

Dissertation Policies

(Please refer to the *SCT Thesis/Dissertation Policies and Procedures*.)

The Department of EWP evaluates students' doctoral performance after their first academic year. Student may be put on probation and/or required to take a writing course at this point. In addition, the department reserves the right to evaluate students' performance and assess their capability to enter the dissertation-writing phase at any point during their coursework. Completion of coursework does not warrant that a student will be allowed to write a dissertation.

Dissertation Proposal Preparation

During their final year of coursework, students take a maximum of two Research Colloquia (one per semester) during which they complete a final draft of the dissertation proposal. Each semester, the department may offer one or two of research colloquia taught by core or adjunct faculty. In their first colloquium, students are expected to commit to a particular topic of study and choose a general methodological orientation: empirical, qualitative—including narrative, heuristic, or phenomenological approaches—or theoretical. (See Appendix E for a sample of EWP dissertation topics). They also begin their literature review as well as draft their research question. During the second semester, students are expected to complete a full draft of their dissertation proposal. If a student does not complete a draft of the proposal during the second colloquium, a non-pass grade may be given.

A Dissertation Proposal Completion Seminar (EWP 6900) is set up for students still needing to complete the proposal after taking the two Research Colloquia. Students enroll in this seminar with their Dissertation Chair for a *maximum of two semesters*. If the proposal has not been completed and approved before the end of the allocated time, the student may petition the Department Chair to enroll for an additional semester. The petition must include a plan and timeline for completion signed by both the student and the Dissertation Chair. A student who does not have a completed and approved proposal by the end of the additional semester may be placed on probation or dismissed from the program.

Dissertation Proposals

Dissertation proposals should be brief, well-focused documents averaging 25-30 pages. Guidelines for empirical, qualitative, and theoretical proposals are given to students during the research colloquium. (See Appendix D). Supplementary documentation is also available at the EWP office, including samples of completed proposals. Dissertation proposals are assessed by faculty using the CIIS Dissertation Proposal Rubric. Students writing their dissertation proposal should consult the rubric as a means of self-assessment and orientation. (See Appendix G). For Approval of the proposal, please refer to the *SCT Thesis/Dissertation Policies and Procedures*.

Academic Style

Dissertation proposals and dissertations should be written according to either the APA Manual of Style or the Chicago Manual of Style, as appropriate to the student's area of doctoral specialization.

External Review

The external review process is done under the supervision of an External Member of the Dissertation Committee. The External Member is considered an active member of the Committee. It is the student's responsibility to find an External Member for her dissertation committee.

Dissertation Completion

The dissertation approval process usually takes an entire semester. Students should consult with their Dissertation Chair about the semester in which completion of the dissertation will likely take place. Nearing completion, students should submit their complete and formatted dissertation *at the latest the first week of the semester in which they are planning to graduate* (graduation may not take place during this semester depending on the amount of revisions required by the Dissertation Committee and the time the student takes to implement these revisions). The semester should include time for the Committee's reading of the dissertation, the defense, final additions and changes, technical review, and final academic review.

Dissertation Defense

Once the Dissertation Chair and the Committee agree that the dissertation is ready for defense, the student files a form for setting up their defense. Dissertation defenses are public events. An announcement will be posted on-line to the CIIS community. Students in the past have invited colleagues, friends, and family to attend this important event. During the defense, students are expected to make a presentation (app. 45 minutes) summarizing their research, as well as discussing their methodology, findings, and conclusions. Each member of the Committee will have a chance to comment and ask questions. The audience is also invited to comment and ask questions to the candidate. Deliberation by the Dissertation Committee will take place during the defense, culminating in a decision regarding the approval of the dissertation. Changes and additions can be requested at this time.

The Department of EWP encourages all students (MA and PhD) to attend dissertation defenses in our and other programs. There are one of best forms of creating scholarly community and providing support for the candidates.

Dissertation Forms and Procedures

It is the student's responsibility to be aware of all procedures and deadlines about the dissertation process, including dissertation proposal completion and advancement to candidacy. For all forms and procedures, please consult the *SCT Thesis/Dissertation Forms*, available in MyCIIS: <http://my.ciis.edu/ics/Academics/>. Scroll down the page on the right hand side for Thesis and Dissertation Forms. An additional *Dissertation Process Check List* is available at the EWP department. Students should also consult the *Catalog* and *Schedule of Classes* for important deadlines regarding dissertation defense, submission of final copy to the Chair, for technical review, and to the Library.

