

Liberty University

School of Music

Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation Handbook

**for students completing
the Ph.D. in Music Education**

Revised August 2022

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Dissertation Purposes and General Guidelines

This manual provides guidance for students pursuing the **Ph.D. in Music Education** at Liberty University who are working on their Doctoral Dissertation—MUSC 987, MUSC 988, MUSC 989, and MUSC 990. This manual includes details and requirements concerning the dissertation project and an orientation to the Jerry Falwell Library. Practical suggestions will be included for each of the components of the project.

The production of an acceptable dissertation represents the culminating experience of the Ph.D. in Music Education Degree Program. A dissertation is an extended discourse on a research topic of significance in the student's field of study.

As the dissertation demonstrates the comprehensive nature of Ph.D. studies and incorporates the scope of educational and professional experience, the student is encouraged to begin thinking about a topic early in the program, formulating possible dissertation topics and conducting research related to those topics throughout his or her course of study.

Work on a dissertation requires the ability to think constructively and carry out a research program demonstrated in the final product. The dissertation's length will vary with methodology/research design. The paper should be approximately 195-220 pages, excluding the front matter and bibliography. To make a worthy contribution to the greater repository of knowledge, the student should choose a dissertation subject that will add to and is based on the current discussion of scholars in the field of study. This necessitates an exhaustive search for what others have written on the proposed topic. The student should not merely repeat what others have written about a given topic but contribute original material to the subject. The final dissertation must embody a well-researched position, demonstrating critical judgment and independence of thought.

A dissertation is primarily an academic document demonstrating a high level of research and analytical skills proficiency. To accomplish this purpose, it may be necessary for the dissertation writer to draw conclusions with which the faculty are not in full agreement. For this reason, it is understood that the views expressed in students' dissertations are not necessarily those of the university, the faculty, or the specific Advisor or Reader who may approve the Dissertation. On the other hand, the student should recognize that the dissertation is being written through course of study at Liberty University and for an Advisor and Reader who agree with the doctrinal statement of the institution.

The Dissertation Project represents the final element of formal education and training. As such, it should make a significant contribution to the individual student, the existing body of literature, and to the student's personal current or desired field of Music Education. The project must lend research support to a practical application of an applied approach by:

1. Showing that the Dissertation Project is supported by appropriate theoretical basis (biblical, ethical, philosophical, psychological, educational, sociological, or theological).
2. Describing and defending the project's design and practical implementation.
3. Evaluating the significance of the project for Music Education and educational research.
4. Communicating fresh and original understandings of Music Education and educational research to peers.

The specific research design of the project depends on the nature of each project. This design should be determined through consultation with the project's Advisor and Reader. For the Ph.D. degree, each Dissertation will be supervised by a project Advisor and supported by one Reader.

Essential guidelines for dissertation form are found in *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (current edition) by Kate L. Turabian and in Liberty University's **Turabian Format Quick Guide**. Additional instructions as to the form and mechanics of the dissertation will be given in MUSC 987 after all other coursework is complete. Accuracy in form, correct grammar, good organization, and a clear and concise English style is necessary for a successful dissertation. Students are expected to know and follow the policy on academic honesty stated in the Graduate Catalog.

General Writing Guidelines

Students are encouraged to download and utilize the Thesis/Dissertation Template provided on the [SOM Thesis/Dissertation Handbook Website](#).

Length

The dissertation should be approximately 195-220 pages, excluding the front matter and bibliography. The dissertation's actual length will vary with methodology/research design. The Online Dean must approve any exceptions to the School of Music guidelines.

Font

The dissertation should be completed in Times New Roman, 12 pt. font. Exceptions are made for tables, figures, captions, footnote matter, etc. Footnotes should be written in 10 pt. font. *Italics* should be utilized whenever appropriate, i.e., book and journal titles. Limit the use of **boldface**, except for headings and subheadings.

Margins

The document should be set to 1 in. margins on all four sides of the document throughout.

Formatting/Citations

Turabian format must be utilized throughout the project. Footnotes should be used for all citations within the dissertation. Refer to the Turabian manual for further guidelines regarding Turabian formatting in dissertation projects.

