Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

THE PATH TO GRADUATION: A MODEL INTERACTIVE WEB SITE DESIGN SUPPORTING DOCTORAL STUDENTS

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

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June, 2012

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under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my late Uncle Clyde and my Grandmother Jessie

Lou Love Simmons, who are not here in person but ever present in spirit. My Uncle

Clyde was a walking, talking verbal affirmation. He showed strength of character through
his positive words: "Mighty fine mighty fine mighty fine, it's getting better and better
everyday!"

Jessie Lou Love Simmons is the epitome of a servant leader. My grandmother had a third grade education and told me to "get your education." I guess I took her words literally. I got everything I could obtain in memory of her.

Last, I dedicate this dissertation to my Mommy, Celia Simmons, and my Daddy Larry Simmons. My mom is a survivor, risk taker, and adventurer. She left her native country, Trinidad, at 17 years of age and made her way to the U.S. in want of more and a better life. My mom's fire burns within me.

My Dad is by far the smartest man I know. And according to him, I owe him everything. Since I can never actually repay how much he has poured into my life, I simply gave him my tam.

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Stay true to your Divine Purpose testing waters no one else dares enter.

Nicole Simmons-Johnson

One word. *Change*. This is what my family and I have experienced in the past 5 years. Change on every level imaginable. The doctoral program is nothing short of therapeutic healing. There have been times of mourning and times of rejoicing and celebrating times. Through it all, I continually prayed for strength and guidance and received it daily.

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ABSTRACT

Objective. This 2-phase mixed method study assessed 2nd-year doctoral students' and dissertation students' perceptions of the current Graduate School of Education dissertation support Web site, with implications for designing a model dissertation support Web site. Methods. Phase 1 collected quantitative and qualitative data through an anonymous electronic survey. Phase 2 consisted of 6 semistructured qualitative Skype interviews. Four themes emerged from the qualitative portion of the study: (a) Mentoring, (b) Student Support Groups, (c) Explicit functions and roles of Dissertation Chairpersons, and (d) the Opportunity to network and interact with dissertation students face-to-face or online. Results. Of the respondents, 42.3% found the web content such as forms and resources helpful and 40% indicated the visual appearance was helpful. Overall, 8.3% were very satisfied, 16.7% were satisfied, 33% neutral, 33.3.% were dissatisfied, and 8.3% very dissatisfied with the current Web site. Among them, 78.3% would like to see e-mentoring implemented on the Web site and 83.3% would participate in a Dissertation Retreat/Bootcamp.

Conclusions. The findings concluded e-mentoring and webinars, as the 2 most desired Web 2.0 technology to enhance the current Web site. The data suggested the most desired type of formal or informal event to add to a model Web site is a Dissertation Retreat/Bootcamp. Recommendations. Decision makers at the departmental and institutional level should strongly consider incorporating e-mentoring/peer mentoring, increased availability of dissertation chairpersons to walk students through the various stages of the dissertation process, a model of the entire process from start to finish, and the use of Web 2.0 tools to foster support and keep students connected, on the

dissertation Web site. Using Appreciative Inquiry 4-D Model (Cooperider & Whitney, 2005) respondents highly recommended day-to-day support such as a dissertation hotline, real-time support, use of multimedia, student testimonials, and early awareness of the Web site resources and tools to make the dissertation Web site an exceptional highlight of the GSE.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Undertaking we have in mind may be very large; it may seem to be more than we alone can carry through; but we need not be alone; the Infinite is at hand ready to work with us, and with Him there can be no failure.

—Christian Larson (1911)

Americans are more educated than ever. The U.S. Census Bureau Educational Attainment (2000) Census Brief, reports 80% of adults 25 years or older had completed a high school diploma and more and 24% had completed a bachelor's degree or higher.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES; 2011) Digest of Education Statistics, the nation's largest data collection and reporting system for educational statistics, in 2009, nearly 2.9 million people were enrolled in Master's and doctoral programs: 58% were enrolled in Master's programs, while 13% were enrolled in a doctoral program. NCES reported slightly more than half a million (581,921) graduate degrees were awarded: 79% of the awards went to master's degrees, while 7% were awarded Ph.D.s. Recent statistical data show 48,802 research doctorates were awarded in 2008 (NCES, 2008).

NCES (2006–2007) Student Effort and Educational Progress reports degree granting institutions enrollment rate increased between the academic years 1997–1998 and 2007–2008. Total postsecondary enrollment increased from 14.5 million to 18.2 million.

Just 7 years later, the NCES (2007) reports that women are outpacing men in obtaining degrees, ranging from Bachelor's degrees to advanced degrees, such as Master's, professional degrees, and doctorates. Professional degrees are career-oriented degrees specializing in law, education, and health, for example, physical therapists, psychiatrists, optometrists, chiropractors, medical doctors, and lawyers.

Black women are making significant gains over men in higher education. Black women earned (75%) more advanced degrees compared with men (72%). The NCES 2007–2008 data reveals 625,000 master's degrees were awarded; during this same period, the number of doctorate degrees increased by 38% (see Table 1).

Table 1

Doctor Degrees Earned by Level, Race, and Ethnicity (1998–2008)

Race/ethnicity and sex	Total	Associate's	Bachelor's	Master's	First- Professional	Doctor's
			Number of	f degrees		
Total degrees conferred	2,755,202	665,301	1,399,542	558,940	83,041	48,378
White	1,940,336	456,047	1,026,114	369,582	60,379	28,214
Male	818,690	183,819	445,483	143,827	31,994	13,567
Female	1,121,646	272,228	580,631 2	225,755	28,385	14,647
Black	271,911	81,183	131,241	50,657	5,930	2,900
Male	87,728	25,961	43,851	14,653	2,248	1,015
Female	184,183	55,222	87,390 3	36,004	3,682	1,885
Hispanic	201,619	72,270	94,644 2	29,666	4,273	1,662
Male	78,775	27,828	37,288	10,813	2,080	766
Female	122,844	44,442	57,356	18,853	2,193	896
Asian/Pacific Islander	168,770	33,149	92,073 3	30,952	9,964	2,632
Male	75,435	13,907	41,360	14,347	4,528	1,293
Female	93,335	19,242	50,713	16,605	5,436	1,339
American Indian/Alaska Native	22,731	8,119	10,638	3,192	565	217
Male	8,476	2,740	4,244	1,127	275	90
Female	14,255	5,379	6,394 2	2,065	290	127

Note. From *Digest of Education Statistics*: Fall 2008 by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education, 2008. Reprinted with permission.

Included in the NCES commissioner's 2007–2008 statement are the numbers and breakdown of doctoral degrees awarded in that year. During this period, 57% of doctorates were awarded to white students, 27% to nonresident alien students, 6% each to Black and Asian/Pacific Islanders, 4% to Hispanics, and Indian/Native students earned less than ½% (National Science Foundation, 2008; NCES 2008).

In 2006–2007, NCES reported, 60, 616 doctoral degrees were awarded. The Survey of Earned Doctorates, another agency that compiles annual data on doctorates and education in the U.S., claims women accounted for most growth. NCES (2008) reported

the highest number of doctorates awarded in U.S. history. According to Survey of Earned Doctorates, this is the 6th consecutive year U.S. doctorates awarded increased nationwide. Table 2 shows number of degrees conferred by public and private degree-granting institutions, level of degree, and all totals.

Table 2

Degrees Conferred by Degree-Granting Institutions and Level of Degree (2007–2008)

	Associate's	Bachelors	Masters	Doctors
Private Institutions	578,520	996,435	299,923	38,315
Public Institutions	171,644	566,634	325,100	25,397
Total	750,164	1,563,069	625,023	63,712

Note. From *Institute of Education Sciences*: Fall 2008 by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education, 2008. Reprinted with permission.

The U.S. population is more educated than ever (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006), with 17% of the population having completed some college education, 18.3% had a Bachelor's or more, and 9.7% had an advanced degree (see Table 3).

Table 3

Highest Level of Education Attained by Person's 25 years old and older

Educational Level	Percent	
Less than High School	14.5	
High School Graduate	31.7	
Some College	17.0	
Associate's	8.7	
Bachelor's	18.3	
Professional Degree	1.6	
Doctor's Degree	1.3	

Note. From *Education Digest*: Fall 2006 by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education, 2006. Reprinted with permission.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation conducted a national survey through Public Agenda, a nonpartisan, nonprofit public opinion research organization founded in 1975, which reported work and family responsibilities fuel low college completion rates

(Public Agenda, 2010). More support is needed in higher education to ensure students matriculate. Mujtaba, Scharff, Cavico, and Mujtaba's (1998) article, "Challenges and joys of earning a doctorate: Overcoming the 'ABD' phenomenon," claims there are multiple factors such as dropout, relationship with dissertation chairperson, problems with committee, and lack of focus on dissertation topic that lead to high rates of attrition or why some remain All But Dissertation (ABD). According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2000) Educational Attainment summary brief, professional and doctoral degrees are rare, accounting for less than for 4% of the population. Peters (2007) claims, "Doctoral students are taking more time to finish than ever before" (p. 4). Survey of Earned Doctorates (1998) reports an overall increase of Time to Degree. University of Washington (2000) Time to Degree reports the time to complete a graduate program is measured in three ways: (a) total time-to-degree, (b) elapsed time-to-degree, and (c) registered time-to-degree. Survey of Earned Doctorates (1998) uses time to degree, which it defines as the total time between receiving the baccalaureate and the advanced degree. Elapsed time to degree is defined as the time from entry into graduate school to attainment of the advanced degree. Last, registered time to degree only measures the amount of time a student was registered in graduate school. Time to degree is a necessary concern, as the longer it takes for a doctoral student to complete his or her studies the less likely he or she is to graduate. According to the University of Washington (2000) report, this lengthening of time to degree completion "often contributes to heightened doctoral attrition rates" (para. 3). Although 48,802 doctorates were granted in 2008, an increase of 38% (National Science Foundation, 2008), this number represents only half of those who were enrolled in a doctoral program.

So, what happens to those who do not complete the program and earn their degree? They are oftentimes mislabeled as dropouts (Tinto, 1993) or ABD. ABD is a title given to doctoral candidates who have yet to complete their dissertations. ABD is a term that designates a student's progress toward a doctorate. The term ABD simply means a student has completed the course work, comprehensive examination, and necessary requirements for a doctorate (Chancellor, 2008). ABD is an unstructured time, when the student is left alone to research and write, with very little accountability on a day-to-day basis. Peters (2007) claims, "Although unstructured time in graduate school can be difficult to manage, you decide how to use it, perhaps for the last time in your life" (p. 7). ABD signifies a graduate student's final steps before completion of the dissertation. The last phase is for the student to write and defend the dissertation. Many graduate students lack knowledge of this process and experience little support in completing the study. During the dissertation phase, a graduate student must find his or her own motivation. Being able to navigate the unstructured time between the completion of course work and the completion of the dissertation is not dependent on intelligence, but knowledge of the process, which is shared through social interaction, informal dialogue, and formal and informal social integration.

Jacks, Chubin, Porter, and Connolly's (1983) study, "The ABCs of ABDs: A Study of Incomplete Doctorates," collected the voices of ABD candidates and how they advanced in their careers despite not completing the dissertation. Jacks et al. wanted to understand how the ABD candidates managed the transition, if they had a positive self-image, and what perception they held of themselves without obtaining the degree.

Carter (2005), dissertation coach and founder of Educational Research Institute

(ERI), states in her monthly inspirational newsletter, "2 million students registered in T/D languish in a frustrated 'All But Done' or 'All But Dissertation or Thesis' phase because they just cannot figure out how to get through the unstructured portion of their T/D program" (para. 3). Carter offers one-on-one dissertation coaching and workshops nationwide to help graduate students matriculate through their educational program. Carter created a program, Thesis and Dissertation Accomplished, along with electronic tools to help students, from start to finish, in completing their degrees in a timely manner.

Conflicts and misunderstandings will surely arise during the dissertation phase. Peters (2007), author of *Getting What You Came for*, offers some tips for resolving conflicts with advisors, chairperson, and committee members. Peters suggests, "Nip problems in the bud, be assertive, be flexible, and get perspective" (p. 171).

Stone, Patton, and Heen (2004), authors of the bestseller *Difficult Conversations:*How to Discuss What Matters Most, can also lend support when discussing matters that mean the most. Stone et al. claim:

Anytime we feel vulnerable or our self-esteem is implicated, when the issues at stake are important and the outcome uncertain, when we care deeply about what is being discussed or about the people with whom we are discussing it, there is potential for us to experience the conversation as difficult. (p. xvi)

Furthermore, the authors argue, "The gap between what you are really thinking and what you're saying is part of what makes the conversation difficult" (p. 7), much like a typical conversation between a dissertation chairperson and doctoral candidate. According to Stone et al., a simple question can turn into a complex and difficult conversation because of the internal distractions. Students sometimes even avoid their advisors for fear of

having a difficult conversation and being asked: How is it going? Or are you making any progress? Some feelings of frustration, fear, rejection, and resentment may arise during the dissertation phase as these difficult conversations are being broached. A doctoral candidate may be "uncertain about what's okay to share, and what's better left unsaid" (p. 7). The internal dilemma is always centered on avoidance or confrontation. Stone et al. claim there are really three conversations going on at one time: (a) the what happened conversation, (b) the feelings conversation, and (c) the identity conversation. Stone et al. argue, "Difficult conversations are not just about what happened; they also involve emotions" (p. 12). They also conclude, "The question is not whether strong feelings will arise, but how to handle them when they do" (p. 12). Peddy (2001) reiterates this point; she argues, "The question isn't how you feel, but rather what you do about it" (p. 132).

Stone et al. (2004) offer conflict resolution techniques to deal with all three conversations: unpack the intentions, perceptions and interpretations, and avoid inherent risks and problems associated with each of them. Stone et al. state, "The goal is to make the conversation visible to reduce fear, anxiety, and frustration" (p. 5). One technique Stone et al. suggests is to make the structure of the conversation visible, "To understand not only what is said, but also what is not said" (p. 5). Stone et al. assert that when having important conversations, "We need to understand what the people involved are thinking and feeling but not saying to each other" (p. 5). Once these steps are successfully taken, then a dissertation chairperson and doctoral candidate can move toward having a better learning conversation.

A learning conversation does not seek blame, but rather the purpose is to share and exchange information, perceptions, and gain clarity by asking questions. The power

of a learning conversation is in shifting from perceptions and engaging in the other person's side. Stone et al. (2004) suggest inviting them into the conversation with you. By offering an invitation to improve and open the lines of communication, both the sender and receiver are able to reframe their stances. Stone et al. state, "Changing our stance means inviting the other person into the conversation with us, to help us figure things out" (p. 17). In a learning conversation, both parties "come to understand the perceptions and intentions involved, the joint contribution to the problem, the central role feelings have to play and what the issues mean to each person's self esteem and identity" (p. 18). The tone shifts from information telling to information sharing. During the dissertation phase, it becomes important for doctoral students to articulate clearly their concerns and have learning conversations with their dissertation chairpersons.