**APPENDIX D:
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL GUIDELINES**

**THEORETICAL DISSERTATION PROPOSAL
(30-40 pages)**

ABSTRACT (1 page)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (1 page)

- I. **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (4-6 pages)**
State your topic and the perspective from which you wish to approach it. Describe the field in which it is located, the background of the topic or problem the dissertation will address, its outer limits (i.e., areas that the dissertation will not cover that might be expected).
- II. **THESIS STATEMENT AND/OR RESEARCH OBJECTIVES (1-2 pages)**
State the thesis that the dissertation will develop and what the work will attempt to accomplish. Depending on the nature of the dissertation, include a thesis statement (i.e., a statement that can be true or false), one or more research objectives (i.e., themes or questions that the dissertation will explore; no truth-value statements), or both.
- III. **LITERATURE REVIEW (6-10 pages)**
Include a preliminary literature review on the topic of the dissertation. Write the review in a way that paves the way for showing the dissertation's original contribution. If appropriate, organize it chronologically or thematically.
- IV. **SIGNIFICANCE (2-4 pages)**
Clarify the original contribution of the dissertation to the existing scholarship. What significance do you see this work having within your discipline and related disciplines, as well as for yourself? This section is usually divided into subsections such as (a) academic significance, (b) personal significance, (c) social significance, and (d) spiritual significance.
- V. **THEORETICAL TOOLS (4-8 pages)**
Name the standpoint or standpoints to the body of existing knowledge that you will apply to your research topic. Describe your perspective (e.g., Jungian, transpersonal, psychoanalytic, Buddhist, shamanic, etc.). Name and discuss any specific methodological approach (e.g., hermeneutic, critical theory, comparative, integrative, etc.) that you will use for your research.
- VI. **CHAPTER BREAKDOWN (2-3 pages)**
Describe what each chapter of the dissertation will discuss.
- VII. **RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY (2-3 pages)**
Include the most significant works/materials that will be used in your research, preferably arranged according to some kind of topical headings, noting if appropriate primary and secondary texts.

REFERENCES

List all authors and works cited or referred to in the proposal.

QUALITATIVE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

(20-30 pages including References, but excluding Appendixes)

ABSTRACT (1 page)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (1 page)

I. INTRODUCTION (4-6 pages)

The introduction should include:

- A. A description of the topic under investigation.
- B. A statement of what the study will attempt to accomplish and its purpose(s).
- C. A discussion of key concepts and terms.
- D. A section on the relevance of the study that should cover at minimum its academic relevance (i.e., how to it contributes to an identified academic discipline, field of study, and/or community of practice), as well as its social or cultural significance. Some projects may also include personal and spiritual relevance subsections that take into account your personal engagement with the topic.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW (6-10 pages)

A clear and detailed articulation of the research literature to be reviewed and a rationale for the parameters of the review. The review of the literature establishes your knowledge of the field and connects your particular research topic to the major themes or “bigger picture” of your field of specialization. The literature review also establishes that your dissertation is an original contribution.

III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES (6-10 pages)

A discussion of the particular method you will be using and a detailed account of how you will apply that method to your research project, including descriptions of:

- A. Rationale for choice of methods.
- B. The design of the study, the specific research tools (interview protocols, etc.), and the procedures used.
- C. Research participants, rationale for selection, and how they will be recruited.
- D. The methods for analysis and interpretation of your data.
- E. Delimitations and limitations of the research and issues of validity.
- F. Ethical considerations.

REFERENCES

List all authors and works cited or referred to in the proposal.

APPENDICES (as needed, e.g., Consent Form, Interview Protocol, specialized items).

EMPIRICAL DISSERTATION PROPOSAL
(20-30 pages including References, but excluding Appendixes)

ABSTRACT (1 page)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (1 page)

- I. INTRODUCTION (4-6 pages)
The introduction should include:
 - A. A clear statement of the problem.
 - B. The goals of the study.
 - C. Section outlining the scholarly, social, and personal relevance of the study.
 - D. Definitions of key terms.