Pagination

Page numbers should be listed in the top, right-hand corner of the page. The Title Page should not be numbered. Pagination should begin with the body of the paper proper with page 1. Pages between Title Page and the paper body should be lower case roman numerals (i.e. i, ii, iii, etc.).

Text Body

The main text of the dissertation should be double-spaced; exceptions include lists and block quotations (which span five lines or more). Block quotations and lists should be single-spaced and justified. Main body text should be left-aligned throughout except in the case of headings. The first line of each new paragraph should be indented by 0.5 inches. Footnote entries should also be single-spaced with an extra space between each consecutive footnote. Individual bibliography entries should be single-spaced. However, the space between each bibliography entry should be double-spaced.

Dissertation Courses

- MUSC 805 – Foundations of Doctoral Research in Music Education
- MUSC 807 – Literature Review
- MUSC 915 – Quantitative Methods Research
- MUSC 917 – Qualitative Methods Research
- MUSC 987 – Dissertation I
- MUSC 988 – Dissertation II
- MUSC 989 – Dissertation III*
- MUSC 990 – Dissertation Defense
- MUSC 982 or MUSC 983 – Quantitative or Qualitative Comprehensive Exam**

*Students will typically be asked to repeat MUSC 989 – Dissertation III each semester until deemed ready by their Advisor for enrollment in MUSC 990 – Dissertation Defense.

**Students will enroll in either MUSC 982 or MUSC 983 during the same semester as MUSC 987. Enrollment in MUSC 982 or MUSC 983 will be dependent on the selected method of research for the student's dissertation.

MUSC 805

This course introduces students to doctoral education and the requirements for a Ph.D. in Music Education. Critical thinking skills, scholarly writing, and empirical research are discussed to equip students for success in the doctoral program. By the end of this course, the student will complete the following:

- Describe the requirements of graduate research and standards for scholarly writing, including the style/form expectations for research papers, prospectuses, theses, and dissertations.
- Develop an awareness of the library and online resources and learn how to access them effectively.
- Identify and search relevant literature, identify gaps, and formulate appropriate research questions and hypotheses.
- Evaluate various research approaches such as Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods approaches and create a research design that seeks to answer a specific research question.
- Evaluate and give appropriate critical feedback to a peer's research and writing.
- Apply a biblical worldview to research concepts.

MUSC 807

This course guides students through the process of developing a literature review. By the end of this course, the student will complete the following:

- Master the use of the library and online resources.
- Identify an exhaustive collection of resources about a topic of interest.
- Identify a theoretical/conceptual framework for the proposed study
- Evaluate, organize, and synthesize resources in a concise outline.
- Compose a literature review containing major relevant scholarly sources related to a Dissertation Project.
- Apply biblical principles of ethics in reviewing the literature.

MUSC 915/917

These courses guide the student through the process of building a Dissertation Proposal through education in quantitative/qualitative research methods. By the end of these courses, the student will complete the following:

- Identify a “gap” in research within the student's chosen field of study in which he or she would like to contribute.
- Propose a research plan that explains the student's chosen quantitative/qualitative research methodology.
- Begin writing a Dissertation Proposal to be considered by the committee in the Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Decision.
- Complete the Committee Formation Assignment, including the Chair Pairing Form to select an Advisor and Reader (this assignment is in MUSC 917 only).

MUSC 987

Once the instructor has approved the student's proposed dissertation topic in MUSC 915/917, the student will enroll in MUSC 987. In this course, the student will present a completed Dissertation Proposal to their committee for a Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Decision. The student will also write Chapter 1 of their dissertation and begin composing Chapter 2.

Note: The student will not be able to enroll in MUSC 987 until they have completed the Committee Formation Assignment, including the Chair Pairing Form (in MUSC 917), confirming their Advisor and Reader.

MUSC 988

In this course, the student will revisit Chapters 1 and 2 to refine and revise as needed. Once Chapters 1 and 2 have been edited, the student will compose Chapter 3.

