University
of San Diego ®

**SCHOOL OF LEADERSHIP
AND EDUCATION SCIENCES**
Learning and Teaching

2013 Research Handbook
Department of Learning and Teaching

Table of Contents

Version: January 2013

Welcome

Welcome to the Department of Learning and Teaching. As a Masters student, you will engage in many forms of learning (classwork, fieldwork, preparing papers, giving presentations, etc.). In addition to these requirements, research is a cornerstone of receiving a Master's degree in the Department of Learning and Teaching. The purpose of this Handbook is to provide information and direction for completing requirements for your degree as they pertain specifically to *research*. Education is a highly dynamic, publicly debated field. There are far-reaching consequences for the educational policies and practices that are adopted both in this country and around the world. As such being an effective and relevant educator goes hand and hand with being a thoughtful, critical consumer and producer of educational research. Towards this goal, the faculty in the Learning and Teaching Department have devised a course of study to support your understanding and development in the area of research. It is our hope that you will find this handbook to be a useful guide as you complete the research requirements for your degree. We wish you the very best as you continue to grow and develop as an educator for the 21st Century.

Sincerely,

The Department of Learning and Teaching

Research Expectations/Philosophy

Research is disciplined, reflective study. At its heart, research is about stepping back, going deeper, asking good questions, being thoughtful, examining assumptions, and analyzing from multiple points of view. In a field such as education, the hope is to unite this disciplined/reflective study with our practices with the goal of continued development and growth.

The Department of Learning and Teaching holds the view that research is both a means for *understanding* and *improving* learning and teaching. Students in our programs will learn about, understand, and conduct research with the express purpose of improving learning and teaching in its varied contexts and settings. Students will read a broad range of research employing a variety of methodologies. This includes, but is not limited to action research, qualitative (ethnography, interview, etc.), and quantitative (experimental, survey, etc.) research. In addition to reading current studies of research, students will read and engage with educational reports, standardized examination data, and policy briefs. At the culmination of their study in the department of Learning and Teaching, students will produce an original report of their research in the form of an Action Research paper or Master's thesis. Results from these papers will be presented in a public forum. The details for preparing the Action Research paper and Master's thesis are included in this Handbook.

Two Roads: Action Research Study or Thesis

As a Masters student in Learning and Teaching, you have the option of two culminating final projects: a thesis or an action research study. Both of the options are rigorous undertakings; however, they have different goals. Below, we provide guidelines for helping you decide whether or not you will be conducting an action research study or a thesis. Remember, these are simply guidelines. To make your final decision of whether you will prepare an action research study or a thesis please consult with your research chair.

Action Research Study

The action research study is designed to help you study and improve your practice as a future educator and to help you find effective ways to meet the needs of your students. In Action Research, the practitioner and the researcher are one and the same. In order to conduct Action Research, you need to have direct access to a classroom or other educational setting where you are in direct contact with students. You should choose the Action Research option if:

- You are studying to become a teacher, or other type of school educator.
- You will work directly with students.
- You are interested in having a tool for improving your students' learning and your instructional practice.

Thesis

A thesis is a piece of original research. While they take on many forms, theses are intended to test theory and to understand phenomena. Those who choose to prepare a thesis are not required to have direct access to students or educational settings; however, the thesis does need to address authentic questions about teaching, learning, and education. You should choose the thesis option if:

- You are planning on going into educational research or pursuing a PhD. in the near future.
- You are pursuing a career in an area other than PK-12 teaching.
- You will not have access to a classroom or other educational setting where you will be in direct contact with students.

Course Requirements & Trajectory

Fulfilling the research requirement for the Learning and Teaching Department includes the completion of a 2-course research series.

Course Sequence

All Learning and Teaching students are required to complete a two-course research series. For those conducting action research, your sequence is EDUC 500- Research Methods and EDUC 580- Capstone Seminar in Action Research. For those completing a thesis, the sequence is EDUC 500 and EDUC 595-Thesis. These courses must be taken sequentially- with EDUC 500 coming first, followed by either EDUC 580 (for those conducting action research) or EDUC 595 (for those preparing a thesis). For students completing action research, EDUC 500 and EDUC 580 must be taken in adjoining semesters (i.e. Fall and Spring, or Spring and Summer). You may not take EDUC 580 or EDUC 595 before you have completed EDUC 500. As well, you may not take EDUC 500 and EDUC 580 or EDUC 500 and EDUC 595 simultaneously.

EDUC 500- Research Methodology

This course provides students with a foundation in the varied research methodologies used by educational researchers. In addition to developing your understanding of these methodologies, in this course, you can expect to read numerous research articles, and conduct preliminary research studies. Students choosing the action research option will leave this class with a completed action research proposal.

EDUC 557/558 – Action Research MCC I & II

EDUC 557 and 558 are a sequence of two courses focused on action research in the secondary classroom setting. EDUC 557 focuses on the nature of action research and action research methodology. Candidates will identify classroom-focused research questions, design appropriate research projects, and initiate those projects in their student teaching classrooms. EDUC 558 will treat data analysis and reporting. It will support candidates as they work to analyze data collected in their classrooms and prepare to present their research as a capstone project.

EDUC 580- Capstone Seminar

Students conducting action research must enroll in and pass EDUC 580. This course provides you with step-by-step support in conducting your action research study. The course instructor will help you implement your study, according to your proposed methodologies, and goals. Upon completion of this course, you can seek continued support and guidance from your Action Research Chair.

EDUC 595- Thesis Units

Students completing a Master's thesis must enroll in a minimum of 3 total thesis units under the course number EDUC 595. Similar to an independent study course, the purpose of EDUC 595 is to allow students the opportunity to work closely with their thesis chair towards the completion of their thesis. Students can take a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 3 thesis units per semester. Grading for thesis units, as well as assignments and deadlines are to be set by the thesis chair and student.