Bridges (1978), author of *Managing Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes* advocates personal development and self-awareness when dealing with life transitions. Bridges claims there are three distinct phases embedded in a transition: (a) an ending, (b) a neutral zone, and (c) a new beginning. The dissertation is a new phase in the doctoral program. Bridges' text, *Managing Transitions*, states everything begins with an ending. Endings for some are events, while for others they are merely a state of mind.

Bridges (1978) makes a distinction between change and transitions. Bridges claims:

The most important differences between a change and a transition is that changes are driven to reach a goal, but transitions start with letting go of what no longer fits or is adequate to the life stage you are in. (p. 128)

ABD is a difficult phase for most graduate students because it is a new phase, a new

transformation. ABD marks the end of course work, collegiality, and separation of the cohort. Peters (2007) claim, "Instead of taking charge, many students waste time floundering, waiting in vain for someone to tell them what to do" (p. 5). It is this gap, this space between completion of course work and beginning of the dissertation phase, that doctoral students need encouragement and support. Endings make us fearful (Bridges, 1978). Peters (2007) contends, "This floundering breeds fear, which is a major curse of graduate school life" (p. 5). Even the most astute students often experience isolation, frustration, and procrastination. Peters argues, "Many graduate students complain about the lack of formal orientation and guidance throughout the graduate experience" (p. 5). For example with the dissertation phase, a student transitions from peer support, structured courses, and faculty support. This period of intense writing is relatively loosely guided and structured. It is this very transition that Bridges argues must be understood. Bridges claims, "It is unfortunate that our change-obsessed and transition-ignorant society keeps us trying to make sense of endings in the context of change rather than in the context of transition" (p. 130).

For doctoral students, the ending of course work and the newfound phase of writing the dissertation could be considered Bridges' (1978) second phase, the neutral zone. Bridges argues the neutral zone is characterized by a sense of emptiness. The neutral zone, like the dissertation phase, deals with "the difficult process of letting go of an old situation, of suffering the confusing nowhere of in-betweenness, and launching forth again in a new situation" (p. 4). The neutral zone is the empty, fallow time in between the ending and a new beginning. Although the neutral zone is a period of isolation, much like the dissertation phase, it too is marked by a "period of confusion and

distress" (p. 8). Peters (2007) states, writing the dissertation is a solitary process that can be isolating. Bridges (1978) claims, "It is only in the apparently aimless activity of your time alone can you do the important inner business of self-transformation" (p. 135). Furthermore, Bridges (1978) asserts, "It is only in the context of the transition process that endings hold personal meaning and open the gate to our own transformation" (p. 130). In order for a person to move successfully forward to a different phase of his or her life, there must be acceptance, closure, and a sense of completion. There seems to be no order or normal reaction to an ending. Bridges states endings are the clearing process. In order for the doctoral student to make the transition successfully to the next phase as a doctoral candidate and finally doctor, he or she must be able to deal with changes and transitions both personally and within the program.

Doctoral programs are highly competitive, with built in ambiguity and high academic demands used in the selection process. Tinto (1985) states competent membership in college communities is partially determined by the formal demands of the academic system and the need to maintain minimum levels of academic performance. Academic demands are also influenced by the culture of the school. The culture defines what constitutes competent academic membership and what does not. Academic rigor is essential to remaining competitive and to staying in a doctoral program. There are consequences when these demands, obligations, and responsibilities are not met, such as probation and dismissal.

Need for the Study

Many doctoral students lack the support of the university, knowledge of the process, and total integration into the formal and informal social system of the institution.

Although it is quite necessary to meet the academic demands of the institution, there are no penalties when the social integrative domain does not mesh. Tinto (1985) argues, "In the broader society, full or total integration is not seen here as a necessary condition for college persistence" (p. 121). Many doctoral candidates across the nation complete course work, but fail to complete the last phase in their doctoral program, which is to write on a topic that adds to the body of knowledge in their field of interest. The dissertation phase can be isolating and lonely, as the students' normal routine of course work, community, and socialization is abruptly interrupted and they are left alone to identify, clarify, and finalize their research topic. Tinto argues social isolation does not have to occur. There are actions the institution can take to minimize social isolation, which will, in turn, increase persistence and decrease departure from the institution or the system. Tinto argues, "Some form of integration—that is, some type of social and/or intellectual membership in at least one college community—is a minimum condition for continued persistence" (p. 120). Although students have many external factors that may influence whether they pursue higher education and where they attend, "once entry is gained their impact tends to be dependent upon the character of one's integrative experiences with that college" (p. 125). It matters more what happens after entry than before entry.

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) Ph.D. Completion Project is a 7-year grant-funded project that focuses on completion rates and attrition of doctoral students. Twenty-nine universities across the United States and Canada are participating in the study with the main goal of creating intervention strategies, pilot tests, and evaluation systems to determine the CGS Ph.D. Completion Project impact on doctoral completion

rates and attrition. The Ph.D. Completion Project compendium of data aims to be the most complete and comprehensive source on attrition and completion of doctoral study ever assembled. The CGS (2012) Ph.D. Completion Project Web site asserts, "No more than three-quarters of students who enter doctoral programs complete their degrees. Research has also shown that the vast majority of students who enter doctoral programs, have the academic ability to complete the degree" (para. 3). The CGS (2010) website reports 57% of Ph.D. candidates complete their programs within a decade.

Hernandez's (2010) article, "Ph.D. Completion Study Documents Best Practices for Student Success," focuses on assisting doctoral students successfully completing their doctorate, reducing attrition, and understanding why students drop out, especially women. Although the CGS strives to reduce the attrition rate of all students, Robert S. Sowell, vice president programs and operation for CGS, (as cited in CGS, 2010) claims, "The Ph.D. project is particularly focused on completion by minorities, including women and underrepresented groups in the STEM fields" (p. 1). Hernandez's (2010) article presents promising practices for supporting doctoral students. Sowell argues many universities are employing writing assistants for doctoral students to lessen the trepidation that students often encounter when beginning a writing project, allowing more senior Ph.D.s to train newer students and prepare them for the dissertation process, and changing the graduate program by offering pre-enrollment summer research programs (as cited in CGS, 2010). Other promising practices include using alumni of color to organize campus visits and meet with prospective students.

The CGS (2010) Policies and Practices to Promote Student Success executive summary outlined six areas of improvement along with promising practices: (a) student

selection and admission, (b) mentoring and advising, (c) financial support, (d) program environment, (e) research experience, and (f) curricular and administrative processes and procedures. Best practices for student selection and admission include colleges and universities offering preadmission, pre-enrollment, and campus visits and improving efforts to recruit and support underrepresented students. Colleges and universities could also improve department Web sites and clarify expectations for students in their doctoral programs, including academic milestones. CGS Ph.D. Completion Project acknowledges that mentoring is an area that poses serious and often unique challenges for universities when implementing a program level or university-wide initiative simply because, "mentoring is practiced and valued unevenly in doctoral programs" (p. 3). Promising practices identified in the area of mentoring and advising include the following: (a) provide student resources such as articulate student academic milestones, develop online mechanisms so students and faculty can track progress and communicate with each other, and implement online tracking systems and dissertation checklists; (b) implement regular advisor/protégé meetings and progress reports; (c) require each student to have an advisor and advisory structure; and (d) offer resources for faculty for example workshops on mentoring, minigrants to improve the quality of mentoring throughout the department, and, last, recognize excellence through mentoring with faculty awards. CGS Ph.D. Project findings conclude financial assistance is one of the most influential factors on Ph.D. completion and attrition. The executive summary reports, "Financial support needs to be structured to optimize completion and enhance academic and social integration" (p. 3). Promising practices for financial support include: (a) increase stipend levels, (b) increase the number of student fellowships, and (c) restructure graduate assistantship

allocation to a preferred Ph.D. model where 80% of doctoral students and 20% of master's students receive funding. Promising practices for program environment include creating department-led and university-wide opportunities for social interaction and integration. These efforts include, but are not limited to, informal opportunities such as department events and regular social gatherings. The study found these informal opportunities are important components of graduate students' socialization. Other practices include: (a) developing support networks and support services that bring students together across disciplines and within the department for academic and social interaction; (b) highlighting student achievement and accomplishments through newsletters, dinners, or other venues; (c) developing a network for support; and (d) outreach to and integration of fellows. Studies (Bloom, Cohen, & Karp, 1998; Feibelman, 1993; Green & Scott, 2003; Peters, 2007) found that the social interaction characteristic of the sciences provide a more supportive environment than, what CGS (2010) describes as, "the solitary, individual research with other extended periods without advisors feedback that is often characteristic of the humanities" (p. 4). Interventions and best practices include offering preprogram research experiences such as a summer predoctoral institute for underrepresented students and early research experiences. Best practices for curricular and administrative include: (a) improving administrative process and procedures, for example, creating a database on students via a web-based system to track student aid and monitor all students who leave; (b) developing writing assistance for graduate students by offering a writing assistance program for graduate students at all stages; (c) utilizing writing coaches or writing consultants; and (d) offering writing assistance to groups of students. Furthermore, departments and universities can offer

more support during the dissertation phase by offering a dissertation retreat, dissertation boot camp, dissertation writing residency fellowship, dissertation house, or dissertation writing institute for students "who are stalled in their progress that offers uninterrupted time to focus on the dissertation, writing strategies, receive feedback, and build peer support" (p. 4), especially for students who are underrepresented.

Liechty, Liao, and Schull (2009), who wrote "Facilitating Dissertation Completion and Success Among Doctoral Students in Social Work," grounded their work in Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory of learning. Liechty et al. argue, "This theory posits that higher learning occurs in the context of significant relationships" (p. 482). Liechty et al. state, "Optimal learning is promoted when students can work alongside a more knowledgeable other such as a mentor, a teacher, a more skilled peer, or another more expert guide who is able to offer scaffolded support and direction" (p. 482). This study examined barriers and facilitating factors to the completion of the dissertation. According to Liechty et al.:

The aim of the study was to serve as a resource for doctoral students, faculty dissertation advisors, and department heads who wish to strengthen programs and practices to achieve the common goal of timely dissertation completion leading to the Ph.D. (p. 482)

This study outlined and categorized factors affecting dissertation success into three levels of influence: (a) individual, (b) relational, and (c) institutional.

There are measures and innovative best practices that individuals, faculty, departments, and institutions can take to assist doctoral students successfully complete the dissertation, in a timely fashion (Hernandez, 2010; Liechty et al., 2009). Liechty et al.

(2009) outlined clear outcomes for each level. On the individual level, self-motivation, persistence, and resourcefulness are essential to degree completion. Furthermore, Liechty's et al. research determined the development of student support groups help students with social integration, lessens isolation, and accountability. According to the study, "Peer support groups can be helpful and can be drawn from one's cohort, the campus, or from websites" (p. 487). At the departmental level, faculty could host workshops, open forums, and schedule regular face-to-face or online support meetings to encourage and monitor students during the dissertation phase. Liechty's et al. study targeted at the departmental level entailed, "training faculty in effective strategies for advising" (p. 489). This training is important considering new faculty "with no formal training beyond their personal experience are often expected to advise students" (p. 490). Rosensitto's (1999) study, Faculty Perceptions of the Need to Prepare Graduate Students to Teach, addresses a similar issue of preparing and training graduate students to teach while in graduate school, as most recent graduates seek a professional career in academia and ultimately the tenure track. Liechty's et al. (2009) study concluded that faculty members who served as intentional mentors and advisors assist students in many roles and on different levels. Intentional mentors help with anything and everything from selecting the topic, developing research ideas, developing the structure of the paper, to support after degree completion in the graduate's career.

Last, at the institutional level, decision makers and key stakeholders for the organization can acknowledge and reward intentional mentors, systematically evaluate their impact, track their progress, and use the information during tenure review.

Hinton and Thompson (2010) study, A Symposium Model for Doctoral Students of

Color Seeking Faculty Positions in Higher Education, shared a model for motivating and mentoring students of color experiencing difficulties in completion of their doctorate degree because of personal, social, or institutional challenges. A Symposium Model for Doctoral Students of Color Seeking Faculty Positions in Higher Education examined institutional goals and ascertained, "Leadership in diversity must come from the top, and Chief Diversity Officers must be committed and persuasive" (p. 359). This study outlined departmental, faculty, and institutional measures such as hosting a dissertation symposium to help doctoral students successfully complete the dissertation. The purposes of the symposium are as follows: (a) provide programs that would increase recruitment, retention, and participation of minorities to complete doctorate degrees; (b) establish networks throughout the United States and a referral system that would encourage doctoral students to participate in the symposium; (c) encourage students of color to apply for faculty positions in colleges and universities and mentor them until they complete the degree; and (d) sponsor, support, and promote programs that build awareness related to completing successfully the degree. Hinton and Thompson claim, "Seven major issues are translated into program components: Believe & Persist, Form Network, Apply for Position, Select Doctoral Committee, Write Dissertation, Meet Minority Faculty, and Relieve Stress and have fun" (p. 363). Hinton and Thompson did not use a particular theoretical base to develop the model, but argue, "it could be theoretically linked to 'social inclusion theory'" and "risk society theory" (p. 359). This symposium model was developed and implemented in 2005 at a regional public university in the Midwest.

Across the nation, the percentage of ABD candidates is about 50% (NCES, 2008).

Approximately 90% of the 2 million enrolled in Master's and doctoral programs languished in transition, as they were unable to move successfully through the dissertation phase. Many graduate students lack knowledge of this process and support. Mujtaba's et al. (1998) study, "Challenges and Joys of Earning a Doctorate Degree: Overcoming the 'ABD' Phenomenon," states, "30%–70% who start don't finish the program and become ABD" (p.10). The good news is the numbers of ABD candidates at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education, across all three of Pepperdine's doctoral programs, are slightly lower than the national averages. NCES (2008) reported Pepperdine University granted 57 degrees in 2008.

Pepperdine University is a private, predominantly white, Christian university. The main campus, located in Malibu, California, is home to the undergraduate school, Seaver College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences; the Graziadio School of Business and Management; the School of Law; the School of Public Policy; and the Graduate School of Education and Psychology (GSEP). Pepperdine University's mission is to prepare and strengthen its students for purpose, service, and leadership.

There are several other Pepperdine campuses located throughout southern

California situated in West Los Angeles, Encino, Irvine, Silicon Valley, and Westlake,

California. Pepperdine's fifth school is GSEP, which is located in West Los Angeles. The

GSEP population is more diverse than Seaver College and meets the needs of its

nontraditional, fully employed Master's and doctoral students. GSEP is an innovative
learning program.

Pepperdine University has a separate body that collects data on the effectiveness of each of the schools' five programs. Pepperdine University's Office of Institutional

Effectiveness (OIE; 2009) mission statement is: "The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) is a research engine designed to advance the mission and values of Pepperdine University by facilitating evidence-based decisions and a culture of assessment" (para. 1). The OIE web page claims this mission is achieved through various actions and measures: it operates as a semiindependent research group and think tank; collects, analyzes, and distributes high quality research; coordinates and provides guidance and data support for the university assessment cycle; consults with departments, programs and schools to ensure rigor of data; guides and facilitates the process of accreditation; and closes the assessment loop by facilitating the use of data to make informed decisions.