MUSC 989

This course will guide the student through Chapters 4 and 5 of their dissertation composition. Students must repeat this course each semester until the Advisor deems the student ready for Dissertation Defense. The student must provide a final draft of their completed dissertation to the Reader by the set date by the Online Dean for the desired defense term. **After the student has completed all edits and revisions requested by the Advisor and Reader, the Advisor will request that the student be moved to MUSC 990 for Dissertation Defense.**

MUSC 982 or MUSC 983

MUSC 982 and MUSC 983 are both Comprehensive Exam Courses. Based on the selected research method, the student will take either MUSC 982 or MUSC 983 along with MUSC 987. Once enrolled, the student will select the dates that they plan to complete the exam. On the date selected by the student, he or she will download three comprehensive questions and will have five days to research and respond to the three questions. This submitted written exam must be in Turabian formatting. Following submission of the Written Exam, the student will complete an oral exam via TEAMS or ZOOM with their Advisor and Reader.

MUSC 990

MUSC 990 is the final course of the Ph.D. in Music Education and is the culmination of all the education and training the student has experienced in this degree program. In this course, the student will defend their dissertation by presenting their research to the Advisor and Reader by submitting or completing the following:

1. Final Written Dissertation
2. Dissertation PowerPoint Presentation
3. Oral Defense

Securing a Dissertation Project Advisor and Reader

During MUSC 915/917, students will prepare a detailed Dissertation Proposal to be considered by the committee in the Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Decision. In MUSC 917, the student will complete the **Committee Formation Assignment**, including submission of the Chair Pairing Form to confirm assignment of the Advisor and Reader. The student will send the Dissertation Proposal document to the Advisor and Reader for review and approval. Upon completion of MUSC 915 and 917, the student will register for MUSC 987 to begin the dissertation writing process.

Note: Students must complete the Committee Formation Assignment, including the Chair Pairing Form or they will not be able to enroll in MUSC 987.

Steps to Completing the Dissertation

This section discusses the steps required to complete the Doctor of Philosophy in Music Education.

Step 1: Submit Dissertation Topic for Approval

Both MUSC 915 (Quantitative Research) and MUSC 917 (Qualitative Research) are required in this degree. The students will create full dissertation proposals in both courses and submit their proposals for approval in each course. In MUSC 917, the student will complete the **Committee Formation Assignment**, including the Chair Pairing Form and confirm their Advisor and Reader. Once the student has secured both an Advisor and Reader, the student will refine and submit the Dissertation Proposal to the Advisor for subsequent final approval by the Advisor and Reader in MUSC 987.

When the Advisor deems the student's Dissertation Proposal to be ready for defense and a Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Decision, the Advisor will ask the student to submit two documents to the Advisor and Reader: a Dissertation Proposal and a PowerPoint presentation illustrating the critical points of the Dissertation Proposal.

The Dissertation Proposal should include the following elements:

1. Front Matter and Abstract (written last)
2. Brief Overview
3. Background of the Topic (historical, sociological, theoretical)
4. Problem Statement
5. Purpose Statement
6. Significance Statement
7. Research Question(s)
8. Research Plan
9. Definitions
10. Bibliography

The PowerPoint presentation should contain one item per slide and include the following:

1. Title Slide
2. Brief Overview
3. Background of the Topic
4. Problem Statement
5. Purpose Statement
6. Significance Statement
7. Research Question(s)
8. Research Plan

Step 2: Dissertation Proposal Decision

Upon review of the Dissertation Proposal, the Advisor may grant one of three outcomes:

1. **Full Approval** to proceed with no proposal revisions. When this decision is rendered, the student will fully engage the research and writing process according to the established timeline. Upon full approval, the student may apply for IRB approval, if applicable (see STEP 4 concerning IRB approval process).
2. **Provisional Approval** to proceed with proposal pending cited revisions. (This is the most common decision). All revisions must be resubmitted to the Advisor according to the established timeline, and the Advisor will indicate the committee's status on your response to the required revisions. The student may NOT apply for IRB approval until full approval is granted.
3. **Redirection of Proposal.** This decision is rendered in cases that minor revisions will not meet the committee's expectations for the dissertation project. Examples of reasons this decision might be rendered can include issues such as: The presence of a poorly constructed research plan, a scope of study that is too large or too small, a study focus that does not contribute a meaningful extension of the existing research, a presentation that contains a lack of research demonstration of a practical application. Further instructions will be communicated via the student's Advisor. The student may NOT apply for IRB approval.