Course Sequencing and Trajectory – MEd and MAT

Students take several routes to completing their Master's degree. Some complete their degree over 3 semesters, while others, because of given constraints, take several years. Despite your chosen route, students preparing an action research study must take EDUC 500 and EDUC 580 in *adjacent* semesters. For example, if you take EDUC 500 in the summer, then you must enroll in EDUC 580 in the fall. If you take EDUC 500 in the spring semester, you may take EDUC 580 in *either* the summer *or* the fall. The general course sequence for those preparing an AR study or a thesis includes:

```
┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐      ┌────────────────────────┐
│  EDUC 500    │ ───► │  EDUC 580 OR     │ ───► │  AR Chair Support or   │
│              │      │      595         │      │  EDUC 595 & Public     │
│              │      │                  │      │  Presentation of AR    │
│              │      │                  │      │  or Thesis             │
└──────────────┘      └──────────────────┘      └────────────────────────┘
```
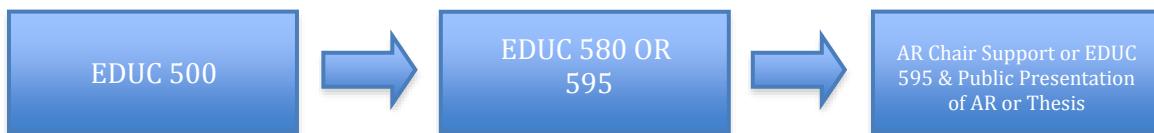
Below, we provide several possible sequences for fulfilling your research requirements, based on the route you choose to obtaining your degree.

Degree Completion in 3 Semesters
Fall- Enroll in EDUC 500
Spring- Enroll in EDUC 580
Summer- Advisor support or enroll in Thesis Units and present your AR or thesis publicly

Degree Completion in 4 Semesters
Fall- No Research units
Spring- EDUC 500
Fall- EDUC 580
Spring- Advisor support or Thesis Units and present your AR or thesis publicly*

5 Semesters or greater
Students preparing an AR study should choose 2 semesters in which they can enroll in EDUC 500 and 580 sequentially. It is suggested that you take the EDUC 500 in the Spring, and EDUC 580 in the fall followed by continued advisor support in the spring or enrollment in thesis units. Those preparing a thesis must take EDUC 500 *followed by* EDUC 595. These students may take between 1 and 3 thesis units at a time in any of the semesters following the completion of EDUC 500.

Action Research-Continued Support

In many instances, students will have completed their AR project during their EDUC 580 course. Those who need extra time/support beyond the EDUC 580 course can continue to work with their Action Research Chair in subsequent semesters. Those working on action research projects should simply schedule additional meetings with their Action Research chair until their project has been completed. The EDUC 500/580 course trajectory is designed so that all students can receive the support and time they need to produce a high-quality final AR project in preparation for a Spring graduation. However, every effort is made to support students who wish to graduate at times other than the spring semester.

Thesis Units- Reaching Your Goal

After the completion of EDUC 500, students preparing a thesis must enroll in EDUC 595- Thesis. You will need a total of three thesis units to graduate. However, you do not need to take all three units at once. With consultation and guidance from the thesis chair, students should plan a thesis unit sequence that is reasonable, yet propels them towards their degree. A suggested route is to enroll in two thesis units for the semester directly after EDUC 500 followed by 1 thesis unit in the subsequent semester. It is highly unlikely that those writing a thesis can complete it within the span of 1 semester. Close guidance from your thesis chair is highly recommended.

Advancing to Candidacy

Advancing to candidacy marks an important milestone in your studies as a Masters student. Students who have advanced to candidacy have demonstrated their readiness for conducting Masters level research either in the form of an action research study or a thesis. The procedures for advancing to candidacy vary slightly based on which type of research study you will conduct. However, in both cases, advancing to candidacy is a prerequisite for conducting your Masters research, and for graduation.

Advancing to Candidacy- Action Research

Students conducting action research are required to prepare an action research proposal. This proposal is the culminating assignment for EDUC 500. Once completed, the EDUC 500 instructor will score your action research proposals using the Action Research Proposal Rubric (see appendices). Students must reach at least Level 2 "Beginning" in each of the three categories on the Action Research Proposal Rubric in order to advance to candidacy. Your EDUC 500 instructor will forward your Advancement to candidacy letters to the chair of the Department of Learning and Teaching. The chair will then sign these and send a copy of the letter to you. Please keep this letter for your files and provide a copy to your Action Research Chair.

Advancing to Candidacy- Thesis

Students preparing a thesis will turn in their proposal to their thesis committee chair. Once the chair and committee member(s) approve the proposal, they will forward along the signed Advancement to Candidacy Recommendation Form to the Department of Learning and Teaching for its records. Upon receipt, the department will issue the Advancement to Candidacy letter to the student.

Public Presentation of Research

All Masters students (whether conducting an action research study or a thesis) are required to present their final study in a public forum. For students preparing a thesis, this public form is your thesis defense. For students conducting action research the venue for your public presentation will be faculty in the Department of Learning and Teaching and other members of the educational community. Students who graduate at times other than May, will need to arrange for a public presentation of their action research studies.

Action Research Papers Guidelines & Procedures

Action Research includes identifying a research question based on your own instructional practice and experience. The following guidelines will help you prepare your AR paper.