The OIE Fact Book compiles and reports statistics such as the head count by major in doctoral programs at GSEP, graduation rates, and number of degrees conferred, among other pertinent data. Individual programs confer degrees. The OIE Fact Book reports, in 2006–2007, Educational Leadership Administration & Policy (EDEL) conferred seven degrees, in 2007–2008 five degrees, 2008–2009 six degrees, and in 2009–2010 EDEL conferred 11 degrees. In 2006–2007, Organizational Leadership (EDOL) conferred 23 degrees, 2007–2008 34 degrees, 2008–2009 38 degrees, and in 2009–2010 EDOL granted 30 degrees (Pepperdine University OIE, 2010).

The bad news is, nationally, the numbers say something else. More than half of all enrolled in a doctoral program simply do not graduate (NCES, 2008). In fact, the national average for completion of graduate programs is 46%, which indicates that it is in any university's best interest to look at the issue of better supporting students through the entire doctoral process, from orientation to completion of the degree. Although GSEP graduation rate is approximately 85%, which is better than the national average, the

university can still do better (U.S. Free Application Federal Student Aid [FAFSA], 2010). According to Dr. Linda Purrington, Academic Chairperson for EDEL, "It has been my experience that we tend to lose students after orientation, towards the end of year one, and after comprehensive exam" (personal communication, March 18, 2010). Liechty's et al. (2009) study, Facilitating Dissertation Completion and Success Among Doctoral Students in Social Work, which is grounded in Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural theory, asserts, "Attrition from doctoral programs occurred when students were all-butdissertation (ABD), after coursework, and before or during the dissertation phase" (p. 482). Knowing this it is critical for doctoral programs to adapt and create innovative ways to assist students with degree completion. Liechty et al. (2009) argues, "These data suggest that the dissertation phase of the doctoral program is a high-risk period for attrition, and that targeted interventions at this juncture are warranted" (p. 482). Tinto (1985) claims, "The process of persistence in college is, by extension, viewed as a process of social and intellectual integration leading to the establishment of competent membership in those communities" (p. 120). Dr. Robin Bailey-Chen Assistant, dean of Student Support Services, stated:

We lose students even after their final oral defense...there is simply no wraparound services put in place to monitor and check with students to ensure they complete [the] APA process, complete modifications, and submit necessary paperwork in a timely fashion...there are still things to do. (Personal communication, March 16, 2010)

Tinto (1993) states, "Departure from college is taken to reflect the unwillingness and/or inability of the individual to become integrated and therefore establish

membership in the communities of the college" (p. 120). Student attrition directly affects the university in the form of lower enrollment rates; thus, a loss in tuition and higher ABD rates. The loss or reduction in tuition stems from students not registering after the comprehensive exam for typical issues such as: (a) not selecting a dissertation chair, (b) lack of wherewithal selecting an appropriate fit, and (c) uncertainty of dissertation topic. According to Dr. Bailey-Chen, after comps and even the final oral defense, there are still things to do. Bailey-Chen claims, "They simply fall off the face of the map and we have no system in place to recapture them" (personal communication, March 16, 2010). Bailey-Chen asserts, "We have a moral and ethical responsibility to intentionally support students and get them through the entire process" (personal communication, March 16, 2010.) Tinto (1993) echoes Bailey-Chen's sentiments:

Institutions of higher education do have a special responsibility in the domain of student retention. In accepting individuals for admission, institutions necessarily accept a major responsibility to ensure, as best they can, that all students without exception have sufficient opportunities and resources to complete their courses of study should they wish to do so. (p. 181)

Indeed, there are two systems at work: an academic and social system, both formal and informal, domains. Both are equally important to sustaining students and both systems are causes for individual, institutional, and system departure. Doctoral students gradually become academically integrated into the school, but lack the social integration that is also vital to their ability to persist in the program in the face of paramount educational and life challenges.

It is the social aspect that stalls student progress. When a student is a fully

competent member of the school, he or she has no problem reaching out to directors or professors for additional support. Indeed some students are just naturally better at building relationships. Some doctoral students meet with professors before, during, or after class. For the student who is socially adept, he or she learns the ropes quickly, builds relationships, and gains insider knowledge of how to eliminate barriers and matriculate through the program faster. Tinto (1993) states:

Both forms of integration, social and intellectual, are central to the process of persistence, so also are the two forms of collegiate experience central to the important processes of social and intellectual development that are the very basis for higher education. (p. 120)

The student's ability to be integrated in both formal and informal domains of the academic and social systems is central to the process of departure. Tinto (1993) purports, "The absence of social integration increases the likelihood of departure by establishing conditions which tend to isolate the individual from the daily life of the institution" (p. 120). Dual integration encourages success, increased persistence, and congruence between the individual and the institution. There are no consequences for not being fully integrated into the social aspect of the institution of higher learning (Tinto, 1993). When academic obligations are not met, probation and academic dismissal ensue. However, what do institutions have in place when the social aspect of integration is lacking and doctoral students need mentoring, coaching, and connectivity with other students to manage the unstructured time of writing the dissertation? Both intellectual and social integration is critical to avoiding isolation. The lack of social integration becomes heightened when the student is left alone to his or her own devices to pen a manuscript.

Peters's (2007) *Getting What You Came for; The Smart Student's Guide to Earning a Master's or Ph. D.* states, "Doctoral programs are particularly isolating" (p. 280). Peters claims, "Students under stress reduce their level of sharing and helping activities, and aggression among them increases" (p. 280). Peters goes to say, "High stress leads to more isolation and negative social behavior and in turn more stress" (p. 280).

Tinto (1993) argues success of education programs generally hinges on the construction of educational communities at the college, which integrate students into the ongoing social and intellectual life of the institution. Peters (2007) states, "One factor contributing to isolation is that graduate students are often largely excluded from living on campus" (p. 281). Furthermore, Peters claims, "Once you're in school, you will have to work much harder at creating a social life than you did as an undergrad" (p. 282).

Eich's (2008) "A Grounded Theory of High Quality Leadership Programs: Perspectives From Student Leadership Development Programs in Higher Education," shared recommendations and points of further study and exploration to designing better leadership programs and program innovation.

There is a dual and shared responsibility among doctoral students, faculty, and the institution to ensure completion of the doctorate. Pepperdine's GSEP can potentially be the leader for top-rate dissertation support by developing a model using Web 2.0 technologies that could be implanted on the GSEP dissertation support Web site or any graduate program Web site throughout the United States. Graduate students at Pepperdine's GSEP, as with graduates at other universities throughout the nation, easily become isolated, but to reduce isolation and increase doctoral graduation rates, an assessment of the current dissertation support Web site, with implications for designing a

more interactive Web site for providing online support for doctoral students, needs to be conducted.

Problem Statement

Doctoral students at Pepperdine University's GSEP need support at the individual, departmental, relational, and institutional level to complete successfully the dissertation. The relational level includes relationships with peers, networking, and support groups as well as relationships with advisors, chairpersons, committee members, and mentors. There are measures and innovative best practices individuals, departments, faculty, and institutions can take to assist doctoral students in successfully completing the dissertation in a timely fashion. Strachan, Murray, and Grierson (2004) colloquium, "A Web-Based Tool for Dissertation Writing," argues, "Online web tools are becoming an important and accessible means of supporting learning in higher education" (p. 369). This study developed a web-based tool that incorporated three types of online space: (a) instructional material, (b) a writing space, and (c) planning templates to provide students with a holistic approach to writing and assisting doctoral students with the dissertation. An evaluation consisting of 10 questions was administered to 13 students in the dissertation phase and a focus group of six after the dissertation had been submitted. Strachan et al. stated, "Clear guidelines were offered for dissertation writing which provided students with a support framework" (p. 374). While the study reported 50% of students experienced some technical difficulties using the program, solutions have since been provided. According to Strachan et al., "The website reinforced a structured approach and gave students a feel for the organization of a dissertation, which enabled them to focus on the creative aspect of the writing itself" (p. 374).

At the institutional level, the current dissertation support Web site at the Pepperdine University GSEP is static. John Kim, director of Technology at Pepperdine University GSEP, stated, "Our current dissertation site is static. It is technically and skill-based driven" (personal communication, November 16, 2010). The GSEP dissertation support Web site reflects some attributes of Web 1.0. Using Web 1.0 technologies means that a site is static, where students go to read passively, download PDF files, and retrieve information. The primary focus consists of technical skill-based support, clearance of forms, processes and procedures for completing the dissertation, along with a focus on APA and writing. There is little sharing, exchanging of ideas, or interactivity between faculty and students. The Web site serves as a resource.

Web 2.0 is the updated version of Web 1.0. Web 2.0 is concerned with what students can actively do, create, change, upload, interact, and share online. According to John Kim, "Social software is a key component to redesigning the dissertation support Web site" (personal communication, November 16, 2010). Kim stated, "The university uses an interface called Yamer, which is modeled after Facebook" (personal communication, November 16, 2010). Yamer, which is a social network, allows users to communicate through discussion forums. According to Kim, "Students utilize electronic resources and threaded discussions the most" (personal communication, November 16, 2010). Liechty et al. (2009) claim, "Additional methods that emphasize face-to-face models also meet students' need for support" (p. 487). Creation of a model dissertation support Web site using Web 2.0 technology can address each of Liechty's et al. levels of influence simultaneously by integrating technology such as social software and the opportunity for social interaction during the dissertation phase.

Pepperdine University GSEP doctoral students are boldly leading through change at the individual and institutional levels. Doctoral students are forming student groups to support each other. Global Access Program (GAP) doctoral students are actively taking part in creating a culture of dissertation support by forming a new student group titled Learning Opportunities Strategies and Technology (LOST). Latrissa Neiworth founded LOST in 2008 and it is operated by GAP doctoral students. This online student forum offers tools, tips, and resources to help others in the program manage their journey. This student group was created to help support doctoral students from feeling lost while in the doctoral program. Current and former student feedback drives this site. Here doctoral students can communicate, share insights, and actively voice questions, comments, and concerns through threaded discussions and surveys. The LOST online community connects through face-to-face social events, blogs, and discussion forums online. Liechty et al. (2009) claims, "Students' own intrinsic ability to seek out and create social support among colleagues and mentors is critical to their success" (p. 487).

More can be done in the way of innovation for dissertation support at GSEP. Liechty et al. (2009) recommends developing, "institutional websites that offer resources and clear direction and expectations for the dissertation" (p. 490). John Kim, director of Technology, suggested creating a LOST dissertation site modeled after the GAP LOST student support group. Kim pointed out the need for continuing building a culture around dissertation support and obtaining faculty and staff support.

Purpose Statement

This study seeks to assess 2nd-year doctoral students' and dissertation students' perceptions of the current GSEP dissertation support Web site, with implications for

designing a model dissertation support Web site to help students: (a) manage the process, (b) build connectedness, and (c) better support doctoral students through the entire doctoral process from orientation, through course work, development of their topic, and finalization of the complete practice study. The broader purpose of this two-phased, mixed-method study is to assess the need for developing a model interactive Web site at Pepperdine University GSEP or other universities throughout the nation, which would support doctoral students through the dissertation phase at the departmental, individual, institutional, and relational level.

Research Questions

This study will address the following research questions:

- 1. What are 2nd-year doctoral students' and dissertation students', at Pepperdine University GSEP in the EDOL doctoral program, perceptions of the existing dissertation support Web site?
- 2. What do 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students at Pepperdine University GSEP in the EDOL doctoral program, recommend as future enhancements to a dissertation support Web site?
- 3. What do 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students, at Pepperdine University GSEP in the EDOL doctoral program, recommend as a future model for a state-of-the-art dissertation support Web site?

Theoretical Framework

Tinto's (1985, 1993) stages of doctoral persistence and Tinto's (1993) model of institutional departure will be used as a theoretical framework for this study to develop a doctoral support Web site. According to Tinto (1993), "There is a complexity of

behaviors that give rise to student departure" (p. 186). Each action and commitment requires that institutions adopt a new way of thinking about educational departure. Still Tinto contends, "For some students regardless of the supports put in place leaving can be just as educational as staying" (p. 187). According to Tinto, this model takes seriously that both forms of integration, social and intellectual, are essential to student persistence. Tinto (1985, 1993) claims two systems, the academic and social domain, overlap and are equally important to the development of students' academic and social integration.

Tinto's (1993) Model of Institutional Departure Principle III Social and Intellectual Community serves as the justification for the dissertation support Web site. Principle III states effective student retention programs should evaluate the services, program, and actions of the institution. The goal is not to retain students but to educate them and understand there are complex and dynamic relationships among the institution, individual, and faculty members when earning the doctorate. Tinto's Principles of Institutional Departure and the Undergraduate Persistence Model will serve as the framework for the study. The models form the conceptual basis of the research on social and intellectual integration.

Limitations

Results of the study will apply to a limited population at Pepperdine University GSEP. The researcher sampled 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students in EDOL from the Irvine and West Los Angeles campus, in the spring and summer semester of 2011. The small sample size limits the study generalizability. Furthermore, the deployment of the survey during the summer term could affect the response rate.

The researcher assumes doctoral students in EDOL responded accurately and

truthfully to the survey items. It is the intention of the researcher that this study contributes to the literature and provides an avenue for further researcher in the area of web-based dissertation support.

Definition of Terms

Key terms used throughout this study are defined below.

ABD: The term ABD refers to a doctoral candidate who has completed two thirds of all necessary requirements for completion of a doctorate. Some scholars have even termed ABD as All But Done. The title is given to one in a doctoral program who has completed course work, comprehensive examination, and preliminary oral defense of chapters 1, 2, and 3.

Adult Learner: An adult learner is any student who is age 18 or older. All adult learners described in this study are enrolled in graduate courses at Pepperdine University, a 4-year institution of higher education.

Adult Learning Theory: Adult learning theory is an idea or belief about the way in which adults learn. Adult learning theory operates under a different set of assumptions of learning and teaching. Adult learning theories help to guide educator's actions and understand adult learners' behavior. A main premise is adult learners learn best in informal, comfortable, flexible, nonthreatening settings.

Andragogy: Andragogy is a theory of adult learning as described by Malcolm Knowles. Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (2005) define Andragogy as, "the art and science of helping adults learn" (p. 61). According to Knowles et al., "Andragogy was ostensibly the antithesis of the pedagogical model" (p. 61).

Appreciative Inquiry (AI): AI is an approach that has made considerable impact

on organizational development. It provides a critical new way of thinking about organizational change and improvement. In a 4-D Cycle, the change agent(s) Discover the best of what is, Dream what might be, Design what should be, and leave a Destiny. The last cycle includes how to empower, learn, adjust, or improvise the new system.

Dissertation Student: A dissertation student is defined as any student who has successfully completed all coursework, met all program requirements, and passed the comprehensive examination, at their respective university.

Learning/Instructional Theory: Barr and Tagg (1995) present a transformative learning model that moves away from the predominate instructional paradigm. A learning or instructional theory is an idea or belief that presents basic principles of good learning and teaching. Learning theories help to guide educators' actions and focus primarily on the student as a self-directed learner.