Step 3: Apply for IRB Approval

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Liberty University exists to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research studies being conducted by or with Liberty faculty, staff, and students. One of the ways the IRB protects participants' rights and welfare is to require students conducting research **involving people or information about people** to submit an application to the IRB prior to enrolling participants in or collecting data for their research project. The IRB will then review, request revisions of, and approve the application once it meets the standards for approval as set forth by the Office for Human Research Protections (a branch of the U.S.

Department of Health & Human Services). There may be cases in which IRB review and approval are not applicable for the research project, but **only** the IRB may determine this.

It is important to take into consideration the approval timeline for the Institutional Review Board as you construct your Dissertation Project timeline, knowing that anonymous, minimal risk studies are often approved within four weeks while more complicated studies may take six to eight weeks. These approval timelines depend on the quality of the application, the IRB's current application load, and the length of time it takes the student to submit revisions to the IRB. For more information about the IRB, the application process, and to access the application, please visit [Liberty University Institutional Review Board](#). **IRB Application must be approved by the IRB prior to conducting your survey, interview, etc. and moving on to writing chapters 3-5 of your Dissertation, and that a Dissertation Proposal will not be reviewed in place of the IRB Application.**

Submit draft copies of research instruments and IRB application

The IRB homepage on Liberty University's website includes samples of these materials with a copy of any cover letters. Your Advisor will approve all research methods and instruments before they are used. If these documents are flawed, then the research may be meaningless. Submission of these drafts and an Institutional Review Board (IRB) application are done through the Cayuse system. Once you have submitted your IRB application to the Institutional Review Board, you must work directly with them to modify your application until your application is approved. **Save the approval letter because it is one of the required appendices for your Dissertation Project.**

Step 4: Research Scholarly Sources

Students must now begin or continue to research their topic thoroughly and **make notes with citations**. Students will save much time and frustration by keeping a running list of quotes, statistics, and studies as they move from source to source.

Students must use scholarly sources. While other theses and dissertations may be a part of your literature review, the bulk of your citations **MUST** be from scholarly sources. Read the following paragraphs carefully *before* you begin your research so that you can make sure that *scholarly* sources (as defined below) make up the majority of your sources.

Definition of "Scholarly"

In general, a **"scholarly" source is one that is written or edited by a "scholar"** -- that is, someone who has earned a graduate degree in the field he or she is writing about. Having such a degree (usually a doctorate) means the author has had to prove mastery in the field such that they are considered an expert. This does not mean that the person's interpretation of their field is beyond question or debate; rather, it means that they know enough about the field to have an

informed interpretation (in other words, one that others ought at least to consider). Most scholarly – or "peer-reviewed," or "juried" sources of information have the following elements:

1. Lengthy articles (i.e., **more than seven pages**) or **texts written by experts or scholars for an expert, academic audience** (faculty, graduate students, researchers) in a particular field.
2. Employ a formal, scholarly, or technical writing style utilizing a vocabulary that requires some degree of subject knowledge.
3. The author's expertise is usually given near the beginning or at the end of the article or book and **an abstract is included with journal articles**.
4. Sources are cited in footnotes and **bibliography**.
5. Often reviewed by an author's peers (hence the term "**peer-reviewed**") before publication. It is important to note that the peers referred to here are other scholars or academic experts studying the same academic subject as the author.
6. Purpose of the publication is to share information within the subject field. Articles and books are based on original research and experimentation in science or social science or are the writings, criticism, and reviews of scholars in the humanities.
7. Published by academic presses, professional associations, or universities.

Step 5: Writing the Dissertation

It is now time to begin writing the actual dissertation. The dissertation will be written while the student is enrolled in MUSC 987, MUSC 988, and MUSC 989. The Dissertation Advisor retains the final authority on the nature, scope, and organization of the dissertation. The final project should include the individual elements listed below.

Front Matter

1. Title Page
2. Dissertation Defense Decisions Signature Page
3. Disclaimer Page
4. Acknowledgements (optional)
5. Abstract
6. Table of Contents
7. List of Tables
8. List of Figures
9. List of Abbreviations

Body

1. Chapter 1: Introduction (10 pages minimum): A modification of the Dissertation Proposal
2. Chapter 2: Literature Review (35 pages minimum; 40 scholarly sources minimum)
3. Chapter 3: Methodology (10 pages minimum)
4. Chapter 4: Research Findings (10 pages minimum)
5. Chapter 5: Conclusions (15 pages minimum)

Note: Page counts for chapters are estimates rather than requirements. The minimum dissertation page counts of 195-220 are considered standard. Dissertations falling outside these parameters must receive Advisor approval. These page counts do not include front matter and bibliography. A quantitative study will have an extended set of appendices. A qualitative study will discuss subjective data in research findings and conclusions. The SOM Online Dean must approve any reduction in the final page count of the completed dissertation.

Back Matter

1. Bibliography
2. Appendices

Step 6: Submit Complete Draft of Dissertation

Upon the Dissertation Advisor's permission, the student will submit a completed draft of his or her Dissertation Project as the last assignment in MUSC 989. It is *highly* recommended that the student utilize a proofreading/Turabian editing service of his or her choosing before submitting the final Dissertation Project.

Step 7: Dissertation Defense

The Advisor will request registration for MUSC 990 on behalf of the student once the Dissertation Project has been submitted and approved by the Advisor and Reader. The defense will occur before the Dissertation Advisor, Reader, and other faculty that desire to attend. The candidate should be able to answer these sample questions:

- What is the background of the study?
- Why did you choose the topic?
- What methodology did you use and why?
- What did you learn in research?
- What is the significance of the study?
- What are the limitations of the study?
- How did the findings impact you personally?
- How do you plan to utilize the information?

The student will prepare and present a PowerPoint presentation (15 to 20 minutes). The presentation should provide an overview of the project, its scope, methodology, basis of research, results, limitations, and recommendations for future study. The student should be prepared to answer detailed questions about the contents of his or her dissertation and PowerPoint presentation.

Upon completion of the defense, the Dissertation Project will be approved, returned for modification, or rejected. If the faculty approves the Dissertation, the Advisor and Reader will submit final comments and a completed rubric to the Grade Center. The final grade will be posted in the course after the defense.

See Appendix “E” for the Doctoral Dissertation Defense Decision form.

Step 8: Submit Final Dissertation to the Jerry Falwell Library Scholar’s Crossing

Upon successful defense and completed revisions, the student will submit his or her Dissertation Project to [Scholar's Crossing](#). Students should review the appropriate library webpage to get complete updated policies for submitting their Dissertation Project. As a graduation requirement, all graduate theses and dissertations must be electronically submitted to the library. The library no longer requires a bound copy. Please visit the [Submitting Electronic Theses & Dissertations](#) website for specific instructions.

NOTE: If your goal is to participate in the graduation ceremony, usually held in May, you must have completed your Ph.D. in Music Education DCP, with grades posted, and your dissertation accepted by the LU Library Digital Commons by the deadline established by the university, usually in the first week of April.

Recommended Reading

Algozzine, Bob and Dawson R. Hancock. *Doing Case Study Research: A Practical Guide for Beginning Researchers*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2017. ISBN: 978-0807758137

Burkholder, Gary J., Kimberly A. Cox, Linda M. Crawford, and John H. Hitchcock. *Research Design and Methods: An Applied Guide for the Scholar-Practitioner*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2020. ISBN: 9781544342382

Charmaz, Kathy. *Constructing Grounded Theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2014. ISBN: 978-0857029140

Clandinin, D. Jean and F. Michael Connelly. *Narrative Inquiry: Experience the Story in Qualitative Research*. San Francisco: Josey-Bass 2000. ISBN: 978-0787972769

- Claxton, B. L. & Dolan, C. L. (2021). A step-by-step guide to writing a literature review in education research. Kendall Hunt. eBook: 9781792466052, Print book: 9781792466069
- Creswell, John W., and Cheryl N. Poth. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Current Edition. ISBN: 978-1506330204
- Creswell, John W. and J. David Creswell. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods*. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2018. ISBN: 9781506386706
- Creswell, John W., and Timothy C. Guetterman. *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. 6th Ed. New York: Pearson, 2019. ISBN 9780134519364
- Gobo, Giampietro and Andrea Molle. *Doing Ethnography*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2017. ISBN: 9781412962261
- Guest, Greg, Kathleen M. MacQueen, and Emily E. Namey. *Applied Thematic Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Current Edition. ISBN: 978-1412971676
- Mann, Thomas. *The Oxford Guide to Library Research*. 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. ISBN: 9780199931064
- Morgan, Susan E., Tom Reichert, and Tyler R. Harrison. *From Numbers to Words: Reporting Statistical Results for the Social Sciences*. New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, Current Edition. ISBN: 978-1138638082
- Peoples, Katarzyna. *How to Write a Phenomenological Dissertation: A Step-by-Step Guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2021. ISBN: 9781544328362
- Roberts, Carol, and Laura Hyatt. *The Dissertation Journey: A Practical and Comprehensive Guide to Planning, Writing, and Defending Your Dissertation*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2019. ISBN: 9781506373317
- Rubin, Herbert J. and Irene S. Rubin. *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2012. ISBN: 9781412978378
- Saldana, Johnny. *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. Current Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2021. ISBN: 9781529731743
- Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Current ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Appendix A: Introduction to the Jerry Falwell Library

Liberty University's Jerry Falwell Library collections are available for use by all Ph.D. in Music Education students. The Jerry Falwell Library is centrally located on the main campus.

The [Jerry Falwell Library](#) provides a wide range of materials and services, employs a group of well-qualified personnel consisting of professional librarians and trained support staff, and maintains membership in local, state, regional, and national library cooperative ventures. The library provides over 317,000 physical items (books, journals, audio-visual items, microforms), more than 176,000 e-items (eBooks, musical scores, plays, e-audio-visual recordings), and 400-plus electronic databases. Through these resources, students have print or electronic access to over 67,000 unique periodicals, over 1.2 million dissertations and theses, and thousands of other historical documents.

Access to the electronic materials is available worldwide to Liberty students and faculty via the Internet. Students can also obtain journal articles from libraries across the United States through interlibrary loan services. The library will ship books from our collection upon request although students are responsible for return postage charges. As Liberty University Online (LUO) students, graduate students have direct toll-free telephone and email access to library personnel. LUO library services include assistance with computer research, document delivery, and book delivery. Electronic access is authenticated using your student username and password. The LU Online Librarian is available at (434) 582-2821 for questions.

Students may search the [Jerry Falwell Library Catalog](#) for books. In the Jerry Falwell Library, the most frequently used and most recent books are on the shelves. Older materials are stored in a robotic retrieval system. Requesting that a book be retrieved from the robotic storage system means that a physical copy will come to the Customer Service Desk in the Jerry Falwell Library. It does not mean that the title will be shipped to you. In order to request that Liberty-owned books be shipped to your home, you must create an account and request a title through the ILLiad interlibrary loan and document delivery system. Note that many of our titles are available electronically and the full text may be accessed off campus. Books owned by Liberty may be checked out by doctoral students under the current circulation policies in place for graduate online students. See the Library Research Portal for these details. Protect yourself by using a traceable carrier to return materials.

Because of time constraints, the library will not borrow books from other libraries for doctoral candidates who live outside the Lynchburg area. Students can use [WorldCat](#) to find books in libraries near them. Many academic and seminary libraries allow non-students to use materials on their campus or pay a small fee for a community borrower's card to allow them to check out materials.

The library has a number of multi-disciplinary and subject specific journal databases that are available from the library research portal. These include the ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials, Christian Periodical Index, ProQuest Religion, Old Testament Thesis Project Topics, New Testament Thesis Project Topics, Theological Journal Library, etc.

Appendix B: Dissertation Committee Requirements

Dissertation Advisor Qualifications and Responsibilities

The Dissertation Advisor will work closely with the student to assist him or her in completing an acceptable Dissertation Project.