Guidelines/Procedures
EDUC 500
- Prepare a needs assessment of your educational context
- Decide on your research question
- Prepare a preliminary AR paper and begin looking for an Action Research Chair

EDUC 580
- Prepare and submit IRB paperwork.
  http://www.sandiego.edu/administration/academicaffairs/irb/
- Schedule regular meetings with your Action Research Chair. Complete all phases of your AR project. Begin analysis of all data; and submit your AR conference proposal.

Continued Action Research Support
- Complete analysis of AR paper with the support of your Action Research Chair
- Revise your AR paper
- Prepare your AR project presentation
- Give public presentation

Formatting
- AR papers should be bound (three-ring binders, spiral, or other bindings are acceptable)
- Each AR paper will be read and scored by two faculty readers. You will receive the average total score of the two readers.
- Prepare your action research paper according to these guidelines:
  - Use 12 pt. Times New Roman or similar font
  - Double-spaced
  - Margins should not be excessive and should conform to your particular binding needs
  - Both the body of the paper and references and appendices should conform to the APA Style Guide, Sixth Edition
-

Organization of the Action Research Paper

Generally speaking, your action research paper should include the following sections. You need two or more phases for your graduation action research project. However, the specifics of the research design and how these sections are to be organized in your paper depend on your project.

1. Introduction
   - Describe your topic, and why you chose the topic
2. Research Context
   - Describe the characteristics of your students/targeted population, school, community
3. Statement of the Problem
   - Describe the perceived needs of the students.
4. Needs Assessment
   - Describe how the needs assessment was done and discuss the findings/identified needs
5. Guiding theories and research
   - Discuss at least one major theory and 3 empirical studies that could guide your inquiry
6. Inputs from AR team Inputs
   - What you learned from the discussions with your AR team.
7. Phase 1
   - Action – Describe your intervention and the rationale in reference to #4, #5, and #6
   - Assessment – Describe how you assessed the process/outcome of your intervention
   - Finding and reflections – Describe and discuss the finding with your own reflection
8. Phase 2
   - Action – Describe your intervention and the rational in reference to Phase 1 findings
   - Assessment – Describe how you assessed the process/outcome of your intervention
   - Findings and reflection – Describe and discuss the findings with your own reflection
9. Phase 3 (and 4, 5, 6…)
   - Include at least Phase 3 action and assessment plan based on Phase 2 findings
10. Overall reflection
    - What you learned in the overall project.

Rubric

Action Research papers will be scored using the AR Rubric found in the appendix. Each paper will be read and scored by two faculty members. One of your readers will be your EDUC 580 instructor. If your EDUC 580 instructor and your Action Research Chair is the same person, then your EDUC 580 instructor will assign a second reader to your paper.

Advising

Each student is assigned a general advisor upon enrolling in the university. This advisor will provide you with guidance (including courses to enroll in, paperwork to take care of, career planning, etc.). In addition to a general advisor, you will need to choose a Designated Action Research Chair (for those preparing an AR project). Your Designated Action Research Chair must be a Learning and Teaching faculty member. This designated Action Research Chair will supervise your research, and provide individualized support and direction as you write up your Action Research paper. Those preparing a thesis, must select a Thesis Committee Chair. Only full-time faculty members can serve as chairs for theses. Both Designated Action Research Chairs and Thesis Committee Chairs must be from the Department of Learning and Teaching. Thesis committees may include members from other departments within SOLES, as well as persons with terminal degrees outside of SOLES, with approval of the department chair. You will be required to fill out a Designated Action Research Chair Form as a student in EDUC 580. Two copies of this form need to be turned in to your EDUC 580 course instructor early on in the semester.

Further Questions

If you have further questions about your research requirements, please contact Dr. Joi Spencer at joi.spencer@sandiego.edu OR the current EDUC 580 instructor.

Master's Thesis Guidelines and Procedures

A Master's Thesis is a piece of original research. This research can be empirical or theoretical. The thesis can take on several forms. For example, you may choose to create and test a new model for instructional delivery, or you might choose to conduct a broad literature review around a particular theoretical perspective. Whatever the form, the thesis must be your original research. Below, we have provided an outline of the steps along the path to preparing and submitting your thesis.

1. Establish a committee (there must be a minimum of 2 full time faculty members on your thesis committee). It is best to establish your committee early on. A good rule of thumb is that your committee should be established by the time you complete EDUC 500.
2. Prepare your thesis proposal. Some programs require a proposal defense. If your program requires a defense, you must decide on a defense date, and submit a proposal defense form. If your program does not require a defense, simply submit your proposal to your committee for approval. Your committee members will read your proposal and decide whether or not you can advance to candidacy. Once your proposal has been approved (either by defense or by review of your proposal), obtain the signatures of your committee on the Advancement to Candidacy letter. Submit this letter to your academic advisor who will place it in your file. (It is a good idea to keep a copy of this letter for your own files.)

3. Enroll in EDUC 595- Thesis. (You will need to enroll in a total of three thesis-units, which can be taken all at once or over the course of several semesters). While enrolled in EDUC 595, create a consistent meeting schedule and map out a clear course of research with your committee chair. These meetings are essential as you conduct your study, and write up your thesis.

4. If your project involves human subjects, obtain IRB approval before collecting data. Instructions for submitting IRB proposals are on the Provosts website at: http://www.sandiego.edu/administration/academicaffairs/irb/

5. When your thesis chair and committee members feel that your thesis is ready to be defended, obtain, fill out, and submit the Petition for Thesis Defense Form. The Petition for Thesis Defense Form must be submitted at least **2 weeks** prior to your defense date. By signing the Petition for Defense of Thesis form, the committee chair and members indicate that they agree upon the date and time for the thesis defense, have received a copy of your thesis, and that they agree that the thesis is ready to be defended.

6. Schedule a room to hold your defense in. (This can be done through Maria Menezes.)

7. Prepare a Thesis defense announcement (sample included) and submit and electronic copy of it to your thesis chair, and other committee members. If you are enrolled in EDUC 580 during this time, please submit a copy of the announcement to the EDUC 580 instructor.

8. Defend your thesis. If approved, have committee members sign thesis signature sheets (obtain their signatures on 3 separate signature sheets). Turn in one copy of the signature sheet to your EDUC 580 instructor (if enrolled) AND to your committee chair. Use the other copy to bind your final thesis and keep the final sheet for your own records.

9. The completed and approved thesis must be bound and submitted to your committee chair, and to the USD library. (For complete instructions on thesis binding, obtain a copy of the USD Thesis Handbook located in the USD Bookstore.)

Important Information from the USD Course Catalog

For the latest information, please review the current Graduate Catalog by visiting:
http://www.sandiego.edu/catalogs

The thesis must be completed, approved, and submitted to the Office of the Registrar within two years after the first registration for thesis units.

Detailed instructions for the preparation and submission of the master's thesis are presented in a pamphlet entitled **Instructions for the Preparation and Submission of the Master's Thesis**, available for sale in the university bookstore. The deadlines for submitting the approved and final copies of the thesis are listed in the Academic Calendar of the Graduate Student bulletin. Students who fail to submit the thesis by the published deadline will not be eligible for graduation in the then current term. If the thesis is submitted prior to the eighth day of the next semester, the student will not be required to register for thesis supervision and will be eligible to petition for graduation in the subsequent term.

Important Dates

Two bound copies of completed master's thesis due in Registrar's Office:

2012-2013 Deadlines
January 2013: Friday, December 14, 2012
May 2013: Monday, May 13, 2013
August 2013: Friday, August 9, 2013

2013-2014 Deadlines
January 2014: TBD
May 2014: TBD
August 2014: TBD

Organization of the Master's Thesis

Those who are completing a thesis should purchase a copy of *Instructions for the Preparation and Submission of the Master's Thesis* at the University Bookstore, for university-wide guidelines for content, organization, and binding of theses at USD. Generally speaking, the thesis should include the following sections. However, the specifics of how these sections are to be organized are included in the booklet mentioned above.

1. Title Page
2. Abstract
3. Background to the Study/Statement of the Problem
4. Purpose of the Study
5. Review of Literature
6. Research Question and/or Hypothesis
7. Research Design and Methodology
8. Presentation of the Study/Findings
9. Discussion
10. Conclusions
11. References

Faculty Members' Areas of Interest

Please make use of this chart to select your Designated Action Research and your Chair thesis committee members.

Faculty Member	Areas of Interest	E-mail address
Viviana Alexandrowicz	Multicultural/bilingual education, teaching English language learners, school community/family partnerships, project based learning, community service learning (tutoring).	vivianaa@sandiego.edu
Jerome Ammer	Strategic learning and assessment with an emphasis on technology and learning difficulties	amner@sandiego.edu
Donna Barnes	Language acquisition, literacy development, charter schools, children and adolescent literature, including use of that literature to explore GLBTQ issues	barnes@sdandiego.edu
Sandy Buczynski	Math and science education, issues relating to curriculum design, pedagogical practices and teacher success, comparative international education and instructional technology	sandyb@sandiego.edu
Anne Donnellan	Autism and related disorders; increasing understanding of the role of movement differences in the lives of individuals with the label of autism	donnellan@sandiego.edu
Steven Gelb	Leadership development, peace studies and peace education, collaborative action research, and disability studies	sgelb@sandiego.edu
Bobbi Hansen	Curriculum and instructional practices in science, social studies and mathematics for elementary teachers, project based learning, issues related to practitioner professional development	chansen@sandiego.edu
Lea Hubbard	Educational reform and educational inequities, as they exist across ethnicity, class and gender	lhubbard@sandiego.edu
Noriyuki Inoue	Educational psychology, cognitive science, learning and instruction, motivation, inquiry lessons, cultural epistemology in education, lesson study, and action research methodology	inoue@sandiego.edu
Heather Lattimer	Secondary literacy, project based learning, history and social science education, teacher growth and professional development, international education	hlattimer@sandiego.edu
Sarina Molina	English and foreign language learning and acquisition, linguistics, multicultural, international, and cross-cultural education, teacher development	sarina@sandiego.edu
Reyes Quezada	Bilingual education, K-12 teacher recruitment, issues on faculty of color, instructional models, home-school community partnerships, experiential education and physical education through adventure based programs	rquezada@sandiego.edu
Joi Spencer	Educational equity, African American student success, tracking, mathematics teaching and learning, and lesson study as a tool for instructional improvement in mathematics' classrooms	joi.spencer@sandiego.edu

Helpful References

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition

Creswell, John W. (2003). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed methods Approaches. Second Edition. Thousand Oakes, CA: Sage.

