowledge of pertinent literature
- \* Arguments and presentation of facts logically presented and easy to follow
- \* Provides details of major developments or aspects of the topic
- \* Identifies and explains relevant expert options or controversies involved with the topic
- \* Contains no errors of fact
- \* Presents logical analysis of issues

#### Quality of written communication

Rate:	Rate:	Rate:	Rate:	Rate:
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- \* Important points are stated clearly, concisely and cohesively but with adequate depth
- \* Writing is consistent with professional standards
- \* Follows APA format

#### Overall Rating for this Question

Rate:	Rate:	Rate:	Rate:	Rate:
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

Comments: