Directions for Assessing the Dissertation Defense

The examining committee members need to perform the following tasks:

1. Review the “Dissertation Defense” section listed below prior to the exam.
2. Read the student’s dissertation and participate in the student’s dissertation defense.
3. Assess the quality of the student’s written work and its defense by completing the score sheet attached.
4. Tally up the points awarded and enter the students total score for the seven (7) dimensions.
5. Sign the score sheet.
6. **Give the completed score sheet to the committee chair to fulfill NCATE and SACS data collection requirements.**

**Dissertation Defense**

Candidates for a doctoral degree must prepare and present a dissertation that reveals independent investigation and is acceptable in content and form to the dissertation committee. The dissertation must demonstrate the student’s ability to conceive, design, conduct, and interpret research, and must contribute to the knowledge base in one’s field. Dissertation work is directly supervised by the chair of the dissertation committee; however, students are encouraged to consult fully with all members of their committee during the planning, conducting, and writing of their dissertations. Students should also consult the Graduate School’s *Manual of Basic Requirements for Thesis and Dissertations*.

**Appointment and Responsibilities of a Dissertation Committee**

Although students are encouraged to work with faculty on dissertation ideas well before the formal appointment of a committee, the Graduate School will formally appoint a dissertation committee after the student is admitted to candidacy. The committee will be comprised of at least four qualified faculty members. Typically, three members are Department of Educational Leadership faculty members and one is appointed by the Graduate School from the University at large. Although students may request a specific at-large University representative, the Graduate School will make the final decision. The Doctoral Program Coordinator will approve the composition of the dissertation committee. Committee members will have the privilege of voice and vote on all relevant matters that come before the committee pertaining to a student’s progress toward the degree. All four dissertation committee members should be present for the oral defense of the dissertation and must attest to the successful completion of the dissertation.

**Dissertation Committee Chair**

Students must identify a dissertation committee chair by the date on which they complete the Comprehensive Examinations and prior to enrolling in ADMN 8699 (Dissertation Research). The dissertation committee chair will provide program advisement through the remainder of the student’s program and will see that students have the opportunity to progress expeditiously toward degree completion. Chairs will assist students in organizing committee meetings, obtaining approval from the Institutional Review Board, presenting the proposal, conducting original research, and organizing the dissertation defense.

**Dissertation Defense**

When the student’s dissertation committee believes that the dissertation is in satisfactory form, a final defense is scheduled. The date for the defense must be scheduled at least two weeks prior to the defense to allow for thorough reading by the committee members. The student, with the chair’s assistance, should arrange for a public announcement of the time, date, and place of the defense. This announcement should be submitted by the dissertation chair to the *Campus News* editor for publication at least one week prior to the defense. Although interested members of the University community are invited to attend to the defense, only committee members evaluate the dissertation. When rendering its decision, the committee may approve, approve contingent upon specific changes being made, defer a decision pending another defense, or disapprove.
### Score Sheet  
**Dissertation Defense Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Dimension</th>
<th>Not Met (0 points)</th>
<th>Meeting Expectations (1 point)</th>
<th>Exceeding Expectations (2 points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Develops clear and appropriate research questions or hypotheses that guide the study.</td>
<td>Has a weak, inconsistent, self-contradictory, unconvincing, or invalid argument</td>
<td>Research questions guide the study and all questions are aligned to analyses.</td>
<td>Research questions guide the study and all questions are aligned to analyses. Peer-reviewed publication quality is evident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demonstrates how those research questions or hypotheses have been examined in previous studies.</td>
<td>Unclear how the research questions were derived.</td>
<td>Provides perspective on previous research, refers back to the introduction, and ties everything together.</td>
<td>Provides perspective on previous research, refers back to the introduction, and ties everything together. Peer-reviewed publication quality is evident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Analysis is comprehensive, complete, sophisticated, and convincing.</td>
<td>Has wrong, inappropriate, incoherent, or confused analyses</td>
<td>The analysis is comprehensive, complete, sophisticated and convincing.</td>
<td>The analysis is comprehensive, complete, sophisticated and convincing. Peer-reviewed publication quality is evident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. All pertinent results reported in clear and concise manner. Table/figures are labeled appropriately.</td>
<td>Results are obvious, already known, unexplained, or misinterpreted.</td>
<td>Results are clear and concise. Table and figures are easy to interpret and understand.</td>
<td>Results are scholarly presented and interpreted. Peer-reviewed publication quality is evident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Draws clear conclusions based on the collected data that answer the research questions or test the hypotheses.</td>
<td>Has unsupported or exaggerated interpretation.</td>
<td>Draws clear conclusions based on data and answers all research questions.</td>
<td>Draws clear conclusions based on data and answers all research questions. Peer-reviewed publication quality is evident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Makes recommendations for further research that can build on this project.</td>
<td>Does not make a contribution and has little to no recommendations for future research</td>
<td>Recommendations for further research are discussed.</td>
<td>Makes clear recommendations for advancing research in area. Peer-reviewed publication quality is evident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Provides a reflection of the problems or errors in the study and discuss how they could be avoided in subsequent studies.</td>
<td>No reflections or errors when discussing results.</td>
<td>Reflects on findings and informs future researchers.</td>
<td>Makes a significant contribution to the field. Peer-reviewed publication quality is evident.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name of Candidate ________________________________

Number of 1-point scores _______ X 1 = _______

Number of 2-point scores _______ X 2 = _______

TOTAL NUMBER of POINTS _______

Name of Committee Member ________________________________

Signature of Committee Member ________________________________

Adopted 2/7/2012 for one year use and then re-evaluation (Doctoral Advisory Committee, 2/7/2012)