Kelly, A. (ed.) and Lesh, R. (ed.) (2000) Handbook of Research Design in Mathematics and Science Education. New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
https://www.erlbaum.com/shop/

Herr, K.G. & Anderson, G. L. (2005). Action Research Dissertation: A Guide for Students and Faculty. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Shavelson, R. J. & Towne, L. (Eds.) (2001). *Scientific inquiry in education.* A report of the National Research Council. Washington, DC: National Academy Press (Executive Summary only)

Action Research Journal. To access current issue go to: http://arj.sagepub.com/current.dtl

Appendix

**Learning and Teaching Master's Degree Midpoint Assessment
Notification of Completion of EDUC 500
*Advancement to Candidacy***

Date: February 22, 2012

Candidate: Excited Student

Title of Research Proposal: Sample Proposal

Faculty Reader: Noriyuki Inoue   **Rubric Score: Sample Scores**

Dear Student,

Congratulations, upon review of your Action Research Proposal, the following action has been recommended:

Action:

 _X_ Passing score on proposal-A*dvancement recommended for MED*

__ Non-passing score on proposal- *advancement not recommended for MED*

Comments on proposal

_____
Chair, Department of Learning and Teaching

**DEPARTMENT OF
LEARNING AND TEACHING**

Mother Rosalie Hill Hall
5998 Alcalá Park
San Diego, CA 92110-2492
P: (619) 260-5938
F: (619) 849-8159
http://sandiego.edu/teach

**Learning and Teaching Master's Degree Midpoint Assessment
Notification of Completion of EDUC 500 - Thesis**

Date: February 22, 2013

Candidate: Excited Student

Thesis Title: Sample Thesis

Dear Student,

Please review the steps outlined below in order to fulfill the necessary requirements needed to Advance to Candidacy.

❖ Submit a copy of your proposal to your thesis committee chair. Once the chair and committee member(s) approve the proposal, they will forward along the signed Advancement to Candidacy Recommendation Form to the Department of Learning and Teaching Chair, who will provide a final signature to the document. Please ensure you keep a copy of the letter for your records.

❖ Once your committee has approved your Thesis and believe it is ready to be defended, please complete Petition for Thesis Defense Form

For more information, please review the Research Handbook.

_____

Chair, Department of Learning and Teaching

University of San Diego®
SCHOOL OF LEADERSHIP
AND EDUCATION SCIENCES
Learning and Teaching

Master's Degree Midpoint Assessment
Advancement to Candidacy Recommendation Form: Thesis

Date: February 22, 2013

Candidate's Name: __Excited Student

Thesis Title:_____

_____X____ Thesis proposal approved- advancement recommended for M.Ed Degree

_____ Thesis proposal not approved- advancement not recommended for M.Ed Degree

Thesis Committee Chair name: _____Committee Chair_____

Thesis Committee Chair signature: _____

Thesis Committee Member name: _____Member 1_____

Thesis Committee Member signature: _____

Thesis Committee Member name: _____ Member 2_____

Thesis Committee Member signature: _____

Comments on proposal:

_____
Chair, Department of Learning and Teaching

**DEPARTMENT OF
LEARNING AND TEACHING**

Mother Rosalie Hill Hall
5998 Alcalá Park
San Diego, CA 92110-2492
P: (619) 260-5938
F: (619) 849-8159
http://sandiego.edu/teach

Thesis Proposal Defense Form

Candidate's Name: _____Excited Student_____

Program: _____MED C&I_____

Today's Date: _____February 22, 2013_____

Thesis Title:_____

Scheduled Proposal Defense Date and time: _____April 1, 2013_____

Location of Defense (Building and room number): _____MRH TBA_____

Committee Chair Name: _____Chair_____

Committee Chair Signature: _____

Committee Member Name: _____Member 1_____

Committee Member Signature: _____Member 2_____

Committee Member Name: _____

Committee Member Signature: _____

By signing the Thesis Proposal Defense Form, the committee chair and members indicate that they agree upon the date and time for the thesis proposal defense and that they have received a copy of your thesis proposal and believing it ready to be defended. This Thesis Proposal Defense Form must be submitted at least **2 weeks** prior to your proposal defense date.

Learning and Teaching Master's Degree Midpoint Assessment
Advancement to Candidacy: Thesis

Date: February 22, 2013

Candidate: Excited Student

Thesis Title: Sample Proposal

Dear Student,

Upon review of your Thesis Proposal, it has been approved by your committee, congratulation on Advancing to Candidacy. Once your Thesis is ready to be defended, please complete and submit a Petition for Thesis Defense Form to Maria Menezes in MRH 257. For more information, please review the Research Handbook.

_____

Chair, Department of Learning and Teaching

**DEPARTMENT OF
LEARNING AND TEACHING**

Mother Rosalie Hill Hall
5998 Alcalá Park
San Diego, CA 92110-2492
P: (619) 260-5938
F: (619) 849-8159
http://sandiego.edu/teach

Petition for Thesis Defense Form

Candidate's Name: _____Excited Student_____

Program: _____MED C&I_____

Today's Date: _____February 22, 2013_____

Thesis Title:_____

Scheduled Defense Date and time: _____April 1, 2013_____

Location of Defense (Building and room number): _____MRH TBA_____

Committee Chair Name: _____Chair_____

Committee Chair Signature: _____

Committee Member Name: _____Member 1_____

Committee Member Signature: _____Member 2_____

Committee Member Name: _____

Committee Member Signature: _____

By signing the Petition for Defense of Thesis form, the committee chair and members indicate that they agree upon the date and time for the thesis defense and that they have received a copy of your thesis believing it ready to be defended. This Petition for Thesis Defense Form must be submitted at least **2 weeks** prior to your defense date.

University of San Diego
School of Leadership and Education Sciences
Department of Learning and Teaching

You are cordially invited to attend a

THESIS DEFENSE

February 22, 2013

2:30 p.m.

Mother Rosalie Hill Hall, Room TBA

Noriyuki Inoue, Ph.D., Chair
Lea Hubbard, Ph.D., Member
Joi Spencer, Ph.D., Member

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree

Master of Education

by

Excited Student

Sample: Abstract

ABSTRACT

Over the past fifty years, considerable change has occurred within the healthcare delivery system within the United States; not surprisingly, much of this change has been driven by technological innovation in the way that patients are initially diagnosed, treated, and ultimately, maintained. Of course, this technological change has powerful implications in the way that health care providers need to be trained, and the last few decades have seen increased educational requirements for a number of different health care professions, including masters' degrees for physician assistants and clinical doctorates for physical therapists. In the past few years, nursing has also decided to upgrade their degree requirements for advanced nurse practitioners to the clinical doctorate; this change was recommended in 2004 by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) and now four years later, 78 schools of nursing have developed their own doctor of nurse practitioner (DNP) degree and 60 schools are in the process of adding the degree program.

From an institutional perspective, however, the process of developing a new doctoral degree is both labor-intensive and wrought with uncertainty. Issues of program design and development, administrative oversight, and, of course, resource reallocations around the institution are all important – not to mention the cost to students and the ultimate level of student demand for the new degree. However, given the recency of the AACN recommendation, the decision calculus of administrative leaders and faculty members considering this change has not been systematically explored. To address this paucity of research, this study will use both document and narrative analysis to examine the decision to move to the DNP at a particular California institution that recently completed this process. Specifically, this investigation will identify both the external and internal factors that lead this institution to add their web-based DNP program, and then examine the extent to which the behavioral responses of administrators and faculty members were consistent with the institutional mission, vision, and goals of the institution. The results of this analysis will be presented in two case studies and a cross-case analysis, and can be used by institutions considering such a degree change.

Rubric/Guide for Action Research

Candidate Name:_____

	Level 1 Not Acceptable	Level 2 Beginning	Level 3 Competent	Level 4 Exemplary
STATEMENT OF PROBLEM, UNDERSTANDING OF CONTEXT AND RESEARCH QUESTION	• No or unclear description of the context • Question is not researchable • Question does not reflect a problem related to a specific site • Question does not reflect the philosophy and guiding principles of the program	• Context is mentioned but not well described • Question is somewhat researchable • Question is timely **or** relevant to the issue or problem • Question is somewhat guided by needs assessment conducted in the context • Question somewhat reflects the philosophy and guiding principles of the program	• Description of the context for the question is clear. • Question is researchable • Question is timely **and** relevant to the issue or problem • Question is clearly guided by needs assessment conducted in the context • Question reflects the philosophy and guiding principles of the program.	• Question is researchable and could potentially resolve a clearly identified problem or issue • Question is relevant, timely **and** grounded in practice and supported by thoroughly conducted needs assessment conducted in the context • Needs assessment was conducted in collaboration with other professionals in the area
Level Rating =				
LITERATURE REVIEW (GUIDING THEOREIS AND RESEARCH)	• Literature review doesn't cite relevant theories and research in terms of the question(s) being asked • Literature reviewed does not includes major theories and research in the area • Literature review is not written in the way that can guide the action planned in the study • Literature is not linked to action and assessment plan • Literature does not reflect the context of the research (i.e., the research setting)	• Literature review cites major theories and research in the field of study that is related, but does not make clear connections with the research questions(s) • Literature reviewed includes some major theories and research in the area • Literature review is written in the way that can somewhat guide the action and assessment plan • Literature is marginally linked to action and assessment plan • Literature minimally reflects the context of the research	• Literature review cites major and contemporary theories and research that seem relevant to the contextual needs and the action research question(s), and clear connections with research questions are made • Literature review includes ,major and contemporary theories and research in the area • Literature review is purposefully written in the way that can meaningfully guide the action and assessment plan • Literature purposefully guides action and assessment plan • Literature review reflects the context of the research	• Literature review cites comprehensive research and theoretical knowledge of the field in the way relevant to the contextual needs and the action research question(s) • Literature review is synthesized purposefully (appropriate connections are made) • Connections substantiate this research • Literature review is organized around and guides action and assessment plan comprehensively • All literature is reviewed in the context of the research
Level Rating =				
ACTION AND ASSESSMENT PLAN – FIRST ITERATION (RECURSIVE DESIGN)	• Action and assessment plan for studying research question are not clear and systematic • Action and assessment plans are not guided by relevant theories and research. • Description of action/intervention is not present or unclear • Process of data collection is not explained thoroughly • Initial design would not permit recursive action • No plan to triangulate data	• Action and assessment plans for studying research question are clear **or** systematic but not both • Action and assessment plans are marginally guided by relevant theories and research. • Methods chosen are not well thought through in terms of the research question(s) • Description of action/intervention is clear • Plan for triangulation of data has gaps and/or triangulation of data is cited but not evident • Data triangulation is planned but not clearly articulated	• Action and assessment plans are clear and systematic • Action and assessment plans are clearly guided by relevant theories and research. • Process of data collection is systematic and thorough • Clear description of action/intervention • Data analyses are appropriate and accurate • Plan for recursive action redesign/implementation is clear and possible • Data triangulation plan is evident or underway	• Data collection demonstrates responsiveness to emerging issues • Links of action and assessment plans to guiding theories and research are insightful and reflective. • Data collection plans are exceptional and provide in-depth examination of the question(s) • Design phases are or could be thoroughly substantiated by data • Developing the action and assessment plans benefited from collaborating with other professionals in the area
Level Rating =				

EVOLUTION OF RESEARCH QUESTION, IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEM, RATIONALE, SIGNIFICANCE	• No description for the context of the new or revised question(s) • Second phase research question does not reflect a relationship to the first iteration of the research design • Changes are not related to professional growth and self-transformation of the researcher. • Second phase research question does not address the needs of the site	• Context is mentioned but not well described • Second phase research question development refers to the first study but does not arise from it • Changes are related to some professional growth and self-transformation of the researcher • Second phase research question is somewhat researchable • Second phase research question is timely **or** relevant to the issue or problem, but not both • Question relates to the site **or** the problem, but not both	• Description of the context for the question is clear • Second phase research question reflects a clear evolution from the first study and its findings • Changes are clearly related to professional growth and self-transformation of the researcher • Second phase research question is researchable • Second phase research question is timely **and** relevant to the issue or problem • Second phase research question clearly addresses a need of the site where research will be conducted	• Second phase research question is researchable and could potentially resolve a clearly identified problem or issue • Second phase research question evolves from first study and reaches beyond the expected next step • Changes are clearly related to substantial professional growth and self-transformation of the researchers • The researcher relates evolution of research question to social and collaborative dimensions of the research process • Second phase research question is relevant, timely **and** grounded in practice
Level Rating =				
ACTION AND ASSESSMENT PLAN – SECOND+ ITERATION (RECURSIVE DESIGN)	• Action and assessment plan for studying research question are not clear and systematic • Plan for data collection does not relate to previous data collected. • Justifications are given for modifications to the original plan of study for new phases • Recursive action redesign/implementation, data collection is not implemented	• Action **or** assessment plan for studying research question is clear and systematic, but the other is not clear • Data collection relates to first data gathered but not specifically • Justifications are given for any modifications to the original plan of study for new phases • Recursive action redesign/implementation, data collection is not implemented	• Action and assessment plan for studying research question are clear and systematic • Data collection is informed by first set of data collected • Justifications are given for any modifications to the original plan of study for new phases • Recursive action redesign/implementation, data collection is implemented (at least 2 phases)	• Data collection demonstrates responsiveness to emerging issues • Design phases are thoroughly substantiated by data • Problem solution is reached in an innovative way
Level Rating =				
DATA ANALYSIS, REFLECTION, AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	• Analysis techniques are not appropriate for the data • Findings from raw data are not well summarized • Findings are not clearly articulated • Invalid or incomplete interpretation of data • Trends or patterns in data not clearly identified • Analysis is not reflective in terms of the context and learning & teaching • Assessment data (findings) are not used in recursive design	• Analysis techniques used are minimally appropriate for the purpose and scope of the project • Findings from raw data are summarized but needs a more clear and systematic format • Partial interpretation of data • Trends or patterns in data marginally identified • Analysis is reflective in terms of the context or relates to professional and personal development • Findings section include graphs or tables without APA style • Findings are presented for recursive design but are not clear	• Analysis techniques used are appropriate for the purpose and scope of the project • Findings from raw data are summarized in a clear and systematic format • Valid interpretation of data • Trends or patterns in the data clearly identified • Analysis is reflective in terms of the context and relates to professional and personal development • Findings include clearly articulated graphs or tables in APA style • Findings are presented effectively for recursive design	• Analysis includes techniques beyond normal scope of action research • Presentation of findings suggest analytical interpretation • Interpretation of data shows synthesis of previous and current research in the research context • Trends or patterns clearly identified in the data • Analysis is deeply reflective in terms of the context and relates to professional and personal development in collaboration with other professionals in the area • Relationships among data are presented graphically
Level Rating =				

DISCUSSION	• Inadequate description of meaning of findings • Interpretation of impact of intervention is missing • Findings not tied to research • Discussion does not relate findings to the context or to learning and teaching	• Marginal description of meaning of findings • Interpretation of impact of intervention is valid but minimally explained • Findings not tied well to research • Discussion relates findings to the context or to learning and teaching	• Adequate description of meaning of findings • Interpretation of impact of intervention is valid • Findings confirm or refute previous research • Discussion relates findings to the context and to learning and teaching	• Description of meaning of findings pushes knowledge and understanding of the subject • Discussion includes a thick description of the relationship between the findings and the context and to learning and teaching.
Level Rating =				
OVERALL REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION	• Little or no reflection • Reflection offered is superficial • Limitations are not recognized	Reflection on action research process address some of these or does not adequately explain: • what the study has shown, how the problem or issue has been resolved • limitations of the study • ways the research study could be improved • suggestions for future research • ways your future teaching/practice is informed	Reflection on action research process includes: • what the study has shown, how the problem or issue has been resolved • limitations of the study • ways the research study could be improved • suggestions for future research • ways your future teaching/practice is informed • how the action researcher was transformed to be a wiser and more effective practitioner through the research experience • how the action researcher benefited from collaborating with other professionals in the field	Reflection ties the study to new potential directions in the field Reflection on action research includes: • how the action researcher was transformed to be a wiser and more effective practitioner through the research experience • how the action researcher could initiate leadership in the field • critical reflection of the transformative experience at personal, social, and cultural levels • how the action researcher benefited from collaborating with other professional in the field and intends to continue the collaboration in her/his professional life
Level Rating =				
QUALITY OF WRITING	• Citations not correct • Academic language not used • Poorly organized • Unclear	Some but not all of the following: • use of proper citations • demonstrates ability to use academic language • clear focus, well organized • conceptual clarity	• Use of proper citations • Demonstrates ability to use academic language • Clear focus, well organized • Conceptual clarity	• Clearly developed analysis and argument that shows relationships between all the components of the research
Level Rating =				
Total Points				
Circle one: **1st reader** **2nd reader** **Total number of points = _____** **COMMENTS:**				

