

EDAD 8195 - Seminar in Educational Research: Dissertation: Results Discussion

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section A04, CRN 42909,

Credit hours: 2

Instructor

Nathan Myers

Email: nrm Myers@ysu.edu

Public Instructor Information

Instructor Title: Associate Professor

Instructor Professional Qualifications: Ph.D., B.A.

Instructor Office Location: 2007 Beeghly Ed. Building

Instructor Office Phone: 330-941-3930

Course Description

8195. Seminar in Educational Research: Dissertation: Results & Discussion. The purpose of this course is to build candidate knowledge and skills in developing Chapter 5 of their dissertation. Students will discuss the findings and their implications in Chapter 5 of their dissertation, broken down into manageable milestones, following the guidelines set forth in the YSU Educational Leadership Dissertation Guidelines and template. Students will then defend their dissertation to their committee for approval. Prereq.: EDAD 8191, EDAD 8192, EDAD 8193, and EDAD 8194. 2 s.h.

Course Readings

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
	no readings		

The course readings are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, research developments, current events, and/or to ensure better learning.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
8/24	Formulating an understanding of Ch. 5	Assignment: Chapter 5 Strategic Plan, Structural Outline, and Definitions Project Due: 11:59 PM (EST) on the final day of the module Length: 3–5 pages Format: APA 7th Edition (Professional Paper) Assignment Overview Chapter 5 represents the intellectual culmination of the dissertation. While Chapter 4 reports findings, Chapter 5 interprets meaning situating results within theory, literature, and professional practice. As Dr. Steve Tippins notes, Chapter 5 is where candidates sing their song by explaining why their findings matter. A common and consequential error at this stage is producing a brief, summary-driven chapter that undersells the scholarly contribution of the study. This assignment does not ask you to write Chapter 5. Instead, you will create a strategic design document that plans a 15–25 page Discussion chapter aligned with YSU Dissertation Guidelines and explicitly “closes the loop” across Chapters 1, 2, 4, and 5. Assignment Purpose By completing this assignment, you will: Plan the intellectual architecture of Chapter 5 before drafting Demonstrate alignment between findings, literature, theory, and implications Operationalize YSU-required Chapter 5 sections and distinctions Reduce revision risk by ensuring structural and conceptual compliance in advance Assignment Components Part 1: Narrative Strategy — The Chapter 5 Plan (≈1 page) Begin by reviewing recent YSU dissertations available on the EdD Microsite, paying particular attention to how authors transition from objective reporting to scholarly interpretation. Write a concise narrative plan that addresses the following: Interpretive Strategy (So What?): Explain how you will

9/7

Determine critical information, patterns and themes that emerge from the research

Assignment: Drafting the Chapter 5 Roadmap and Bridge (Introduction and Summary of Findings) Deadlines Initial Draft: Sunday of Week 1 by 11:59 PM (EST) Dissertation Chair Consultation: Completed by Thursday of Week 2 Final Revised Submission: Sunday of Week 2 by 11:59 PM (EST) Assignment Overview In Module 2, you will draft the opening sections of Chapter 5: the Introduction and the Summary of Findings. These sections serve distinct but complementary purposes. The Introduction functions as a roadmap, reorienting the reader to the study now that data collection and analysis are complete. The Summary of Findings functions as a bridge, transitioning the reader from the detailed results presented in Chapter 4 to the interpretive work that will follow later in Chapter 5. A guiding principle for this assignment is the no new data rule. As emphasized by Grad Coach, Chapter 5 does not introduce new statistics, themes, or results. If information did not appear in Chapter 4, it does not belong here. Assignment Components Part 1: Chapter 5 Introduction — The Roadmap Purpose: To reorient readers who may begin reading the dissertation at Chapter 5 and to situate the final chapter within the completed study. Instructions: Write a 1–2 page Chapter 5 Introduction that includes the following elements: Restating the Why: Concisely restate the research problem and purpose of the study. This should reflect the perspective of a completed study, not proposal language. Summarizing the How: Provide a brief overview of the methodology used to conduct the study. This section should be limited to one paragraph and should avoid procedural detail. Previewing the Chapter Structure: Conclude the Introduction with an advance organizer that outlines how the remainder of Chapter 5 is organized e.g., summary of findings, interpretation, implications, limitations, and recommendations. Part 2: Summary of Findings — The Bridge Purpose: To synthesize the results of the study in a concise, objective manner that prepares the reader for later interpretation. Instructions: Write a Summary of Findings section that adheres to the following requirements: Organization by Research Question: Structure the section using your research questions or hypotheses as subheadings e.g., Findings Related to Research Question 1. Objective Reporting Only: This section must remain descriptive, not interpretive. Avoid language such as suggests, implies, because, or therefore. Explanations and implications belong in later sections of Chapter 5. Synthesis, Not Repetition: Do not reproduce tables, figures, or extended statistical results from Chapter 4. Instead, present the key outcomes or patterns that directly answer each research question. The Summary of Findings should communicate the headlines of the results, not the analytic process used to obtain them. Part 3: Dissertation Chair Consultation — Quality Control Purpose: To ensure accuracy, clarity, and alignment before moving into interpretive writing. Task: During Week 2, engage in a brief consultation with your Dissertation Chair (via meeting, phone, or substantive email exchange). Suggested Discussion Points: Does the Introduction effectively reorient the reader without repeating earlier chapters? Does the Summary of Findings remain objective and free of interpretation? Are findings clearly and logically organized by research question? Incorporate feedback from this consultation into your final submission. Submission Requirements Format: APA 7th Edition (Professional Paper) Length: Typically 4-6 pages total (Introduction + Summary of Findings) File Name: LastName_Ch5_IntroSummary_Date.docx References Grad Coach. (2020). Dissertation discussion chapter: How to write it in 6 steps [Video]. YouTube. PhilScholar. (2025). Chapter 5: Discussion, conclusion, and recommendations.

9/21 Formulate a discussion of new patterns & themes

Assignment: Drafting the Interpretation (Discussion / Analysis of Findings) and Limitations Note on Section Titles: Depending on disciplinary convention and Chair preference, this section may be titled Discussion, Interpretation of Findings, or Analysis of Findings. Regardless of title, the intellectual work required is the same and must align with YSU Dissertation Guidelines. Deadlines Initial Draft: Sunday of Week 1 by 11:59 PM (EST) Final Revised Submission: Sunday of Week 2 by 11:59 PM (EST) Assignment Overview In Module 2, you established what your study found. In this assignment, you will write the interpretive core of Chapter 5 by drafting the Interpretation (Discussion/Analysis) of Findings and the Limitations of the Study. This is where you explicitly close the loop connecting your findings back to the literature and theoretical framework introduced in Chapter 2, and explaining how those findings address the problem articulated in Chapter 1. A governing principle for this assignment is disciplinary restraint: If content did not appear in Chapter 2 (Literature Review) or Chapter 4 (Findings), it does not belong in this section. Assignment Components Part 1: Interpretation / Discussion / Analysis of Findings (Closing the Loop) Purpose: To interpret the meaning of your findings and situate them within the broader scholarly and theoretical conversation. Instructions: Write a cohesive interpretive narrative, typically organized by research question or theme, that addresses the following elements: Explicitly Answer the Research Questions: Interpret how the findings respond to each research question. This section should move beyond restating results to explaining their significance. Integrate the Literature (Chapter 2): Compare your findings to prior research discussed in your literature review. Clearly indicate whether your results: Support (corroborate) Contradict Extend existing studies Use discipline-appropriate scholarly language, such as: Consistent with Smith (2020)... In contrast to Jones (2019)... Apply the Theoretical Framework (YSU Requirement): You must explicitly interpret findings through the lens of your theoretical framework by distinguishing between: Foundational Theorists: Originators of the core theory Additive Theorists: Scholars who extended, refined, or challenged that theory Explain how your findings align with, complicate, or advance these theoretical positions. Address Discrepancies and Unexpected Findings: If findings diverged from expectations or prior research, provide reasoned, literature-supported explanations for why this may have occurred. Part 2: Limitations of the Study (Context, Not Apology) Purpose: To critically evaluate the boundaries of interpretation and generalizability without undermining the credibility of the study. Instructions: Write a Limitations section that includes the following: Identification of Constraints: Discuss relevant methodological, sampling, or data-related limitations e.g., sample size, self-reported data, time constraints, access limitations. Impact on Interpretation: Do not merely list limitations. For each major limitation, explain how it affects interpretation, transferability, or generalizability of the findings. Researcher Reflexivity (When Applicable): Particularly for qualitative or mixed-methods studies, briefly address researcher positionality and potential sources of bias. Limitations should frame the scope of conclusions not invalidate them. Part 3: Dissertation Chair Consultation (Quality Control) Task: Engage in a consultation with your Dissertation Chair during Week 2 (substantive email exchange). Suggested Focus Areas: Is the distinction between reporting (Chapter 4) and interpreting (Chapter 5) clear? Are findings convincingly connected to literature and theory? Is the distinction between Foundational and Additive theorists explicit and accurate? Are limitations presented as analytic boundaries rather than fatal flaws? Incorporate Chair feedback into your final submission. Submission Requirements

10/5 Present conclusions based on key information & data

Assignment: Articulating the Legacy — Implications, Recommendations, and Conclusion Deadlines Initial Draft: Sunday of Week 1 by 11:59 PM (EST) Final Revised Submission: Sunday of Week 2 by 11:59 PM (EST) Assignment Overview You have interpreted your findings and established their meaning. In this final assignment for Chapter 5, your task is to articulate the impact, relevance, and legacy of your study. You are now answering the questions that extend beyond the dissertation itself: Who cares about these findings? What should change as a result? What remains to be studied? As Steve Tippins cautions, the most common error at this stage is underselling the research by writing too little. After more than 100 pages of sustained scholarly work, brief or superficial implications and recommendations fail to communicate the value of the study. This assignment requires you to fully articulate how your research contributes to theory, informs practice, and guides future inquiry. Assignment Components Part 1: Implications (Explaining Significance — the So What?) Purpose: To explain why your findings matter for both scholarship and practice. Instructions: Theoretical Implications (YSU Requirement): Explicitly discuss how your findings affect the theoretical framework introduced in Chapter 2. Foundational Theorists: Explain how your findings support, refine, or complicate the original theory. Additive Theorists: Discuss how your findings align with, extend, or challenge later theoretical developments. Practical Implications: Translate findings into meaning for real-world contexts. Explain how your results help address the problem identified in Chapter 1. Focus on consequences, not restatement of data. Example framing: Because X occurs, educational leaders should reconsider Y. Implications explain impact, not action steps. Part 2: Recommendations (Guiding Action — the Now What?) Purpose: To provide clear, evidence-based guidance for future researchers and practitioners. Instructions: Recommendations for Future Research: Move beyond generic statements such as more research is needed. Use your study's limitations to propose: Specific research designs New or expanded populations Additional variables or contexts for investigation Recommendations for Practice and/or Policy: Offer concrete, feasible actions that stakeholders can take based on your findings. Recommendations must be directly supported by your data. Avoid speculation or personal opinion not grounded in results. Recommendations are calls to action that logically follow from implications. Part 3: The Conclusion (The Takeaway) Purpose: To bring the dissertation to a clear and coherent close. Instructions: Write a concise synthesis that brings the study full circle. Revisit the Problem Statement and Purpose Statement from Chapter 1. Clearly state how the study addressed the problem and what was ultimately learned. Non-Negotiable Rule: Do not introduce new data, new citations, new theories, or new arguments in the Conclusion. The Conclusion is a synthesis, not an extension. Part 4: Dissertation Chair Consultation and Revision Task: Email your Dissertation Chair during Week 2 to review your draft. Suggested Focus Areas: Are implications fully developed and clearly distinguished from recommendations? Are recommendations feasible and directly supported by findings? Does the Conclusion clearly and confidently articulate the study's contribution? Incorporate Chair feedback into your final submission. Submission Requirements Format: APA 7th Edition File Name: LastName_Ch5_Conclusions_Date.docx Submission Scope: This submission must include the complete Chapter 5, incorporating: Introduction and Summary of Findings (Module 2) Interpretation/Discussion and Limitations (Module 3) Implications, Recommendations, and Conclusion (Module 4) References PhilScholar. (2025). Chapter 5: Discussion, conclusion, and recommendations. Tippins, S. (2020). Writing dissertation

10/12	Practical & Theoretical Implications or Significance of Study	Assignment: The Impact — Writing Theoretical and Practical Implications (Chapter 5) Deadlines Initial Draft: Sunday of Week 1 by 11:59 PM (EST) Chair Consultation: Completed by Thursday of Week 2 Final Revised Submission: Sunday of Week 2 by 11:59 PM (EST) Assignment Overview You have reported and interpreted your findings. The purpose of this assignment is to answer the central scholarly question of Chapter 5: So what? In this assignment, you will write the Theoretical and Practical Implications section of Chapter 5. This section demonstrates the value and impact of your study by explaining: How your findings contribute to existing theory, and How your findings should influence real-world practice, policy, or program development. Dr. Steve Tippins cautions that the most frequent weakness in Chapter 5 is writing too little. After producing a dissertation of substantial length, a brief or underdeveloped implications section undermines the strength of your work and your defense. This assignment is your opportunity to clearly and confidently articulate the significance of your research. Part 1: Theoretical Implications (Academic Contribution) Purpose To explain how your findings confirm, extend, refine, or challenge the theories presented in Chapter 2. YSU-Specific Structural Requirement Your theoretical implications must be organized according to the two layers of your theoretical framework: Foundational Theorists (Originators): Discuss how your findings relate to the original theorists who established the framework (e.g., Maslow, Dewey, Bandura). Address whether and how your data support, refine, or complicate their core assumptions. Additive Theorists (Extenders): Discuss how your findings relate to scholars who have expanded, applied, or modified the theory in more recent research. Address whether your findings align with, extend, or contradict contemporary interpretations or applications. Writing Guidance Avoid general statements such as the findings supported the theory. Be explicit about how your data interacts with theoretical constructs. If your study examined a population or context outside the original conditions of the theory e.g., applying a corporate leadership theory to K–12 education, explain how your findings validate, refine, or limit the theory in this new context. Expectation: Theoretical implications should represent meaningful additions to knowledge, not a restatement of results. Part 2: Practical Implications (Real-World Application) Purpose To describe specific, actionable changes that should occur in professional practice, policy, or program design if your findings are applied. Instructions Your practical implications must be concrete and stakeholder-specific. Vague recommendations will not meet expectations. Address implications for one or more of the following: Practitioners: What should teachers, principals, superintendents, or administrators do differently as a direct result of your findings? Example: Principals should restructure professional development time to include... Policymakers: Do your findings suggest a need to revise district, state, or institutional policies? Program or Organizational Development: How can your findings improve existing programs, leadership preparation, or organizational practices? Key Question: If a stakeholder accepted your findings as valid, what would they be compelled to change? Part 3: Integration and Evaluation — The So What? Purpose To integrate your theoretical and practical implications into a cohesive, defensible narrative that demonstrates the overall impact of your study. Required Components Connection to the Problem Statement: Explicitly explain how your implications address the problem identified in Chapter 1. Feasibility and Realism: Critically evaluate the practicality of your recommendations. Consider constraints such as time, funding, staffing, or policy
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10/19	Determine further possible research that emerged based on the topic and study and provide a comprehensive summary of the study, data collection, findings, analysis and interpretation of the data	Assignment: Boundaries and Horizons —Finalizing Chapter 5 Deadlines Initial Draft: Sunday of Week 1 by 11:59 PM (EST) Dissertation Chair Consultation: Email by Thursday of Week 2 Final Revised Submission: Sunday of Week 2 by 11:59 PM (EST) Assignment Overview You have interpreted your findings and articulated their implications and recommendations. In this final Chapter 5 assignment, your task is to define the boundaries of your study and extend its scholarly horizon. Specifically, you will draft the concluding sections of Chapter 5: Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations Suggestions for Future Research Summary Together, these sections demonstrate scholarly maturity by clarifying what your study can and cannot claim, while providing a clear pathway for future researchers to build on your work. Assignment Components Part 1: Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations (Defining the Boundaries of the Study) Purpose: To clearly and critically articulate the conditions, choices, and constraints that shape interpretation of your findings. Instructions: Assumptions: Identify key assumptions underlying the study (e.g., participant honesty, instrument validity). Briefly explain why these assumptions were reasonable and necessary for the research design. Delimitations (Intentional Design Choices) Describe the boundaries you deliberately set to focus the study. Explain what was excluded and why. Example: This study was delimited to public schools in Region 8; private schools were excluded to ensure consistency in governance and funding structures. Limitations (Uncontrollable Constraints): Identify constraints beyond your control (e.g., sample size, access, self-reported data). Impact Requirement:: Do not merely list limitations. For each major limitation, explain how it may have influenced interpretation, transferability, or generalizability. Scholarly Note: Thoughtful discussion of limitations strengthens credibility by demonstrating awareness of research design constraints. Part 2: Suggestions for Future Research (Extending the Scholarly Horizon) Purpose: To provide a clear, research-oriented blueprint for future scholars, avoiding vague or generic recommendations. Instructions: From Limitation to Opportunity Review the limitations identified in Part 1. For each major limitation, propose a specific future study that could address or overcome it. Example: If sample size was limited, recommend a quantitative or mixed-methods study with a broader population. Four-Area Framework for Future Research: Structure your suggestions across the following dimensions: Methodological: Alternative designs (e.g., longitudinal, experimental, mixed methods). Participants: Different populations, roles, demographics, or contexts. Contextual Factors: Consider whether external conditions (e.g., policy changes, societal events) influenced findings. Scope: Broader or narrower geographic, institutional, or systemic focus. Clear Differentiation: These are academic recommendations for researchers, not practical recommendations for practitioners. Avoid restating practice-focused recommendations from earlier modules. Part 3: The Summary (Closing the Research Narrative) Purpose: To provide the final synthesis of the study and bring the dissertation narrative to a coherent close. Instructions: Non-Negotiable Rule: Do not introduce new data, new citations, or new arguments. Objectives Alignment Check Restate the original research objectives or research questions from Chapter 1. Explicitly indicate whether each was: Fully addressed Partially addressed Not addressed Base these statements strictly on the findings. Narrative Closure Briefly summarize: The problem addressed The methodological approach The key findings and overall contribution This section serves as the dissertation's closing argument, not a detailed recap. Part 4: Dissertation Chair Email and Revision Task: Email your Dissertation Chair during
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11/9 Writing Center Feedback

Assignment: The Professional Polish External Review, Strategic Revision, and Final Formatting Deadlines Writing Center Submission: Due Sunday of Week 1 Final Revised Submission: Due Sunday of Week 3 Assignment Overview You have completed the drafting of Chapter 5. At this stage, your role shifts from author to editor and project manager. The purpose of this assignment is to engage in a structured, professional revision process that incorporates external feedback, maintains version control, and results in a polished, submission-ready manuscript. You will work with the Youngstown State University Writing Center as an objective external reviewer and apply editorial judgment to determine which revisions strengthen clarity, coherence, and technical accuracy. As Dr. Cheryl Lentz emphasizes, effective revision requires distinguishing between: Substantive editing (argument alignment, coherence, logic), and Copyediting/proofreading (grammar, mechanics, and APA formatting). This assignment formalizes that process. The YSU Writing Center Part 1: Preparation and the Revision Inventory Plan before you revise. Before submitting your draft to the Writing Center, complete the following steps. 1. Develop a Revision Inventory Rather than revising randomly, compile all prior feedback you have received from: Your Dissertation Chair Peer discussions Previous module assignments Categorize each item into one of the following: Substantive edits: Issues related to argument structure, alignment with research questions, coherence, missing connections, or clarity of implications. Line edits: Grammar, word choice, sentence structure, APA mechanics, and formatting. 2. Address Substantive Issues First Resolve major conceptual or organizational issues before submitting your work to the Writing Center. The Writing Center is best used for refining clarity and presentation—not for reconstructing arguments or reanalyzing findings. Part 2: Writing Center Consultation Engage external feedback intentionally. 1. Submission Submit your complete Chapter 5 draft to the YSU Writing Center by the Week 1 deadline. 2. Specify the Type of Review Requested When booking your appointment or submitting your document: Clearly state whether you are requesting: Substantive feedback (logic, coherence, alignment), or Copyediting/proofreading (grammar, clarity, APA formatting). Recommended focus for this stage: Ask the Writing Center to review: Headings and subheadings Citation and reference formatting (APA 7th Edition) Sentence clarity and academic tone 3. Document the Consultation Save proof of engagement, such as: Appointment confirmation Feedback summary Email receipt This documentation must be submitted with your assignment. Part 3: Strategic Revision and Version Control Revise deliberately and preserve your work. 1. Preserve File Versions Do not overwrite your original draft. Create a new file using a clear naming convention, such as: LastName_Ch5_v2_WritingCenterFeedback.docx 2. Use Track Changes Enable Track Changes in Microsoft Word and address feedback item by item. Do not select “Accept All.” Evaluate each suggestion carefully. If you reject a suggestion, ensure you have a defensible, APA-based reason. 3. Use Comments Strategically When making substantial changes based on feedback, insert brief comments explaining your revision rationale e.g., Reworded to improve clarity and reduce passive voice per Writing Center feedback. Part 4: Final Formatting and Technical Audit Prepare a submission-ready document. Before final submission, conduct a comprehensive APA and formatting check: Margins: 1 inch on all sides Spacing: Double-spaced throughout, including references Headings: Correct APA Level 1–5 formatting (bolding, capitalization, alignment) References: Hanging indents, italics, and punctuation consistent with APA 7 This final pass ensures technical compliance and professional presentation.

11/23	Finalize your completed dissertation including all chapter edits	Assignment: The Final Seal of Approval – Chapter 5 & Chair Sign-Off Deadlines Submission to Chair: Sunday, Week 1, by 11:59 PM (ET) Final Approval Upload: Sunday, Week 2, by 11:59 PM (ET) Assignment Overview You have refined your dissertation through peer feedback, Writing Center support, and prior revisions. This assignment represents the final and most consequential checkpoint in the dissertation process: formal approval from your Dissertation Chair. As outlined in the YSU Dissertation Guidelines, the Chair serves as your primary mentor and academic gatekeeper. Their approval confirms that your study particularly Chapter 5 is intellectually sound, aligned, and ready to withstand full committee review and the oral defense. This assignment requires you to conduct a final strategic audit of Chapter 5, submit the manuscript to your Chair, and provide documented evidence of approval. Part 1: The Defense-Ready Audit – Final Revisions Before submitting your document to your Chair, conduct a final review to eliminate the most common approval-stopping errors identified by dissertation experts: The No New Information Rule: Chapter 5 must not introduce new data, findings, or sources. As emphasized by Grad Coach and AbleSim, the conclusion is reserved for synthesis and interpretation. Any new statistics, quotations, or analyses must be relocated to earlier chapters or removed. The So What? Test: Dr. Steve Tippins cautions against writing a thin Chapter 5. Your Implications for Practice and Recommendations should clearly articulate why your findings matter to scholarship and practice. Brief or underdeveloped sections often signal insufficient depth. The Alignment Audit: Review the Research Questions in Chapter 1 and immediately compare them to the Summary of Findings in Chapter 5. Each research question should be answered directly, explicitly, and without ambiguity. Part 2: Submission to Your Chair – Week 1 Task: Submit your revised Chapter 5 (or the full dissertation, if requested by your Chair) using your Chair's preferred method. Version Control: Use a clear and professional file-naming convention to distinguish this draft from earlier versions (e.g., LastName_Dissertation_DefenseDraft_v1.docx). Explicit Request: In your submission message, clearly ask: Is this draft ready for distribution to the full committee? Part 3: Securing Final Approval – Week 2 Task: If your Chair requests final revisions, complete them promptly and resubmit as directed. Deliverable: Obtain written confirmation (email or signed form) from your Chair indicating that Chapter 5 is approved and that you are cleared to move forward to committee review and the defense course. Submission Requirements (Blackboard) By the end of Week 2, upload both of the following: Final Manuscript: The approved, clean version of Chapter 5 (Word or PDF). Evidence of Chair Approval: A screenshot or PDF of your Chair's written approval (email or signed document) confirming readiness for full committee review.
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11/30	Dissertation Completion & Timeline Processes	Assignment: Dissertation Completion Strategy & Graduation Roadmap Deadline: Submit by Sunday, 11:59 PM (ET) — End of Week 2 Assignment Overview You have completed the scholarly work of your dissertation. The remaining barriers to graduation are logistical precision and performance readiness. To earn your degree, you must successfully complete the oral defense (EDAD 8196) and comply with all Youngstown State University Graduate School deadlines and procedures. This assignment requires you to develop a 3–5 page strategic plan (excluding title and references) that reverse-engineers your path from graduation back to your current status. This document should function as a working roadmap and accountability checklist for the final phase of your doctoral journey. Dissertation Completion Worksheet.docx Part 1: Reverse-Engineered Timeline — Administrative Strategy Purpose: Identify critical-path dependencies and non-negotiable deadlines. Using the current YSU Academic Calendar and Dissertation Guidelines, construct a timeline that works backward from your intended graduation date. Your timeline must include specific calendar dates for each of the following: Graduation / Commencement: Your target degree conferral date. ETD / OhioLINK Submission: The final deadline to upload your approved dissertation PDF to the OhioLINK Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD) system. Note that YSU requires an electronic signature page without physical signatures. Post-Defense Revisions: Allow a minimum of two weeks after the defense to complete committee-requested edits. Oral Defense Date: Your planned defense date. Committee Submission Window: YSU guidelines require that the full manuscript be distributed to committee members at least two weeks prior to the defense. Account for this mandatory reading period in your timeline. Part 2: Defense Performance Strategy Purpose: Prepare intentionally for the oral defense as a conversation among scholars. Drawing on guidance from Dr. Valerie Balester (Texas A&M University) and Dr. Steve Tippins, outline your strategy for managing the defense itself. Opening Response Strategy: Draft bullet points for your response to the opening prompt: Tell us about your study. Your outline must address the problem, methodology, findings, and significance and be deliverable in under two minutes. Visual Aids Plan: Dr. Tippins cautions against text-heavy slides. Describe how you will design slides that support your presentation without competing for attention e.g., limited text, purposeful visuals. Difficult Question Protocol: Define how you will respond to questions that fall outside your data or scope. Based on Ranywayz Random's guidance, script a professional response that acknowledges limitations and pivots appropriately e.g., toward future research, without guessing or overextending. Part 3: Logistics & Paperwork Audit Purpose: Prevent administrative errors that delay degree conferral. Identify and confirm the requirements for all major YSU forms and approvals. At a minimum, address the following: Intention to Graduate Form: When is it due for your intended graduation semester? Approval for Oral Defense Form: Who must complete and sign this form, and at what point in the process? Signature Page Preparation: Describe required formatting elements e.g., committee member names, titles that must be finalized prior to the defense. Part 4: Resource & Support Plan Outstanding Questions: Identify two to three unresolved questions you still have regarding the defense process or YSU submission requirements. Chair Support Needs: Specify how your Dissertation Chair can best support you during this final phase e.g., timeline confirmation, post-defense revision guidance. Formatting & Submission Requirements Length: 3–5 pages (excluding title and references) Style: APA 7th Edition (title page, headings, citations) Sources: You must cite: The YSU
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The course schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better learning.