Duties

- Approve each Dissertation Project assignment and provide detailed feedback both via email and within the learning management system
- Approve all research (i.e., surveys, questionnaires, etc.) and provide signature for IRB application within 7 days of submission
- Respond to emails within 36 hours
- Uphold all submission dates
- Provide approval for enrollment in MUSC 990 *before* scheduling a defense
- Receive Dissertation Project submission JFL documentation *before* posting final grade
- Post attendance in the learning management system

Qualifications

- An earned Doctoral degree / Ph.D. in Music Education from an accredited institution
- Faculty member at Liberty University School of Music
- Approved by the Online Dean of the School of Music
- Extensive knowledge in the subject area of the Dissertation project
- Thorough knowledge of Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*

Reader Qualifications and Responsibilities

The Reader will work with the doctoral candidate to assist in completing an acceptable Dissertation Project. The Reader reports to the Dissertation Advisor.

Duties

- Review and read each step of the Dissertation Project
- Provide comments regarding content and Turabian formatting
- Participate in the student's oral defense and provide noted revisions

Qualifications

- An earned Doctoral degree from an accredited institution and/or a recognized specialist in a related field
- Faculty member at Liberty University
- Approved by the Online Dean of the School of Music
- Extensive knowledge in the subject area of the Dissertation Project
- Thorough knowledge of Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*

Appendix C: Dissertation Proposal Decision Form

Ph.D. in Christian Worship or Ph.D. in Music Education

Dissertation Proposal Decision Form

The Dissertation Advisor and Reader have rendered the following decision
concerning the proposal status for (Student's Name)
on the research topic title of (Title of Dissertation)
as submitted on (Date)

Full Approval to proceed with no proposal revisions.

The student may fully engage the research and writing process according to the established the timeline. Upon full approval, the student may apply for IRB approval, if applicable (see STEP 4 concerning IRB approval process).

Provisional Approval to proceed with proposal pending cited revisions.

This is the most common decision. The student must resubmit the proposal with cited revisions according to the established timeline. The Advisor will indicate the committee's status on your response to the required revisions. The student may NOT apply for IRB approval until full approval is granted.

Redirection of Proposal

The student is being redirected to develop a new proposal, as minor revisions will not meet the expectations for the research project. The student may NOT apply for IRB approval.

Print Name of Advisor

Signature

Date

Print Name of Reader

Signature

Date

Appendix D: Dissertation Defense Decision Form
Ph.D. in Christian Worship Studies or Ph.D. in Music Education
Dissertation Defense Decision

The Dissertation Advisor and Reader have rendered the following decision

concerning the defense for

(Name of Student)

on the Dissertation

(Title)

as submitted on (Date)

Full approval to proceed with no proposal revisions.

The document should be prepared for submission to the Jerry Falwell Library.

Provisional approval pending cited revisions.

The student must resubmit the project with cited revisions according to the established timeline.

Redirection of project.

The student is being redirected to take MUSC/WRSP 989 again, as minor revisions will not meet the expectations for the research project.

Print Name of Advisor

Signature

Date

Print Name of Reader

Signature

Date

Appendix E: Dissertation Project Checklist

DISSERTATION PROJECT COMPONENTS	COMPLETED
Student has completed all Dissertation Courses (MUSC 987, 988, 989, 990)	
IRB Approval secured by student (if applicable to project)	
Dissertation Project Proposal Completed – Containing:	
Front matter with a title of 15 words or less	
Background	
Statement of the Problem	
Statement of Purpose	
Significance of the Study	
Research Questions	
Definition of Terms	
Summary	
Dissertation Project Completed – Containing:	
<i>Front Matter</i>	
Title Page	
Copyright Page	
Signature Page	
Abstract	
Acknowledgements (optional)	
Table of Contents	
List of Tables (optional)	
List of Figures (optional)	
List of Abbreviations	
<i>Main Body</i>	
Chapter 1 – Introduction	
Chapter 2 – Literature Review	
Chapter 3 – Methodology	
Chapter 4 – Research Findings	
Chapter 5 – Conclusions	
<i>Back Matter</i>	
Appendices	
Bibliography	
Dissertation checked for spelling, grammar, sentence structure, and formatting	
All assignments submitted in MUSC 987, 988, 989	
Dissertation submitted through Turnitin to check for plagiarism	
All revisions determined by Advisor completed	
Oral Defense completed and successfully passed	
Dissertation submitted to the Jerry Falwell Library Scholars Crossing	
Doctoral candidate's grade posted to the Registrar	