Rubric/Guide for Master's Thesis

Candidate Name:_____

Candidate Name:	Level 1 Not Acceptable	Level 2 Beginning	Level 3 Competent	Level 4 Exemplary
RESEARCH QUESTION, RATIONALE, SIGNIFICANCE	▪ Question(s) not researchable ▪ Question(s) not timely **or** relevant to the teaching and/or learning of content areas. ▪ Question(s) does not reflect the philosophy and guiding principles of the program. ▪ Description of the context is not clear.	▪ Question(s) somewhat researchable ▪ Question(s) timely **or** relevant to the teaching and/or learning of the content area(s),but not both ▪ Question(s) somewhat reflects the philosophy and guiding principles of the program. ▪ Description of the context is unclear or confusing.	▪ Question(s) researchable. ▪ Question(s) timely **and** relevant to the teaching and/or learning of \content areas ▪ Question(s) reflects the philosophy and guiding principles of the program. ▪ Description of the context is clear	▪ Question(s) researchable and could potentially make a contribution to the field. ▪ Question(s) relevant, timely **and** offers new insights into the area of research.
Point Range/Points Earned	0-2 Points earned___	3-5 Points earned___	6-8 Points earned____	9-10 Points earned___
LITERATURE REVIEW	• Literature review doesn't cite salient research or theory **or** research and theory cited is inadequate • Literature reviewed does not includes contemporary research in the area • Literature review does not identify the gap in the research that demands further study	• Literature review cites research and theory in the field of study that is salient or comprehensive but not both • Literature reviewed includes some contemporary research in the area • Literature review identifies the gap in the research that demands further study but does not support it well with research	• Literature review cites salient research in the field • Literature review includes contemporary research in the area • Literature review has appropriately identified the gap in the research that demands further study	• Literature review cites comprehensive research and theoretical knowledge of the field • Literature review is synthesized (appropriate connections are made) • Connections substantiate this research
Point Range/Points Earned	0-2 Points earned___	3-5 Points earned____	6-8 Points earned___	9-10 Points earned____
METHODOLOGY	▪ Plan for studying research question(s) is not clear and systematic ▪ Methods chosen are not reasonable given the research question(s) ▪ No rationale is presented	▪ Plan for studying research question(s) is clear OR systematic but not both ▪ Methods chosen are appropriate given the research question ▪ Weak rationale for research methodology is presented	▪ Plan for studying research question(s) is clear and systematic ▪ Methods chosen are appropriate ▪ Rationale for methodology is sound	▪ Rationale for methodology is very well-developed, sophisticated ▪ Methodological rigor is evident
Point Range/Points Earned	0-3 Points earned_____	4-7 Points earned_____	8-11 Points earned_____	12-15 Points earned___

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSES	• Process of data collection is not systematic or thorough • Inadequate data collected	• Process of data collection is reasonable but not thorough • Data collected minimally acceptable for design and planned analyses • Justifications are given for any modifications to the original plan of study for new phases	• Process of data collection is systematic and thorough • Data collected are adequate for the design and analyses • Justifications are given for any modifications to the original plan of study for new phases	• Data collection demonstrates extraordinary means • Design phase changes are substantiated by data
Point Range/Points Earned	0-3 Points earned____	4-7 Points earned____	8-11 Points earned____	12-15 Points earned___
RESULTS	• Analysis techniques are not appropriate for the data • Results from raw data are not well summarized • Results are not clearly articulated	• Analysis techniques used are minimally appropriate for the purpose and scope of the research • Results from raw data are summarized but needs a more clear and systematic format • Results section include graphs or tables without APA style • Assessment results are used but results information is not thoroughly described	• Analysis techniques used are appropriate for the purpose and scope of the research • Results from raw data are summarized in a clear and systematic format • Results section includes clearly articulated graphs or tables in the APA style • Assessment data (results) are adequately described	• Analysis includes techniques beyond normal scope of the research • Presentation of results suggest analytical interpretation • Relationships among data are presented graphically
Point Range/Points Earned	0-3 Points earned____	4-7 Points earned____	8-11 Points earned____	12-15 Points earned___
DISCUSSION	• Invalid or incomplete interpretation of data • Trends or patterns in data not clearly identified • Inadequate description of meaning of results • Assessment of impact of intervention is missing • Results not tied to research	• Partial interpretation of data • Trends or patterns in data marginally identified • Marginal description of meaning of results • Assessment of impact of intervention is valid but minimally explained • Results not tied well to research	• Valid interpretation of data • Trends or patterns in the data clearly identified • Adequate description of meaning of results • Assessment of impact of intervention is valid. • Results confirm or refute previous research	• Interpretation of data shows synthesis of previous and current research • Trends or patterns clearly identified in the data • Description of meaning of results pushes knowledge and understanding of the subject
Point Range/Points Earned	0-4 Points earned___	5-10 Points earned___	11-15 Points earned___	16-20 Points earned___

CONCLUSION	Little or no reflection.	Reflection on research process includes some but not all: • what the study has shown • limitations (generalization, validity issues) • ways the research study could be improved • suggestions for future research • ways your future teaching/practice is informed	Reflection on research process includes: • what the study has shown • limitations (generalization, validity issues) • ways the research study could be improved • suggestions for future research • ways future teaching/practice is informed	Reflection ties the study to new potential directions in the field
Point Range/Points Earned	0-2 Points earned____	3-5 Points earned____	6-8 Points earned____	9-10 Points earned____
QUALITY OF WRITING	• Citations not correct • Academic language not used • Poorly organized • Unclear	Some but not all of the following: • use of proper citations • demonstrates ability to use academic language • clear focus, well organized • conceptual clarity	• Use of proper citations • Demonstrates ability to use academic language • Clear focus, well organized • Conceptual clarity	• Clearly developed analysis and argument that shows relationships between all the components of the research
Point Range/Points Earned	0 Points earned____	1-2 Points earned____	3-4 Points earned____	5 Points earned____
Total Points				
Circle one: 1st reader 2nd reader Total number of points – ____/100 COMMENTS:				