- II. THE HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM (LITERATURE REVIEW) (6-10 pages)
A clear and detailed articulation of the research literature related to your topic (Who has said what in the field up to now that is related to your argument?). The review of the literature establishes your knowledge of the field and connects your particular research topic to the major themes or “bigger picture” of your field of specialization. The literature review also establishes that your dissertation is an original contribution.

- III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES (6-10 pages)
A detailed description of what you intend to do and how you intend to do it, including, as appropriate, descriptions of the following:
 - A. The study design.
 - B. Control or contrast groups to be used, how they will be recruited or selected, and a discussion of their representation.
 - C. The measures to be used, with clear relationships established to the variables being studied, and discussion of their reliability and validity.
 - D. Plans for data analysis and the rationale for any proposed statistical tests.
 - E. Delimitations and limitation of the study and issues of validity.
 - F. Ethical considerations.

REFERENCES

List all authors of works cited or referred to in the proposal.

APPENDICES (as needed, e.g., Consent Form, Interview Protocol, specialized items).

**APPENDIX E:
SAMPLE EWP DISSERTATION TOPICS**

David A. Trevealen	<i>Meditation and Trauma: A Hermeneutic Study of Western Vipassana Practice from the Perspective of Somatic Experiencing</i>
Charles I. Flores	<i>Integral Yoga Activism: An Exploration of its Foundational Elements and Practices</i>
Datri J. Kory	<i>The Ecstasy of Intimacy: Cultivating Relationship as a Spiritual Path</i>
Tarakali Vanissar	<i>Towards a Psychology of Unlearning Racism: A Case Study of a Buddhist Unlearning Racism Course for White People</i>
Joseph A. Nathan	<i>Courageous Heart: Healing in a Time of AIDS—A Narrative/Heuristic Study</i>
Glenn Hartelius	<i>Participatory Empiricism: Toward a Phenomenological-Empirical Science for Human Psychology</i>
Martina Dannecker	<i>Myogenic Transformations of Emotions: A Dialectical Inquiry into Western Psychotherapy and Buddhist Psychology</i>
Annette Odwazny Peterson	<i>The Dynamic God Image: Psychoanalytic, Object Relational, Developmental, and Jungian Theories of God Image and Their Implications for Psychotherapy</i>
Lotte H. Stein	<i>Widowhood: From Grieving to Healing</i>
Susana Bustos	<i>The Healing Power of the Icaros: A Phenomenological Study of Ayahuasca Experiences</i>
Christian Dombrowe	<i>Touched by Spirit: A Heuristic Study of Healing Experiences in Peyote Ceremonies</i>
Elisabetta Strada-Russo	<i>The Nature and Application of Spiritual Care for the Dying: Perspectives from Mahayana Buddhism and the Western Hospice Training</i>
Robert Matta	<i>Couch and Compassion: A Phenomenological Study of the Psychoanalyst's Experience of Compassion</i>
Rochelle Suri	<i>Meaningful Voices: A Phenomenological Exploration of Auditory Hallucinations in Individuals Diagnosed with Schizophrenia</i>
Norio Suzuki	<i>The Search for Resiliency: An Exploration of the Human Potential for Dignity in an Age of Crisis</i>

Rodney Davis

Stages of Spiritual Development

Judith Kinst

Trust, Emptiness, and the Self in the Practice of Soto Zen Buddhism

APPENDIX F:
ALTERNATIVE MULTI-PAPER DISSERTATION FORMAT
GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

In addition to the standard format for doctoral dissertations, the Department of East-West Psychology allows for the use of an alternative format that consists of three peer-reviewed papers (two of which are to have been published or accepted for publication; the other is to be published, accepted for publication, or under review) as the main basis for the dissertation.

Application and Proposal Writing

Students wanting to pursue the multi-paper dissertation format are assessed by the faculty program committee on a case-by-case basis. Students submit a written project request to their academic advisor or Dissertation Chair, who evaluates the request in light of their academic performance and/or past publication history. Then the academic advisor or Dissertation Chair discusses the project request with Department Chair and EWP faculty; the department reserves the right to deny students the use of the alternative dissertation format. Lastly, the advisor or chair communicates the final decision to the student.