Pedagogy: Knowles et al. (2005) defines Pedagogy as, "the art and science of teaching children" (p. 61). It is a set of assumptions and beliefs about learning for children and teaching children that evolved between the seventh and 12th centuries. The pedagogical model derived from the monastic and cathedral schools of Europe out of their experience teaching boys. Knowles et al. claims, "The pedagogical model assigns to the teacher full responsibility for making decisions about what will be learned, how it will be learned, when it will be learned and if it is learned" (p. 61).

Reentry Students: Reentry students are described as students older than the age of 25 and who have been away from formal education for at least 2 years. Reentry students represent a wide variety of ages, attitudes, and interests. Reentry students, especially women, make up a large portion of graduate and doctoral students.

Second-Year Doctoral Student: A 2nd-year doctoral student is defined as any student who has completed at least 1 full year of doctoral course work at his or her respective university.

Self-Directed Learning: Self-directed learning is a process in which individuals take initiative without the help of others in understanding their learning needs, setting goals, identifying resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes. Knowles et al. (2005) states it is a learner's self-concept of being responsible for his or her own decisions and for his or her own life. Adult learners have a need to be perceived as self-directed learners. Knowles et al. suggests, "Educators can create learning experiences in which adult learners are helped to make the transition from dependent to self-directing learners" (p. 65).

Organization of the Study

This mixed-methods study is categorized into five chapters. After presenting the background, need for the study, statement of the problem, purpose statement, and research questions, Chapter 1 concludes with limitations, definitions of terms, and organization of the study.

Chapter 2 begins with an overview of Tinto's (1985) Undergraduate Persistence Model and Tinto's (1993) Model of Institutional Departure as the theoretical framework followed by AI, a positive change model. Chapter 2 provides a review of literature related to AI, Andragogy, education versus learning, curriculum planning, and Web site development. The chapter concludes with Web 2.0 tools, web design, e-mentoring, and face-to-face mentoring.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of mixed-methods approaches, strategies, and the

selection of Sequential Explanatory Design. Next, the researcher details a series of requests and approvals to conduct the study. Sources of data are outlined, including population and sampling techniques, and a data collection plan, which includes survey instrument development and content validity procedures. The design plan is framed within an ethical framework, followed by an explanation of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process, and thoughts on moral authority. Last, the proposed data analysis procedures begin with a statement of personal biases followed by mixed-methods procedures for analyzing data for Phase 1 quantitative data and Phase 2 qualitative data in the mixed-methods study.

The results from the study appear in Chapter 4. Data are analyzed and presented using a variety of statistical figures and tables to answer the proposed research questions. In addition to the statistical and visual representation of the data, short narrative descriptions and student testimonials accompany some data. Furthermore, the results are implemented into the possible development of a Web site.

Chapter 5 will present a summary of the findings, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research. Pending implications and final findings, Chapter 5 showcases a model dissertation support Web site with 2.0 technology, informational DVD, and student testimonials.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

All the good things of life have come from the world of visions and dreams. Someone entered the finer realms of life for a moment and brought back a treasure. The practical mind turned it to use, and the world was richer and better than it was before.

—Christian Larson (1911)

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the literature related to the need for designing a doctoral support Web site to support better doctoral students across three programs. The chapter begins with an overview of Tinto's (1985) Undergraduate Persistence Model and Tinto's Model of Institutional Departure followed by AI, a positive change model. Chapter 2 provides a review of literature related to AI, and Andragogy, followed by education versus learning, curriculum planning, and Web site development. The chapter concludes with Web 2.0 tools, web design, e-mentoring, and face-to-face mentoring.

Tinto's Undergraduate Persistence Model

The first stage of the model is drawn from Tinto's (1985) undergraduate persistence model; these stages are (a) adjustment, (b) incongruence, (c) difficulty, and (d) social isolation. The subsequent stages are drawn from Tinto's (1993) theoretical model of institutional departure. This model includes six principles, along with actions and commitments for institutions to implement in order to decrease individual, institutional, and system departure. Tinto's model of institutional departure "is a model of educational communities" (p. 128). Educational communities are concerned with the role of social and intellectual communities and the importance of involvement in the shaping of a student's life. In addition, Tinto claims educational communities share "ways in which diverse forms of social and intellectual involvement may be generated on campus

for different types of students" (p. 128) namely doctoral students. Furthermore, Tinto asserts, "Inherent in the model of institutional departure is a notion that colleges are systematic enterprises of a variety of linking interactive, reciprocal parts, formal and informal, academic and social" (p. 118).

Tinto's (1985) four stages of persistence are: (a) adjustment, (b) incongruence, (c) difficulty, and (d) isolation, which lead to withdrawal. Incongruence is defined as a mismatch between the individual and the institution. It is the students' perceived inability to find commonalities and mesh with the program. Difficulty occurs from the lack of integration into both the academic and social domains. Although the latter two will occur, isolation need not. Isolation is the gap, separation, and disjointedness from the culture of the school. Tinto (1993) claims the process doesn't have to be an isolated one. His early model shows all possible exits out of the university. All points ultimately lead to a form of withdrawal or institutional departure, be it voluntary or forced as a result of academic dismissal. There are three types of departure: (a) individual, (b) institutional, and (c) system departure. Tinto states, "Patterns of incongruence and isolation, more than that of academic incompetence, appear to be central to the process of individual departure" (p. 136).

Academic difficulty is the individual's inability to reach educational and occupational goals and/or failure to become or remain incorporated in the intellectual and social life of the institution. Tinto (1993) claims it is both the individual's as well as the institution's responsibility to ensure program completion or, at the very least, acknowledgement that the institution plays a role in the responsible for the loss of students. When students leave, there should be a system in place such as an exit interview

to try and understand the reasons the individual is transferring and or exiting the entire educational system. Schools should have a wrap-around service in place to support students even upon exiting the institution. Tinto asserts if the student chooses to transfer to another program, the institution should do all that it can to make the transition smoother for the student.

Tinto's Model of Institutional Departure

Tinto's (1993) Model of Institutional Departure has principles and dimensions of institutional actions that can reduce isolation and withdrawal. The model's core assumptions are as followed: (a) departure is marked by a passage of old and new associations and new forms of membership in the social and intellectual communities of college, (b) individual leaving is an interactional system, (c) both intellectual and social integration are essential to persistence, and (d) the model of institutional departure is a model of educational communities. The first sequence of the model defines the term dropout in Dimensions of Institutional Actions.

Define term: Defining dropout from higher education.

Principle I: Examining dropout as individual and institutional failure.

Principle II: Ascertaining goals and commitments of students and discernment of the institutional goals and commitments.

The second principle is to ascertain clearly and systematically the goals and commitments of the student and the institution's goals. Although student commitment and intentions matter, Tinto (1993) says it is what happens after entry that matters most when examining student commitment and their ability to persist; support must be made available at the outset of the program. Tinto states that counselors and advisors should

never underestimate the power of an individual's resolve. The first step is to ascertain the goals and commitments of entering students. Institutions can make it a point to ascertain the individual's commitment level and institutional level of commitment during selection and recruitment. For instance, are doctoral students entering for program completion, career advancement, or personal growth? Other factors to determine during orientation are whether students want to use the program to transfer to another institution for career mobility, obtain a new position, earn additional educational credits, or possibly earn salary scale points. Some will undoubtedly leave because of academics, but there are other external factors such as incongruence, changing goals, advancement in careers, and/or transfer to less rigorous and restrictive programs that are also causes of departure. The model of departure then moves on to outline the general Principles of Effective Retention.

There are three principles of effective retention according to Tinto (1993):

- I. Institutional Commitment to Students
- II. Educational Commitment to Students
- III. Social and Intellectual Community

Principle III is committed to the development of supportive social and educational communities in which students are fully integrated as competent members. The researcher focused on the principles of effective retention Principle III, Social and Intellectual Community, and actions the institution can take such as developing supportive online social communities to avoid social isolation as the theoretical framework for designing the Web site. Tinto (1985) suggests that persistence is greatly enhanced when both forms of integration occur. Tinto (1993) claims, "When the culture

of the academic and social systems are supportive of each other each other, then the two systems may work in consonance to reinforce integration in both the academic and social systems of the institution" (p. 119).

ΑI

AI is a form of organizational analysis first developed by David Cooperrider. *Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Revolution in Change,* written by Cooperrider and Whitney (2005), created a narrative-based process of positive change. AI is a cycle of activity that engages every member of the organization on all levels through interviews and deep dialogue about strengths, capabilities, and approaching problems from the creative side. It is the study of the best of what has been and what can be. AI asks people to develop positive propositions that will ultimately guide their future. AI theory states organizations are centers of human relatedness and relationships thrive where there is an appreciative eye.

Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) claim, "AI embodies both a philosophy and a methodology for change" (p. 49). AI is grounded in five principles and scholarly streams of thought (Cooperrider, Sorensen, Whitney, & Yaeger, 2000, p. 17). The five principles are summarized from Cooperrider et al. (2000) and Cooperrider and Whitney and outlined below:

Constructionist Principle: This principle states human knowledge and
organizational destiny are interwoven. We are constantly involved in
understanding and making sense of the world around us. Constructivism is the
approach to human science that replaces the individual with the relationship as
the locus of knowledge.

- 2. Simultaneity Principle: This principle asserts inquiry and change are not separate moments, but are simultaneous. Inquiry is intervention. The seeds of change, the things people talk about, discover, and that inspire images of the future are implicit in the very first question we ask.
- 3. Poetic Principle: This principle claims an organization's story is constantly being coauthored. Past, presents, and futures are endless sources of learning and interpretation.
- 4. Anticipatory Principle: This principle states our positive images of the future lead our positive actions. This is the increasingly energizing basis and presuppositions of AI. The image of the future guides the current behavior of any organization. Inquiring in ways that redefine anticipatory reality create positive images may be the most important aspect of any change process.
- 5. Positive Principle: The positive principle states building and sustaining momentum requires large amounts of positive affect and social bonding. The more positive the questions we ask, the more long lasting and successful the change. A change agent can make a significant difference by simply asking and crafting unconditionally positive questions.

The main premise of AI is to value what is best. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) claim, "AI seeks, fundamentally to build a constructivist union between a whole person and the massive entirety of what people talk about as past and present capabilities" (p. 5).

AI begins by first selecting an affirmative topic. This is placed among the four phases called the 4-D cycle. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) state, "AI topics become an organization's agenda for learning, knowledge sharing, and action" (p. 17). The topic

then sets the stage for the 4-D cycle. The topics are written into AI-based questions and are used in the discovery interviews. The affirmative topic germinates in the dream phase, lays the groundwork for creating positive propositions, and becomes the catalyst for action in the fourth phase—the destiny phase. The cyclical 4-D cycle is shown in Figure 1.

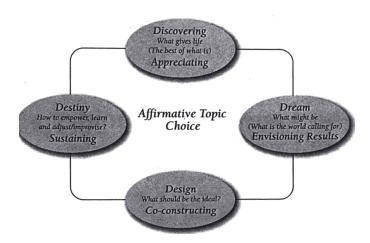


Figure 1. Cyclical 4-D cycle. From Appreciative Inquiry A Positive Revolution in Change (p. 16), by D. Cooperrider & D. Whitney, 2005, San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler. Copyright 2005 by Berrett-Koehler. Reprinted with permission.

The following is a summary of each phase of the AI 4-D Cycle.

- Discovery: This phase entails mobilizing and engaging all stakeholders in a conversation about strengths and best practices. In this phase, stakeholders identify the best of what has been and what is.
- 2. Dream: This phase entails dreaming and visualizing a better future, product development, and innovative systems. A higher-purpose question is asked: What is the world calling us to become?
- 3. Design: This phase entails the coconstructing of positive possibility propositions of the ideal future for the organization.

4. Destiny: This phase entails the legacy and best practices that will be left behind to add to the organizational memory.

According to Cooperrider et al. (2000), the last D in the 4-D cycle used to be termed delivery, but it simply did not capture the essence of AI, so it was replaced with the word destiny. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) state, "Our positive image of the future leads our positive actions" (p. 22).

Applying AI 4-D Cycle

There are many ways emerging on how to apply the 4-D cycle. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) proposed two of the most widely used systems: (a) whole-system inquiry, and (b) AI Summit.

Whole-system inquiry engages all stakeholders on all levels; customers and interested community members participate in the discovery phase (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). They are trained as interviewers then they set out to gather personal-best stories to use as benchmarks. Stakeholders are charged with envisioning their collective future and launching innovative teams to carry out the new initiatives. The final stage in whole-system inquiry occurs when "the best practices are then disseminated throughout the organization in various forms such as newsletters, briefings, meetings, postings, and within departments" (p. 38).

Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) describe the AI summit as "A large-scale meeting process that focuses on discovering and developing an organization's positive core and designing it into strategic business processes, such as marketing; customer service; leadership and human resource development; and new product development" (p. 38). It is typically a 4-day conference that results in strong relational bonds being formed.

A typical AI summit follows the 4-D cycle by focusing on each stage for an entire day.

Hammonds (1998), author of *A Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry*, summarizes the main tenets of AI. Hammonds outlines the assumptions, classic questions, and differences between the problem-solving model developed by Levinson and AI model developed by Cooperrider.

Hammonds (1998) states eight basic assumptions exist about AI:

- 1. In every society, organization, or group something works.
- 2. What we focus on becomes our reality.
- 3. Reality is created in the moment, and there are multiple realities.
- 4. The act of asking questions of an organization or group influences the group in some way.
- 5. People have more confidence and comfort to journey to the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known).
- 6. If we carry parts of the past forward, they should be what are best about the past.
- 7. It is important to value differences.
- 8. The language we use creates our reality.

Hammonds (1998) goes on to say assumptions are nothing more than a set of shared beliefs by a group. Schein (2004) declares when a group becomes less and less conscious of beliefs and values, it will begin to treat them as nonnegotiable. When the group takes theses beliefs and core values for granted and they drop out of consciousness, they become part of the group's identity and are taught to newcomers. Schein states, "This concept of assumptions, as opposed to beliefs and values, implies nonnegotiability"

(p. 16). Schein asserts, "Definitions of culture that deal with values must specify that culture consists of nonnegotiable values—which I am calling assumptions" (p. 16).

According to Hammonds (1998), assumptions:

- Are statements or rules that explain what a group generally believes.
- Explain the context of the group's choices and behaviors.
- Usually are not visible to or verbalized by the participants/members; rather they develop and exist.
- Must be made visible and discussed before anyone can be sure of the group's beliefs.
- Are a set of beliefs shared by a group that causes the group to think and act in certain ways.
- Become a shorthand way for making quick decisions and acting.
- Shorten the time needed to stop and think and constantly reevaluate what they believe and how they should act.

In addition, Hammonds (1998) argues there are downsides to holding assumptions and using quick fixes to evaluate and solve problems. By using this shorthand technique, one develops the tendency to: (a) develop scripts for ways of acting and thinking, (b) maintain outdated scripts, (c) operate at the unconscious level, (d) fail to see new data that contradicts their belief, or (e) reevaluate and make assumptions visible by writing them and reviewing them.

Hammonds (1998) cited Cooperrider et al. model of organizational diagnosis as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

AI Into Organizational Life

AI	Problem-Solving Model
Appreciating and valuing the best of	Felt need
"what is"	Identification of Problem
Envisioning "what might be"	Analysis of causes
Dialoging "what should be"	Analysis of possible solutions
Innovating "what will be"	Action planning
	Treatment
Basic assumption: An organization is a	Basic assumption: An organization is a
mystery to be embraced	problem to be solved

Note. AI = Appreciative Inquiry. From *Appreciative Inquiry* (p. 23), by D. Cooperrider, P. Sorensen, D. Whitney, & T. Yaeger, 2000, Champaign, II: Stipes. Copyright (2000) by Stipes. Reprinted with permission.

Senge's (1991) article, "Learning to Alter Mental Models," states, "A problem-solving orientation tends to extract an emotional toll from the people in the organization, and clearly cramps imagination" (p. 23). The perils of problem solving can be a source of limitation and small thinking. Senge argues problem solvers are fundamentally reactive. Senge claims there are two great energies that stimulate change: fear and aspiration.

According to Senge, a problem-solving outlook limits creativity in certain ways. To avoid reactive thinking, shift paradigms, and ultimately change thought patterns, leaders must first become aware of locked mind-sets, recognize them, and become a "paradigm buster" (p. 23). Furthermore, Senge claims a problem-solving mind-set produces episodes of abrupt change rather than continuous, proactive, evolutionary change such as the AI 4-D cycle.

Cooperrider et al. (2000) claim, "AI makes it easier for the organization to honor those things that should be preserved when valuing what is best, envisioning what might be, dialoging about what should be and innovating what will be" (p. 63). When an

organization is able to recognize and value its strengths and what it is already doing well, it makes it easier to examine other areas or systems that might need adjusting. Such is the case with the dissertation support Web site. AI will offer faculty members a different lens to view what is best about the site and how to add to it to serve and support doctoral students.

Head and Young's (as cited in Cooperrider et al., 2000) article, "Initiating Culture Change in Higher Education Through Appreciative Inquiry," claims, "the traditional academic culture is grounded in philosophy, ritual and practice...in this culture, loyalty to the discipline transcends commitment to the institution" (p. 166). According to Head and Young, any intervention efforts attempted, "must be designed to gain faculty's active support and involvement" (p. 166). Head and Young assert, "Since it is anothema to faculty for anything to be imposed from without, the process of change must generate from the voice of the faculty" (p. 166). Thus AI is the best change model to use when working with educators. It can literally breathe life, strength, and proactive response into a crisis. Head and Young state, "Appreciative inquiry seems uniquely designed to fit the academy" (p. 166). AI is a strengths-based positive approach to change management, which involves unleashing human potential and opening lines of communication in a learning organization. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) claim, "Human systems grow in the direction of what they persistently ask questions about, and this propensity is strongest and most sustainable when the means and the ends of inquiry are positively correlated" (p. 9). The very act of asking questions changes the culture. Cooperrider and Whitney claim, "The questions we ask set the stage for what we find, and what we discover [the data] becomes the linguistic material, the stories, out of which the future is

conceived and constructed" (p. 51).

Cooperrider et al. (2000) assert, "AI uses the power of powerful questioning to develop a database out of which we can envision more proactive and positive futures" (p. 167). Classic questions such as: What is it that you want more of in your organization?; Describe a time in your organization you consider a highpoint experience?; Without being modest, tell me what it is that you value most about yourself and your organization?; and Imagine your organization 10 years from now, when everything is just as you always wished it could be. What is different? How have you contributed to this dream organization? Classic questions such as the ones stated above prompt deep dialoguing and envisioning of the future.

At the heart of AI is the appreciative interview that Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) describe as, "a one-on-one dialogue among organizations members and stakeholders using questions related to highpoint experiences" (p. 14). With this in mind, the researcher obtained information in the form of interviews of various stakeholders, decision makers. In addition, the researcher conducted dialogues with faculty members at the monthly faculty meeting to ask for recommended books, links, videos, and suggestions on how to thrive in the program, to add to the web design, to make it rich, and to make it interactive. According to Cooperrider and Whitney, "In AI, intervention gives way to inquiry, imagination, and innovation" (p. 8). The faculty's voice and insights are essential to developing a fully integrated and interactive doctoral support Web site.

Last, the use of AI is similar to mixed methods in that it collects quantifiable data first and then develops themes through one-on-one interviews and focus groups.

Hammonds (1998) claims AI is a different approach to research and dialog. Cooperrider et al. (2000) purport, "The purpose of survey-guided AI is to invite whole-system exploration into an organization's highest human values. Instead of problem diagnosis, there is inquiry into hopes, dreams and visions" (p. 155). The survey then guides the process, "Instead of the survey being a mirror of what is it is an intervention into what might be" (p. 156). AI is a radical rethinking of the survey-guided method from the perspective of AI. AI follows mixed-methods strategies such as development of an instrument, use of open-ended questions, and use of focus groups. From the qualitative data, themes emerge, as with mixed method, and are explored. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) assert, "Appreciative Inquiry is a philosophy, it's a methodology for working with organizations, and it's an intervention theory" (p. 166).

Hammonds (1998) called AI a philosophy. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) referred to AI as, "a methodology for working with organizations and it's an intervention theory" (p. 7). With this in mind, the researcher utilized AI as the basis and model of change to work in conjunction with a mixed-methods approach.

Klein and Izzo's (1998) text, Awakening Corporate Soul: Four Paths to Unleash the Power of People at Work, speaks of this same philosophy of looking within and pulling from a positive source of energy to solve organizational problems. According to Klein and Izzo, the four paths to unleashing the power of people at work are "about how to unlock the potential in their people" (p. 5). Awakening corporate soul, much as with AI, begins with questions. Klein and Izzo claim, "Questions become doorways that open us to new domains of choice previously unconsidered" (p. 49). Klein and Izzo go on to say, "These thought-provoking questions, or koans, act as catalysts to initiate

breakthroughs in thinking, perceiving, and acting" (p. 49).

Yet another text predates Klein and Izzo's (1998) thoughts on spirituality in the workplace. Larson (1911), a forward thinker of metaphysics and spiritual thought leader as well as author of more than 40 books, including *The Pathways of Roses*, declares, "A genius is asleep in the subconscious of every mind; a spiritual giant is within us awaiting recognition; and in the soul is the Christ knocking at the door" (p. 70). Klein and Izzo urge readers to awaken the slumbering giant of our soul and bring those energies into the workplace. Larson argues for the acknowledgment of the mind, body, and soul, "but it is the life we live [in the soul that] we invariably bring forth into the mind and body" (p. xi). Larson claims the soul determines our reality because it is the part that taps into the divine. To tap into the divine is to tap into what is best about man.

Larson (1911) adamantly believes, "We give life to our work" (p. 40). Whatever our line of work, Larson asserts, "When we work, every muscle in the body should be filled with the spirit" (p. 71). Larson states, "The expression of the spirit should be universal in all the actions of man" (p. 70). Larson goes on to say:

Whatever our field of action may be we may give the very best that there is within us...hide nothing that has worth; use every talent in full measure; bring forth into life and usefulness the highest powers that you know you possess. (p. 50)

Klein and Izzo (1998) echo Larson's sentiment, "When the personal life is separated from the spirit, darkness, confusion, sickness and trouble begin" (p. 70). People simply cannot separate who they are, what they do, or their spiritual self and work self and expect great results to occur (Klein & Izzo, 1998; Larson, 1911).

Klein and Izzo (1998) assert, "Getting everyone within a corporation to be willing

to look inside themselves, rid themselves of outmoded habits, and openly explore new choices is not finished in a two-day workshop" (p. 49). As with AI, change on this scale and magnitude requires focused attention and deep systemic change. Klein and Izzo argue, "Awakening the corporate soul is a nascent movement that seeks to reclaim the spiritual impulse that is at the heart of work" (p. 4). Klein and Izzo claim, "This fresh approach is about people wanting work to have meaning and even more, to engage more of them at the deepest levels of their capacity" (p. 4). As with AI, the 4-D cycle—discover, dream, design, and destiny awakening corporate soul—ignites passion by following the (a) Path of Self, (b) Path of Contribution, (c) Path of Craft, and (d) Path of Community to unleash innovation and increase organizational commitment.

Using AI coupled with awakening corporate soul's four paths to unleash the power of people at work is the best way to encourage change on all levels. This study sought to gain input both from students and faculty members to redesign the dissertation support Web site.

Andragogy

Knowles has been called the Father of Andragogy. Andragogy is the study of adult learning, it operates under a different set of assumptions (Knowles et al., 2005). Unlike pedagogy, which focuses on the teaching of children and operates from the Deficit Theory, Andragogy is the teaching of adults. The pedagogical model is a set of beliefs about teaching and learning stemming from as far back as the seventh century. This model "assigns the teacher full responsibility for making all decisions about what they learn, how they learn, when it will be learned, and if it has been learned" (p. 60). Freire (2007), author of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, claims the pedagogical model operates

within the same constructs as banking and narrative education. The pedagogical model is more of a passive way of obtaining knowledge, which Knowles et al. (2005) state is, "leaving the learner only a submissive role of following a teacher's instruction" (p. 62). The learner has little input. Pedagogy is teacher centered and teacher directed.

Knowles et al. (2005) identified six assumptions about adult learning that are different from those of the pedagogical model: (a) the need to know, (b) learners' self-concept, (c) the role of the learners' experience, (d) readiness to learn, (e) orientation to learning, and (f) motivation. Andragogy seeks to include the adult learner's experiences, interests, and motives in the learning process. The researcher implemented the Andragogical model in the development of the dissertation support Web site to satisfy doctoral students' interests and to meet unmet social needs. Andragogy is student centered, student directed, and operates within the learning paradigm. The learning paradigm focuses on the learner and learning outcomes. It is imperative that doctoral students' voices and opinions are sought after and implemented to develop a worthwhile, user-friendly support site that promotes social integration into the dominant culture.

The researcher sought input in designing the Web site prior to launching it. When working with adult learners, it is best to involve the learners in the process so their interests and needs are met. There are inherent differences between the pedagogical model of learning and the Andragogical model of learning. Knowles et al. (2005) offers an Andragogical process model for learning. Table 5 shows Knowles Process Elements of Andragogy juxtaposed to the pedagogical model of learning.

Table 5

Knowles's et al. (2005) Process Elements of Andragogy

Element	Pedagogical Model	Andragogical Model
Preparing	Minimal	Provide information. Prepare for participation
Learners		helps develop realistic expectations begin thinking about content.
Climate	Authority-oriented Formal Competitive	Relaxed trusting mutually respectful, informal warm collaborative supportive
Planning	By teacher	Mechanism for mutual planning by learners
Diagnosis	By teacher	By mutual assessment
Setting Objectives	By teacher	By mutual negotiation
Designing lesson plans	Logic of subject matter; content units	Sequenced by readiness problem units
Learning Activities	Transmittal techniques	Experiential techniques
Evaluation	By teacher	Mutual re-diagnosis of needs mutual measurement of program

Note. From *The Adult Learner a Definitive Classic in Adult Education and Human Resource Development*, (p.116), by M. Knowles, 2005, Burlington, MA: Elsevier. Copyright (2005) by Elsevier. Reprinted with permission.

This process model is starkly different from the content-based instructional model in which the teacher or researcher decides what knowledge or skills need to be transmitted, arranges the content, and selects the means for transmitting the content via video, lectures, exercises, or films. The andragogical model prepares a set of procedures for involving the learner (Knowles et al., 2005). Learning is self-directed. Banking and narrative education are concerned with transmitting knowledge, while the process model is concerned with "helping the learners acquire information and skills" (p. 115).

Preparing the Learner

Knowles et al. (2005) states, "[The] Andragogical and learning projects models, especially, the entire systems are built around the concept of self-directed learning" (p. 117). With this in mind, Knowles et al. suggests when designing a program for new entrants, build in time to introduce and prepare the learner for the new learning activities.

The purpose is to expose the students to a "truly adult educational program" (p. 117). This focus on social integration is necessary to allow new, transfer, and reentry students an opportunity to get accustomed to the culture and the academic and social demands. Knowles et al. state, "The range of the activity may vary from an hour to a day in length, depending on the intensity of the total program" (p. 117). Knowles et al., suggest three elements to include in the learning-how-to-learn activity: (a) A brief explanation of the difference between proactive and reactive learning, (b) short experience identifying (who knows what or who has experience doing what), and (c) a miniproject in using the skills of proactive learning. By setting aside this time for social interaction and integration, students learn the formal and informal rules for what's expected, their roles and responsibilities as doctoral students, and their accompanying intellectual and social obligations. Tinto (1993) states that more frequent faculty interactions with students increase both goal and institutional commitment.

Education Versus Learning

Knowles et al. (2005) distinguish between education and learning. Education focuses on the educator, while learning focuses on the learner. They define education as an "activity undertaken or initiated by one or more agents that is designed to effect changes in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of individuals. This term emphasizes the educator, the agent of change" (p. 10). Furthermore they argue, "It is the role of the educator to create the stimuli and change the environment to produce learning. Learning involves a change in a person. The assumptions about learning are as followed: (a) it involves change; (b) it is the acquisition of habits, knowledge, and attitudes; (c) and learning is a process.

Freire (2007) argues, "Pedagogy is an instrument of dehumanization" (p. 54). Education, according to Freire, can be used as an oppressive tool used for dominance or for liberating minds, awakening consciousness, or as a tool of freedom. Educational liberation can only take place if the dynamics between teacher-student shift and dialog and communication take place. Freire claims, "Without dialog there is no communication and without communication there can be no true education" (p. 93). Learning requires a mutual exchange of ideas. Thus, for doctoral students truly to learn and become fully competent members of the institution, there must be a forum such as the dissertation support Web site to interact, pose inquiry, and exchange ideas among students and faculty. Dialog exists only when learners are engaged in critical thinking. Using features such as live streaming, e-conferencing, and e-mentoring allow faculty members and students to engage in critical thinking. Dialog takes place in an open, mutually respected environment where others' gifts and contributions are valued. Dialog cannot exist without humility. Freire posits, "How can I dialog if I am closed minded? How can I dialog if I'm afraid of being displaced?" (p. 92). Often doctoral students are embarrassed or simply afraid to ask questions about the dissertation process. They are afraid of how they will be perceived by their peers. Many questions will go unanswered as the fear of displacement or being perceived as inadequate, incompetent, or slow is enough to stifle a doctoral student's voice inside of the classroom. Everything is high stakes at this educational level. The doctoral program is highly competitive. An open forum, which suspends judgment and is created specifically for doctoral students should be designed. This space should foster critical thinking, encourage dialog, and allow dissertation students to ask questions freely, without penalty of being judged for not knowing. In this way, students

will obtain both social and academic support.

The Deficit Theory is a negative view of learning. As with banking education, it too operates under a different set of assumptions about education and the learner. The following is Freire's (2007) Banking Concept of Education, which outlines the basic Deficit Theory assumptions about education:

- The teacher teaches and the students are taught;
- The teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
- The teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
- The teacher talks and the students listen—meekly;
- The teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;
- The teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;
- The teacher acts and the students have an allusion of acting;
- The teacher chooses the program content and students adapt to it;
- The teacher confuses authority of knowledge with his or her own professional authority; and
- The teacher is the subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects. (p.74)

Freire (2007) describes the relationship between student and teacher both inside and outside of the classroom as fundamentally narrative in character. In banking education, "the role of the teacher is to 'fill' the students with the content of his narration" (p. 70). The memorization of facts and numbers and the transactional process of depositing bits of known information to the student becomes the illusion of learning. Theory without practice, as with memorization of parcels of information, paralyzes a

student's mind, hindering critical thinking, impedes problem solving, and leads him or her to become passive learners inside of the classroom. Freire argues when students passively obtain information, like loading forms and files and reading material on Web 1.0, "they become containers—receptacles to be filled by the teacher" (p. 72). When this occurs, learning is reduced to an act of depositing. He purports, "The banking concept of education extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits" (p. 72). The Banking Concept of learning is in direct opposition to the learning paradigm and the andragogical model, which require self-directed active learners in the learning process. In order to transform our educational systems from the instructional paradigm and use of banking and narrative education to the learning paradigm, which focuses on learning, adult learning principles must be incorporated into the design of the Web site.

Hooks (1994), author of *Teaching to Transgress Education as the Practice of Freedom*, speaks about the needed shift in the teaching paradigm to engage critical thinkers, as does Barr and Tagg's (1995) article, "From Teaching to Learning." Hooks declares in her opening line, "There is not nearly enough practical discussion on ways the classroom setting can be transformed so that the learning experience is inclusive" (p. 35). She goes on to state, "Teachers—on all levels, from elementary to university settings—must acknowledge that our styles of teaching may need to change" (p. 35). This new shift to create a dynamic and engaging learning environment for doctoral students "must be a setting for folks to voice fears, to talk about what they are doing, how they are doing it and why" (p. 38). In thinking of this, the researcher encourages doctoral students to share openly their voice and experiences via blogging and reflect on their learning in their respective programs. Building a community of learners will create a climate of openness

and academic rigor. Hooks' philosophy of building a community of learners fits within Tinto's (1993) model of institution departure, a model that focuses on communities both academic and social. Even in developing a web-based support site, the climate must be relaxed, trusting, mutually respectful, collaborative, and supportive for students to feel safe in the neutral setting (Hooks, 1994; Knowles et al., 2005). This environment will ensure that no student remains invisible or socially isolated from the institution (Hooks, 1994). The researcher will strive to create this safe online environment for doctoral students by posting netiquettes, clear expectations, and norms for useable and restrictive capabilities. Hooks asserts, "transforming these classrooms is a great challenge" (p. 43). Much like the classroom, transformation of the dissertation support Web site will be a challenge as doctoral programs restructure traditional face-to-face platforms to include hybrid, online, and more web based support. Hooks sympathizes with educators when giving up old ways and approaches to learning. Hooks states, "There is some degree of pain involved in giving up old ways of thinking and knowing and learning new approaches" (p. 43). Using a hybrid model to socially integrate students is a new approach to learning and teaching. This new form of faculty and student interaction will undoubtedly cause some discomfort and apprehension as a new system and change is introduced. It may also be a relief for some professors, as a new and faster way to respond to and connect with students. Teaching to transgress requires shifting mental models, building safe communities of practice, and establishing rapport with students. Hooks asserts, "Students are eager to break through barriers to knowing. They are willing to surrender to the wonder of re-learning and learning ways of knowing that go against the grain" (p. 44). Doctoral Essentials dissertation support Web site will incorporate both

the intellectual and social domains as well as offer students a place to become socially connected. By overlaying the intellectual and social domains, the institution can "teach in ways that transform consciousness, creating a climate of free expression that is the essence of a truly liberatory liberal arts education" (p. 44).

Curriculum Planning

Tyler's (1949) *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* aligns learning experiences and educational purposes for a successful curriculum development. Tyler's treatise on the basic principles of instruction is a guide to program development, student learning experiences, and evaluation of a program. Tyler describes four basic areas of concern when developing or improving a plan for any curriculum; these content areas include: (a) clarifying the purpose of the program, (b) selecting learning experiences, (c) organizing the curriculum, and (d) evaluating the program. The following is an analysis of Tyler's education program criteria as it is applied to the Doctoral Essentials dissertation support Web site.

Clarifying purpose. Tyler (1949) states, "If an educational program is to be planned, it is necessary to have some conception of the goals that are being aimed at" (p. 3). The goal of Doctoral Essentials is to develop an interactive hi-tech, low-cost Web site to: (a) assist doctoral students in managing the process, (b) build connectedness, and (c) better support doctoral students through the entire doctoral process from orientation, through course work, development of their topic, and finalization of the complete practice study. The purpose of the interactive a hi-tech, low-cost dissertation support Web site is to encourage, engage, and enhance social integration, thereby avoiding social isolation and prolonged periods of ABD.

Selecting learning experiences. There must be alignment between experiences and educational purposes for a successful curriculum. Tyler (1949), as with Barr and Tagg (1995), suggests creating viable learning experiences for the learner. Tyler wrote:

The term "learning experience" refers to the interaction between the learner and the external conditions in the environment to which he can react. Learning takes place through the active behavior of the student; it is what he does that he learns, not what the teacher does. (p. 63)

With this in mind, the researcher collaborated with key stakeholders to design common social activities and learning experiences across the three doctoral programs, such as an end-of-first-year dinner or culmination luncheon for the completion of 2nd-year course work. In this way, formal rituals and traditions will be established and all doctoral students will have a common shared experience, cutting across three programs.

Web 2.0

Tools for Teaching, written by B. G. Davis (2009), is a comprehensive textbook for experienced college faculty in all disciplines, which provides strategies for learning and teaching across all aspects of college and university teaching, from planning the course to grading, and evaluation of the both students and professors. B. G. Davis refers to it as a reference book to improve learning and teaching methods. Tools for Teaching is used by college-level faculty, who wish to enhance their instructional practice, reflect on learning and teaching, and improve students' learning experiences. Tools for Teaching should be thought of as a "toolbox from which to select and adapt those ideas that match your teaching style and the needs of your students" (p. viii). There are 12 parts, including 61 chapters of enhancements and endless ways to improve, starting with Getting Under

Way, Responding to a Changing Student Body, Discussion Strategies, the Large Enrollment Course, Alternatives and Supplements to Lectures and Discussion, Enhancing Students' Learning and Motivation, Strengthening Students' Writing and Problem-Solving Skills, Testing and Grading, Presentation Technologies, Evaluation to Improve Teaching, Teaching Outside the Classroom, and Finishing Up. Each chapter includes a concise introduction, specific strategies, and researched-based teaching ideas. *Tools for Teaching* expounds on better learning and teaching strategies, but all of the techniques are not meant to be implemented within one course. B. G. Davis cautions against trying to implement everything in one course or even one year. Faculty members should selectively choose and adapt ideas to fit personal teaching style, the learning platform, and student needs.

In part five, alternative and supplements to lectures and discussion, B. G. Davis (2009) provides an overview of Web 2.0. Web 2.0 is merely the updated version of Web 1.0, a static and passive way of using the Internet. Web 2.0 is an active and dynamic process and way of learning and doing. Alexander's (2006) article, "Web 2.0: A New Wave of Innovation for Teaching and Learning?" states the term 2.0 implies a transition from Web 1.0. Alexander states few can agree on even the general outlines of Web 2.0. According to Alexander, Web 2.0 does not encompass one single development, but moreover, a term to refer to a mix of familiar and emergent technologies.

Shuen (2008), author of *Web 2.0: A Strategy Guide*, speaks about the transformative power of technology. Shuen claims Web 2.0 realizes and goes far beyond what Web 1.0 started. The fundamental difference is the users create value in Web 2.0. Web 2.0 allows users to buy, sale, trade, research, search, interact, and connect with

many more people. The shift from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 occurred when passive viewers and readers made a "quantum leap from being passive viewers and readers to becoming actively participating, socially engaged, and collaborative up *loaders*—personal contributors and creators of the Web" (p. 1). Kelly's (2005) article, "We are the Web," noted a significant change in the web around the year 2005. Kelly states, "We reached a crossover point in 2005, at which time there was more digital content being uploaded to the web than downloaded" (p. 2). There was a major shift from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 in that users became active uploaders and creators, and less passive downloaders, readers, and viewers. Web 2.0 allows users to communicate, connect, and share information freely. In this way, their combined efforts are multiplied rather than added together (Shuen, 2008). Web 2.0 users are active, creative, collaborative, and interactive.

Shuen (2008) exclaims, "We saw Web 2.0 not as a new version of the Web, but rather, as a realization of the Web's potential" (p. x). Shuen argues, "You don't have to be a web technologist to understand Web 2.0" (p. xviii). Web 2.0 changed how we connect socially, interact, share, and work. According to Shuen, Web 2.0 is also "about collaborative innovative online and offline sharing" (p. xx). Shuen claims, "Web 2.0 Alexander (2006) states social software has emerged as a major component of the Web 2.0 movement.

Shuen (2008) claims Web 2.0 "opens tremendous opportunities as business models catch up to the technological possibilities" (p. 1). O'Reilly (2005) argues in his paper *What is Web 2.0* that, "Web 2.0 is ultimately about harnessing network efforts and the collective intelligence of users to build applications that literally get better the more people use them" (p.1). Web 2.0 allows people with common interest to form the most

unique communities. Alexander (2006) argues, "Web-based communities have linked people around the world" (p. 2).

Shuen (2008) argues, "There has been a transition from a Web 1.0 collection of static websites to a Web 2.0 platform for a new generation of dynamic social web applications and services" (p. xvi). According to B. G. Davis (2009), "Web 2.0 was coined to refer to the websites and applications that foster collaboration, user participation, interactivity, and content sharing" (p. 181). According to Shuen, Web 2.0 is more than just technology, it focuses on connectivity and interactivity between people. Web 2.0, the updated version of Web 1.0, includes blogs, social networking, book marking, wikis, online discussions, content sharing, multiuser virtual environments (B. G. Davis, 2009). According to Shuen, "Online users are no longer limited by how many things they can find, see, or download off the Web, but rather by how many things they can do, interact, combine, remix, upload, change, and customize for themselves" (p. 1). Shuen claims the earlier version of the web was "passive and encouraged only downloading, whereas the new applications are more interactive and dynamic, encouraging users to be more involved and upload content onto the Web" (p. xvi). Shuen goes on to say that architectures and recent technologies have triggered a transition from a "Web 1.0 collection of static websites to a Web 2.0 platform for a new generation of dynamic social web applications and services" (p. xvi). B. G. Davis (2009) outlines general principle concepts underlying Web 2.0:

- Facilitating the individual creation and manipulation of digital information;
- Offering strong support and low barriers to sharing individual creations;
- Harnessing the power of the crowd and collective intelligence of large groups;

- Maximizing the architecture of participation whereby the service improves over time as usage increases; and
- Affirming openness in source software and content distribution, allowing users to access, reuse, and recombine digital material.
- B. G. Davis (2009) provides three general strategies when implementing Web 2.0 into a course or program: (a) be open to new developments, (b) select technologies based on pedagogical principles, and (c) recognize the educational opportunities and challenges posed by Web 2.0.
- B. G. Davis (2009) provides numerous samples of applications in *Tools for Teaching*. Alexander (2006) asserts a group of web projects and services became perceived as especially connective, receiving the rubric of social software: blogs, wikis, pod casting, video blogs (vlog), and other tools such as Myspace and Facebook. Below are three samples of applications that will be used on the Doctoral Essentials Web site.

Blogs are a series of time-stamped entries posted by the blog's creator, which also allow comments to be contributed by its readers. A vlog uses video as the primary source of sharing information. Blog entries can be updated daily or weekly. B. G. Davis (2009) states instructors can use Blogs for the following purposes:

- Provide answers to questions about course/program content;
- Give students their unvarnished point of view and invite conversation, reaction, and comments;
- Create a class/program Website, use plug ins that allows for e-mail, voice mail, and quick polling; and
- Provide a forum for peer review, with students posting drafts and final

versions of papers so that others may read and comment on them. (p. 183) Wikis allow multiple users to write and edit a Web document. Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia that allows collective composition from multiple collaborators on a topic. There are advantages as well as disadvantages to sites such as Wikipedia. B. G. Davis (2009) states the voice of many collaborators "lends breadth and depth to entries" (p. 184), but oftentimes because sources are not cited, the accuracy, credibility, and reliability of the information are questionable.

McGee and Diaz's (2007) article "Wikis and Podcasts and Blogs Oh My! What Is a Faculty Member Supposed to Do?" outlines ways in which new and veteran faculty members can contribute to the information technology revolution at their institution and stay abreast of the current technological trends impacting learning and teaching. In this article, the writers share how a faculty member's every waking moment is spent in Web 2.0. Long gone are the days of memos, e-mail, and simple voice mail. With the advent of Web 2.0, new faster innovative technologies pervade a faculty member's every free moment with text, e-mail, twitter updates, and wikis.

McGee and Diaz's (2007) argue the new resources are an advantage, but they can become overwhelming, as experienced by the author in the article. A college professor's time is inundated with not only teaching but updates, last-minute checking of assignments, downloading of material, and blackboard posting, what is a faculty member to do with so much technology at his or her fingertips? This article is meant to share how to stay abreast and keep your sanity in the ever-changing, fast-paced learning and teaching environment.

B. G. Davis (2009) suggests program directors and instructors use wikis to:

- Produce a collaborative set of class notes or course material;
- Construct bibliographies, reference lists, or summaries of key points at the end of class;
- Facilitate cross-disciplinary or cross-institutional collaboration; and
- Have students draft, revise, and submit individual assignments, allowing the instructor to see the evolution of the paper.

Social bookmarking and tagging. Social bookmarking can be used on the Doctoral Essential Web site to create a list of useful web links to supportive dissertation sites and writing sites. According to Alexander's (2006) article, "Web 2.0: A New Wave of Innovation for Teaching and Learning?" social bookmarking is one of the signature Web 2.0 categories. B. G. Davis (2009) states that tagging of key words and phrases for each link will help students to "collect a set of Web resources, share their list with others, and provide a classification scheme for those resources" (p. 185). EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (2010a) 7 things you should know about Social Bookmarking report "Social bookmarking is particularly useful when collecting a set of resources that are to be shared with others" (para. 2). EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative advances learning through information and technology innovation and reports on current and emerging technological trends, such as social bookmarking and its uses in the academic setting. EDUCAUSE series, 7 Things You Should Know About Social Bookmarking, provides a succinct review of: (a) what is it, (b) who is doing it, (c) how it works, (d) why is it significant, (e) downsides to social bookmarking, (f) where it's going, and (g) implications for teaching and learning. EDUCAUSE states social bookmarking opens the doors to new ways of organizing information. Social bookmarking is also a social

networking tool, as the service reveals the creators of tags and "provides access to that person's other bookmarked resources, users can easily make social connections with other individuals interested in just about any topic" (para. 3).

In addition, Alexander (2006) states a user does not have to be a single person; groups can create accounts. A learning community could tag key words and phrases called folksonomy. EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (2010a) Social Bookmarking states social bookmarking creates new communities, as like-minded people are able to find each other and "create new communities of users that continue to influence the ongoing evolution of folksonomies and common tags for resources" (para. 4). Alexander (2006) purports any user can create an in-box for what someone else is bookmarking.

According to EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (2010a), claim downsides to social bookmarking include that it is done by amateurs, has little oversight over what is tagged and how it is organized, and its users tag broad and general information, which leads to poor use of tags and inconsistent information. Furthermore, since social bookmarking reflects personal views and values of its community of users, there is a risk of presenting a skewed view of the value of any topic.

As for teaching and learning implications of social bookmarking, it seems as though a paradigm shift might occur from questioning where the information has come from to knowing how to retrieve and use the information (EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative, 2010a). Last, tagging information resources with keywords has the potential to change how we see, select, store, and retrieve information.

Social networking. Originally, social networking was designed to connect family, groups of friends, and build relationships (B. G. Davis, 2009). Shuen (2008)

claims, "Social networks are becoming a more and more common aspect of Websites of all kinds, giving participants opportunities to connect and share, and invite others to do the same" (p. 103). Social networking involves informally sharing various forms of media such as photos, music, and content. B. G. Davis (2009) purports, "Each participant in a social networking site creates a personal profile of interests and activities using text, photos, videos, music, and links to other profiles or Websites" (p. 185). Social networking is the new way of meeting and connecting with people. Shuen (2008) claims, "Social networking is the hallmark of Web 2.0" (p. 101). Furthermore, Shuen asserts, "Web 2.0 technologies provide an unexpected and new answer to the age-old challenge of how big companies in slow moving but highly competitive industries get dynamic capabilities" (p. 112).

Social networking has taken on new and more sophisticated forms such as Facebook, MySpace, and professional networking sites such as LinkedIn. Shuen (2008) claims, "Some social networks give their users considerably more freedom to add information" (p. 101). Shuen describes Facebook as "a social network advertising platform" (p. 70) with more than 47 million customers. Facebook is one of the most popular social networking sites, and its popularity continues to grow as users willingly post "photos of friends, personally created profile, and evolution of digital persona" (p. 70). With this sort of information, stores are able to track, single out, and build a profile on frequently visited sites, interested products, and most visited links to market to customers.

According to Shuen (2008), "Facebook allows people to communicate and work together in ways that simply weren't possible before" (p. 70). Shuen adamantly states,

"People with common goals and interests—even highly specialized and unusual pursuits—can find each other more easily and build groups" (p. 71).

Twitter is yet another forum for people to collaborate, share, and respond instantaneously using text. EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (2010b) series provides the latest information about emerging technologies, what they are, where they are going, and how and why they matter to learning and teaching, in concise white papers. The EDUCAUSE series, 7 Things You Should Know About Twitter, explains, "Twitter is an online application that is part blog, part social networking, and part cell phone/instant message (IM) tool" (para. 1). This application allows people to respond to a post using only a limited number of characters. Its purpose is to inform other users of what the individual is doing or thinking. It is a form of free thought. EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative reports Twitter can be used inside of the classroom or academically as a way for students and faculty to compare thoughts on a topic and to foster interaction and social metacognition. Twitter has more than 50 million active users. Social networking has evolved in Web 2.0 to include professional contacts, personal updates, and the creation of online identities.

According to Shuen (2008), people build connections, not necessarily the site. Shuen describes three social roles people typically play both online and offline: (a) connectors, (b) mavens, and (c) salesmen. Connectors are the social glue that wants to introduce you to everyone "you should know" (p. 71). Connectors are great resources for social matchmaking or career mentoring; they build relationships with many contacts. Mavens act as "information broker" (p. 71). Mavens tend to know and want to share the best deals and give advice on where to go, what to buy, and where to stay. They know a

lot about specific subjects and want to share what they know. Last, "salesman acts as 'evangelists' who get you to act and convince you to buy" (p. 71). Salesman are influential and lead others to take action both online and offline.

The Internet has changed how people interact, get to know each other, and share information. Shuen (2008) claims, "Some of the most popular services on the Web today are online social networks built to help people find each other, share their stories, and connect" (p. 72). Online networking is much like offline networking. Shuen argues those same skills are helpful when building an online connection. However, Shuen states, "connecting by Websites and e-mail makes it more like a network of people who are all in the same room ready to make introductions without the small talk" (p. 73).

Shuen (2008) claims, "Social networks don't have to be like Wikipedia, where users spend lots of time creating material to share with others" (p. 101). A networking site to encourage and enhance social integration can use "basic networking software capturing what users already have—acquaintances—and creating a forum that can be shared and expanded" (p. 101).

B. G. Davis (2009) claims, "Current social networking sites can enhance learning and motivation by facilitating collaboration and information sharing" (p. 185). B. G. Davis offers some tips when using campus and commercial social networking sites:

- Present yourself as trustworthy and keep entries professional,
- Respect students' privacy,
- Post pictures from class or research activities,
- Post requests to recruit students from various programs, and
- Inform students where they can form study groups through social networking

sites to exchange advice, ideas, and tips about assignments. (p. 186).

Shuen (2008) asserts, "Web 2.0 transforms the economics of knowledge-based businesses everywhere" (p. 107). Shuen goes on to say, "Knowledge-based businesses are being forced to rethink their strategies for competing in a hyper-connected, web savvy world" (p. 107). Shifts are occurring in how people work and live and how work gets done. Shuen purports these fundamental shifts in how work gets done are zooming across organizations, business and social networks, and an increasingly "flat world" (p. 109). A model dissertation site employing Web 2.0 technology will require professors to take on new roles and duties such as becoming a mentor, e-mentoring, and/or e-coaching.

Doctoral Essentials Web site will not only support doctoral students, but also help the institution survive, compete, and capitalize on the range of internal and external capabilities, know-how, know who, and networks needed to solve problems faster, better, and cheaper (Shuen, 2008).

Web Design

Don't make me think. There are numerous how-to books that provide templates for designing a Web site as well as free web pages on the Internet. When designing a web page, Krug (2006) states it is imperative to "don't make me think" (p. 11) when developing a Web site. Don't Make Me Think, by Krug, is about human interaction and web usability. This book is written in a light and humorous tone for web developers, designers, and executives and is concise enough to be read on a flight. Don't Make Me Think helps developers create a site that meets needs, is interesting and usable, and is sure to get return visitors. The main premise of this text is a good Web site should be free of visual noise, allow users to accomplish their task on the site without frustrating them, and

eliminate users' thought balloons. Simply put, "A web page should be self-evident. Obvious. Self-explanatory" (p. 11). Krug claims, "Users should be able to get it—what it is and how to use it—without expending any effort thinking about it" (p. 11). Krug argues if users get it, (a) there's a much better chance they'll find what they are looking for, (b) there's a better chance they'll understand the full range of services your site has to offer, (c) designers will have a better chance of steering their attention to other services on the site, and (d) they'll feel smarter and more in control when using the site, which will bring them back. Once a Web site page or template is found, Krug's book *Don't Make Me Think* can help determine layout, purpose, message, and effective user interface techniques. According to Krug, it is not the design but the message and material that is uploaded that matters most. A great Web site limits visual noise, is purposeful, changes often, evokes a brand or feeling, and is simple.

Krug (2006) claims when visitors come to a site, they are in a rush and are there to find answers to their questions and locate solutions quickly. Speed means everything to the end user. Krug declares, "Much of our Web use is motivated by the desire to save time" (p. 22). The primary objective for web developers is to make the site simple, easy to use and navigate. Krug suggests not wasting users' time by having them search unnecessarily on a site. The average users don't read web pages; they scan for relevant information. Krug argues, "We're really only interested in a fraction of what's on the page. We're just looking for the bits that match our interests" (p. 22). The author states scanning is how users find the relevant bits. Basically, a good Web site should be viewed as a billboard. Krug states, "If Web pages are going to be effective, they have to work most of their magic at a glance. And the best way to do this is to create pages that are

self-evident, or at least self-explanatory" (p. 19).

Krug (2006) suggests omitting needless words: (a) it reduces the noise level on the page, (b) makes the useful content prominent, and (c) makes the page shorter, allowing users to search the page without scrolling. Krug states, "Most people will spend anywhere from thirty seconds to two minutes trying to work things out before leaving frustrated and willing to share their stories of pain and confusion with anyone who will listen" (p. 56). This of course will decrease the number of subsequent visits.

Another tip Krug (2006) offers is to make the site simple; don't make users think anymore than they have to or add any additional thought balloons, such as: Is this a link or can I click that phrase? A designer's job is to eliminate questions. According to Krug, "When we're using the Web every question mark adds to our cognitive workload, distracting our attention from the task at hand" (p. 15). Krug states, "A site should be self-explanatory or as close to it as possible" (p. 47). People want to feel smart and "as a rule, people don't like to puzzle over how to do things" (p. 15). The site should be clear, clean, uncluttered, and simple to use. Krug suggests using breadcrumbs, conventions, tabs, and taglines. Krug argues when the people who build the site don't care enough to make things obvious and easy, it erodes users' confidence in the site and its publishers. Users have many choices on the web and "making choices mindless is one of the main things that makes a site easy to use" (p. 43). Last, Krug suggests getting people to test the site before deploying. One usability tester is better than none. Krug assert testers will point out what they like, what works, what doesn't, and what should be taken out or modified. Krug claims it is best to get someone in the field for which the site is designed to test it, although anyone with basic knowledge of a computer will do just fine.

The design of the dissertation support Web site will answer Krug's (2006) four basic questions: (a) Why am I here and not somewhere else?; (b) What can I do here?; (c) can this site help me?; and (d) What is the purposefulness of the site? This site will share valuable formal information about the academic requirements for completing the dissertation as well as provide informal social platforms. Krug claims, "The problem is there are no simple 'right' answers for most Web design questions. What works is good, integrated design that fills a need—carefully thought out, well executed, and tested" (p. 128).

E-Mentoring

Not all mentoring is done in person (Peddy, 2001). Some relationships develop over the telephone or the computer. Peddy argues, "Mentoring is a two-way relationship" (p. 199). According to EDUCAUSE (2008), Wikipedia one of the largest online free encyclopedia of shared information is, "itself a symbol of collective intelligence and collaboration in a Web 2.0 world" (EDUCAUSE, 2008, p.3). Compared to tradition face-to-face mentoring, E-mentoring is flexible, less restrictive, and less time consuming (E-mentoring, Wikipedia, 2010). E-mentoring is a new wave of connecting people and experts in their field by providing a mentoring relationship using online software and e-mail. E-mentoring began early in 1993 with the advent and use of the Internet to connect school-aged children with adult mentors and businesspeople (E-mentoring, Wikipedia, 2010). In its earlier stages, E-mentoring used telephonic communication and e-mail. Now, there is software made especially for mentor and protégés to login on a secure online community and interact under the supervision of moderators and coordinators. This software also protects privacy rights of both mentor and protégés. New e-mentoring

programs rely on web-based solutions, especially when minors are involved.

Much like face-to-face mentoring, the same mannerism and etiquette are required while using online mentoring software or e-mail. Johnson and Ridley (2008) state mentors must still carefully consider the match and "find a good fit" (p. 74). It is important that there is a shared interest between both parties. Peddy (2001) claims, "Whether you meet in the hall, by phone, or even by e-mail, don't forget to begin the conversations with questions" (p. 199).

Killian's (2005) article, "E-Mentoring Is a Way to Connect With the Future," shares new insights and developments of lawyers participating in a new e-mentoring program. Silvergate (as cited in Killian, 2005), an active member of the Bar's Standing Committee on Professionalism, states, "The goal is to provide a safety net for young lawyers before leaving law school, before they pass the bar, and before they take on the responsibility of representing the interest of clients in Florida" (para. 1). Using Ementoring allows mentors and protégés to connect with many more people. In this case, more than 1,000 law students are paired with more than 700 experienced lawyers "willing to share stories and give advice via e-mail" (para. 2). All one must do is post a short biography, sign up, and wait for prospective and available mentors to make a selection. Suitable protégés have the opportunity to contact individuals based on character, perceived interest, skills, talent, ability, and position. E-mentoring also broadens the scope of getting to know someone quite removed from your immediate circle. According to Silvergate (as cited in Killian, 2005), claims "It is often difficult to find time to meet face-to-face, given the busy schedules of lawyers and students, Silvergate said ementoring has the advantage of transcending geographic boundaries and time constraints"

(para. 6). Silvergate boasts, "Online you can meet anytime" (para. 5).

Silvergate (as cited in Killian, 2005) states as soon as student's names are put into the system, the information goes into a waiting bay. When there is a match, an automated e-mail message is generated and sent to respective parties indicating so, and the mentor and protégés names go back into the system. There are standards for becoming a mentor. The Center for Professionalism requires lawyers to be bar members for 7 years or longer, be in good standing with the bar, and show an interest in mentorship. In addition to the requirements, the Center for Professionalism is also designing an e-mentoring training program on how to mentor someone through an e-mentor program. Once these requirements are met and a mentor becomes available, the student is instantly matched and an automated e-mail message is sent to both parties exchanging e-mail addresses. The Center for Professionalism encourages dialog between the mentor and protégés by sending monthly prompts, recent cases, pressing legislature, and interesting articles. Lasting results occur when the relationship forms naturally and informally. Killian claims if there is a mismatch, "mentors and protégées are under no obligation to continue the relationship" (para. 25). This freedom and flexibility allows mentors and protégés to request reassignment at any time. To encourage lawyers and judges to become e-mentors and participate in the e-mentoring program, the Center for Professionalism offers professionalism and ethics credits. The entire program is voluntary.

Some of the difficulty with e-mentoring lies with the inability for mentors and protégés to decipher facial expression, intonation, social cues, and other nonverbal communication that send messages. Also, e-mentoring can seem, at times, impersonal because of the lack of human face-to-face interaction and connectivity. Emphasis can be

lost as well as meaning when transferring oral language into written communication (Ementoring, 2010).

E-Mentoring Tools

With all the various means of communicating with students, one of the most powerful ways is the integration of technology and collaborative tools. EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (2008) article "Collaboration Tools" written by Burke, Lomas, and Page, define collaboration tools as, "Those that enable remote collaboration" (p.3). The use of technology to communicate, collaborate, and connect is widely used and accepted as best practices, and according to Burke et al., "Has become synonymous with effective scholarship and collegiality" (p.3).

These virtual environments promote the sharing of information in faster less restrictive environments. EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (2008), "The advent of faster communication tools-from two way audio/video to instant messaging (IM)---has allowed colleagues and collaborators to transcend the physical distances that separate them, offering faster transfer of knowledge and quicker feedback on new ideas and results" (p.2). In addition, "millennials' have seamlessly integrated the social tools they use for communication with their friends into their academic toolkit" (EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative, 2008, p.2).

"Any tool that allows interaction on a shared resource has the potential to be a collaboration tool" (p.3). According to EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (2008), "A good tool should promote communication; share a diagram, photograph, paper, or similar objects; allow natural interactions; and be easy to use and learn" (p.4). Because of the accessibility, connectivity, and versatility of these Web 2.0 tools, social networks and

collaborative tools are now used "to share content with peers or discuss common classroom problems" (p.2). Integration and use of collaborative tools inside of the class promotes communication, collaboration, engagement, sharing, and social interaction (EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative, 2008). Intentional mentors now have a wealth of devices and means of connecting with protégés, for example, Skype, GoToMeeting, and video conferences. Below are examples of online collaborative tools that can be used to decrease social isolation and increase connectivity.