If the project request is accepted, the student writes the dissertation proposal, which should follow the general outline of the proposal framework including the various sections listed in the program/department handbook (see Dissertation Proposal Guidelines), a synopsis of the articles in question (in the case of a theoretical dissertation, this synopsis substitutes, or is included in, the “Chapter Breakdown” section), a list of the journals where the student plans to submit the articles, and a timeline for article submission.

The proposal then goes through the same approval process as do traditional dissertations. (See the SCT Thesis/Dissertation Policies and Procedures).

Dissertation Committee

As with the traditional dissertation, a committee of three members is formed. No change in existing policies.

Dissertation Writing Process

During dissertation writing, the committee works with the student to assess whether the essays are ready for submission by taking the role of the reviewers. When a paper is judged ready for submission, the student submits it to the chosen journal and then moves on to the next paper. It is the obligation of student to share the feedback from journal editors with committee members. This feedback will be incorporated into the committee’s final assessment of the dissertation.

If a paper is not accepted for publication, the student can re-submit it to another journal after making the appropriate changes, as suggested by journal editors and/or dissertation chair. If specific changes are requested by journal editors as a condition for publication,

the chair strategizes with the student about how to best integrate the feedback. In the case of repeated rejections, the chair should assess the implications are for the student's progress using this alternative dissertation format. If no publications are achieved, the student will need to produce a traditional dissertation. Students should be mindful of the time limits for dissertation completion set by the School of Consciousness and Transformation.

General Format for the Dissertation

The dissertation should include a minimum of 3 original papers with the student being the only or main author. In the case of multiple authorship, the contribution of each author is to be detailed in the introduction chapter or in a separate attribution section (multiple authorship will be assessed and accepted on a case-by-case basis by the committee). Two of the articles must have already been accepted for publication in English language peer-reviewed journals with the third either accepted or under peer review. Students must have submitted the articles for publication after acceptance into the EWP doctoral program.

The papers are to be nested into a document, the dissertation. The dissertation should include a general Introduction offering a clear organizing framework that articulates how the articles relate to each other and a literature review that relates the work to existing literature. A section between each article should bridge the various papers in the context of the larger organizing framework. The three papers should be followed by a conclusion offering a final general discussion of the overall research project.

Dissertation Outline

- Chapter 1. Introduction
- Chapter 2. Literature Review (this could be included as a section of the Introduction)
- Chapter 3. Article 1
- Chapter 4. Bridge section, as needed
- Chapter 5. Article 2
- Chapter 6. Bridge section, as needed
- Chapter 7. Article 3
- Chapter 8. Conclusion
- References
- Appendices (if needed)

Dissertation Defense and Approval Process

A dissertation defense is held according to existing policies. Changes requested by the Dissertation Committee should be included in the final UMI document. This means that the UMI document may not include the identical version of the article that was published. Students should make sure to retain the right to use their published articles in this manner when they sign publication agreements. Whether previously published or to be reviewed, the entire manuscript should be formatted to fit the style requirements for dissertations stipulated by the School of Consciousness and Transformation.

**APPENDIX G:
CIIS DISSERTATION PROPOSAL RUBRIC**

Students writing their dissertation proposal should consult the CIIS Dissertation Proposal Rubric found at this website: <http://my.ciis.edu/ics/Academics/>. Scroll down the page on the right hand side for Thesis and Dissertation Forms: [SCT Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Rubric \(CIIS Affiliates\)](#).

**APPENDIX H:
HUMAN RESEARCH REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Any research proposal involving human subjects must be submitted for approval to the Institute's Human Research Review Committee (HRRC) along with application for approval. Applications for approval are available outside the Registrar's Office or online at <http://myciis.edu>.

The HRRC is charged with the responsibility and authority to review, approve, disapprove or require changes in research activities involving human participants. This review is done to ensure that the research conforms to the principles of ethical research articulated by the various professional organizations, including the APA, the American Anthropological Association, and the Department of Health and Human Services.

Students may not begin any of their research involving human participants, including piloting and fieldwork, until the entire research proposal has been fully approved by the Human Research Review Committee.