Skype (n.d.) is a leading Internet communication company. Skype is free software that allows one, two, or multiple connections via a video camera. EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (2008) article Collaboration Tools states, "Skype is VoIP application that allows users to collaborate over voice channels by calling another person" (p. 6). Skype allows its users to make free video and voice calls, and send instant messages to mobile devices and landlines. Instant messaging allows for a quick chat and succinct responses. Skype encourages the sharing of files, relevant links, pictures, music, and text, which can be attached and sent to the receiver. With this collaborative tool, collaborators can communicate more frequently, for longer periods of time, and even record conversations (EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative, 2008). One of the many benefits of Skype according to EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative is, "Researchers have taken advantage of recording capabilities to create another opportunity for archiving conversations and interview notes or making academic podcasts to share research" (p.6). In addition, mentors can schedule Skype meetings anytime and anywhere in the world. Last, Skype lessens the propensity to travel and allows for worldwide online communication.

GoToMeeting is an online service that offers telephonic and video conferences, which can be scheduled and held anytime and anywhere in the world ("GotoMeeting Fact Sheet," n.d.). It is a remote conferencing tool and electronic room. GoToMeeting allows users to demonstrate, present, and collaborate in real time. It is an effective meeting solution to use in conjunction with e-mentoring. GoToMeeting has unique features that allow presenters to chat with all attendees or have private conversations with specific participants. GoToMeeting also features the capabilities to save, replay, post, e-mail, and record audio. In addition, there is a feature that will take the minutes for each online meeting.

GoToMeeting involves a simple two-step process: (a) log onto the site to view presenter, and (b) call via landline, mobile, or computer attached microphone or headphone to participate fully in the meeting ("GoToMeeting Fact Sheet," n.d.). If users are invited to attend a GoToMeeting, a link will be sent to their primary e-mail account along with dial-in information. To gain access to the meeting, simply click the link provided.

GoToMeeting goes to extreme measures to insure the users' rights and privacy ("GoToMeeting Fact Sheet," n.d.). For example, GoToMeeting requires encryption, strong password usage, user authentication, and single use meeting identification and password. This information is essential to gain access to any online meeting.

E-mentors might also use video conferencing to connect with protégés. Mann's (2008) article, titled *What Is Video Conferencing?* describes the myriad of possibilities for using video conferencing. Mann states video conferencing is a method by which people can communicate in real time with two or more people via video. This ability to

see, hear, and interact with remote participants has its advantages over merely audio-conferencing. Mann claims in the early stages of a relationship, "a telephone call or email is not always the best way to communicate with another person" (para. 8). This sort of access and open communication allows mentors and protégés to "communicate more regularly" (para.9). Given the appropriate resources such as a high speed data connection, microphone, and a computer with web camera, "video conferencing wins out in being able to maintain those relationships easily and cost effectively" (para. 4). They add a touch of personalization and humanness when mentoring online.

E-mentoring encompasses collaboration and learning from both mentor and protégé. Thus, claims Mann (2008), "interactive meetings can help generate ideas, and enable people to read and react to others' sensitivities" (para. 8). Furthermore, video conferencing and meetings are shorter in time and duration, as no travel is involved. Mentors can video conference with many more protégés and hold group check-in sessions.

Last, willing e-mentors have numerous tools at their disposal to connect and remain accessible. E-mentors can schedule designated online meetings, as well as telephonic conversations, and follow-up calls. In addition, e-mentors can communicate with multiple protégés at one time by conducting group conference calls. Through the use of technology E-mentors can remain accessible via e-mail, text, Twitter, instant messaging, and other online social platforms such as Facebook.

Mentoring

Luecke (2004), the writer of *Coaching and Mentoring: How to Develop Top*Talent and Achieve Stronger Performance, is a collective source of comprehensive

business practices and relevant topics in business. Luecke states, "A mentor is simply someone who helps someone else learn something that he or she would have learned less well, more slowly, or not at all if left alone" (p. 76). Luecke asserts, "Mentoring is, after all, about learning, and both parties are bound to be on different learning trajectories that temporarily converge" (p. 108). Peters (1997) claims, "A mentor can be anyone who desires to help bring out the potential of others, or who takes a special interest in the success of their students" (p. 263). Jaschik (2009), who authored "Money, Mentors and Love," reported, according to a survey of recent doctorates by the CGS, "The top factors in helping graduate students complete a Ph. D. are financial support, mentoring, and family support" (p. 1). Simmons (2008), also known as Rev Run, the leader of the ground-breaking 1983 rap trio Run-DMC, entrepreneur, and most notably minister at Zoe Ministries, wrote Words of Wisdom; Daily Affirmations of Faith From Run's House to Yours. Words of Wisdom is filled with positive inspirational affirmations on love, life, happiness, and success. In this text, Simmons encourages others to, "Find a mentor. Whatever you are trying to accomplish will become much easier if you follow those who have already accomplished it. The mentor is one who comes to shorten the distance. Sit. Listen. Learn" (p. 98).

Johnson and Ridley's (2008) *The Elements of Mentoring* asserts, "Let's face the facts; mentoring is hard work" (p. 107). Johnson and Ridley's *The Elements of Mentoring* is the primary text on mentoring, covering: (a) matters of skill, (b) matters of style and personality, (c) matters of beginnings, (d) matters of integrity, (d) matters of restoration, and (e) matters of closure. The text presents 65 research-based core elements clustered around six themes for becoming an effective intentional mentor. The 65 elements are

what new mentors need to know and what seasoned mentors must remember. Johnson and Ridley argue instead of mentoring by happenstance, be intentional about what you do and what you say, and be a role model at all times by employing the core elements.

Johnson and Ridley (2008) purport, "Mentoring is associated with positive personal and career outcomes" (p. xi). Some of the benefits of a mentor include higher salaries, faster promotions, acceleration of lateral and vertical career mobility, improved personal and career branding, and decreased job stress and role conflict. Luecke (2004) asserts:

The benefits of mentoring to the organization are threefold: (a) it helps to develop the human assets of the organization, (b) it helps to transfer important tacit knowledge from one employee to another, and (c) it aids in the retention of valued employees. (p. 81)

Luecke argues, "Human assets are of greater importance than physical and financial assets. Human assets are the source of innovation and value creation" (p. 81). Since the benefits are mutual, Peddy (2001) claims, "Organizations need to embrace the policies and practices that encourage and reward mentoring" (p. 256). Last, Luecke (2004) declares, "Mentoring is one approach to retaining high-value-adding employees" (p. 83).

Johnson and Ridley (2008) claim, "Mentoring is a responsibility not to be taken lightly. It entails many benefits but many risks as well" (p. 105). Mentors share both risks and benefits with protégés. Some of the risks involve the following: poor association, alienation, social isolation, reputation dispute, disloyalty, personality conflict, and values misfit (Peddy, 2001). This is part of the reason it is important to have the relationship form as naturally as possible before committing to becoming a mentor.

The early stages of the relationship are most important as the mentor actively considers the consequences of serving in a mentor role. During this phase, the mentor and protégés find common ground and dispel unrealistic expectations and ideals. It is during this early phase both mentor and protégés develop an informal relationship. Luecke (2004) states, "A good start is defined as an open-ended conversation in which mentor and protégé get to know each other, establish rapport, understand each other's expectations, and identify a set of mutually agreed goals" (p. 106). Peddy (2001) states, "Create ground rules to support a productive relationship" (p. 208). Johnson and Ridley (2008) argue, "An excellent mentor sets clear and measurable expectations for protégés" (p. 35). In addition, timelines and personal and professional boundaries are set. Last, measures to protect confidentiality and privacy are put in place to insure the integrity of the relationship. Johnson and Ridley claim the mentor-protégé relationship hinges on this assumption: "What is disclosed in the relationship stays in the relationship" (p. 57). Any violation of confidentiality will cause damage to the relationship. Protégés in turn must be aware and understand the limits to confidentiality. Johnson and Ridley argue, "Wise mentors should discuss the limits of confidentiality early in their mentorship and make certain there is mutual understanding about the factors that might trigger a disclosure" (p. 57). Johnson and Ridley strongly encourage prospective mentors and protégés to hold themselves accountable for their action and impact on others. Johnson and Ridley claim, "Because no legislative or monitoring body serves to hold those who mentor accountable, good mentors must be constantly self-governing" (p. 104).

Matters of skills, matters of style and personality, and matters of beginning reiterate the importance of personal leadership, ethics, and displaying emotional

intelligence. Robbins and Judge (2007) define emotional intelligence as, "the ability to detect and manage emotional cues and information" (p. 116). In addition, exhibiting internal locus of control, using self as instrument, being self-reflective, and conflict resolution skills are highly necessary when cultivating the new professional and personal relationship. Furthermore, practicing effective communication skills such as fourdimensional listening and active listening are essential when building and sustaining relationships. Caesar and Caesar (2006) describe four-dimensional listening as active listening; it involves feeling, thinking, and understanding. Four-dimensional listening requires one to "do our best to really hear what the person is saying and to give some kind of tangible feedback that we understood what he or she was saying or trying to say" (p. 97). The listener is challenged to listen for what is said, what is not said, for what was said in the past, and anticipate what might be said. Caesar and Caesar affirm fourdimensional listening is the formula for empathy. According to Caesar and Caesar, "When a person is speaking, we first give tangible evidence that we are listening by looking at him or her. It does mean being attentive to the person's words and feelings" (p. 97). Johnson and Ridley (2008) claim listening is more than hearing. As with fourdimensional listening, Johnson and Ridley state listening is active attention on two levels of communication: (a) the overt message—concrete meaning of the words spoken, and (b) the covert message—the subtle cues or implied meanings. Both the overt and covert messages are equally important. Johnson and Ridley claim, "It is essential that you deliberately work at "hearing" your protégés on both levels" (p. 52). By listening actively, mentors can discern incongruence between the protégés overt and covert message. Oftentimes, protégés will send mixed messages unintentionally when trying to

convey their real experiences. Active listening is complex and demanding, consisting of numerous microskills. Johnson and Ridley offer mentors useful tips when communicating with protégés:

- Use nonverbal responses such as smiling, nodding, and maintaining eye contact;
- Use verbal prompts to stimulate dialog and probe for understanding;
- Do not interrupt by using problem-based listening, narrative listening, or autobiographical listening;
- Ask for clarity; and
- Accurately reflect what protégés communicate (p. 53).

Johnson and Ridley (2008) define mentoring and mentorship as developmental relationships. The authors claim, "Mentoring relationships are dynamic, reciprocal personal relationships in which a more experienced person (mentor) acts as a guide, role model, teacher, and sponsor of a less experienced person (protégés)" (p. xi). According to Luecke (2004), "Mentoring, then, is the offering of advice, information, or guidance by a person with useful experience, skills, or expertise for another individual's personal and professional development" (p. 76). A mentoring relationship is interdependent. Caesar and Caesar (2006) declare, "Interdependence is the foundation for relationships without resentment, where both 'get' more than they give" (p. 93). Johnson and Ridley claim, "Implicit attitudes and explicit behavior communicate more to the protégé than any lecture the mentor might offer" (p. 45). A mentor publicly advocates for protégés and provides protection. Strong mentors help protégés avoid social isolation (Tinto, 1985, 1993). Simmons (2008) states, "Before you start any new project, you should consult a

professional who has successfully achieved that for which you are striving. Never work alone! Isolation is harmful" (p. 21). Successful mentors exchange trade secrets and insider knowledge about the unwritten rules of the culture (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Robbins & Judge, 2007; Schein, 2004). It is important for mentors to have informal and formal periods of socialization with their protégés. It is during this shared time critical implicit and explicit information is shared. According to Johnson and Ridley, "When mentors socialize with their protégés, they provide crucial insider information about the organization or the profession, convey the implicit values and subtle skills that cumulatively make one a professional" (p. 35). Luecke declares, "Mentoring aims to support individual development through both career and psychosocial functions" (p. 76). Peddy (2001) states, "Mentors teach you the unspoken rules of an organization: how to dress, what to say, how to get projects approved, insider information that can make or break a career" (p. 30). Simmons (2008) claims:

I believe that one of the essential keys to your success has everything to do with the mentor that you choose. You will never move beyond the people with whom you are connected. If you really want to grow in all areas of your life, find a worthy mentor. (p. 82)

Successful mentors are adept at transferring knowledge about the culture of the workplace through storytelling. Johnson and Ridley (2008) claim, "To narrate effectively, mentors must be intentional, observant, and caring" (p. 37).

Intentional mentors provide high-visibility exposure and access to diverse assignments with a high level of responsibility and a sophisticated network of leaders to build a mentoring constellation. Johnson and Ridley (2008) define a mentoring

constellation as a, "collection of supportive people who take an interest in their development" (p. 94). It is necessary for mentors to expose their protégés to a wide array of other potential advocates and supporters. Luecke (2004) claims, "As a mentor, you are one of those 'other people,' but your support alone is insufficient" (p. 105). "A single mentor does not have all the answers, nor access to all learning opportunities" (p. 105). In order to broaden the protégés experiences and further advance their career options they must be encouraged to build relationships with others, outside of their mentor. Luecke adds, "a single relationship will not expand a protégés career" (p. 128). Furthermore, a larger selection of mentors will include new ideas that challenge the status quo. An intentional mentor provides access to formal and informal domains to allow protégés to meet and be exposed to a wide range of people on various levels within the organization. A mentoring constellation or mentoring network can also help protégés create alliances and build relationships in different units of an organization and at different levels. Luecke purports, "Your protégés need support from many people. Part of your job as a wise and resourceful guide is to establish a broad foundation of support for the protégés within the organization and with key external stakeholders" (p. 105). Last, Luecke claims, "A network of mentors provides continual support and learning" (p. 128). Caesar and Caesar (2006) claim, "Happy High Achievers have key relationships that give them energy, especially with stakeholders" (p. 93). According to Caesar and Caesar, "Stakeholders are those people who have interest in and influence over your success or failure to be a Happy High Achiever" (p. 93). Peddy (2001) argues, "Over-dependence on one mentor can be deadly" (p. 56). There are ways to lessen dependency: (a) ensure protégés takes responsibility for their learning plans and goals; review plan and make suggestions; (b)

instead of offering answers, ask probing questions; (c) listen actively; and (d) avoid narrative-based, problem-based, and autobiographical listening (Luecke, 2004). This constellation of supportive career helpers enriches the protégés' experiences and widens their networking scope. These relationships can take the form of peer-to-peer mentoring, group mentoring, or e-mentoring (Johnson & Ridley, 2008).

Intentional and mindful mentors primarily welcome growth and change. Johnson and Ridley (2008) claim, "By their nature, mentorships are developmental relationships, focused on the transition of the protégé from a neophyte to full member of a profession" (p. 147). This relationship is best formed informally where both the mentor and protégé self-select each other. The key to a successful mentoring relationship is to find a right match—a good fit. Mentors should seek out attributes and look for like qualities. Peddy (2001) states, "Mentors carefully consider the match. Mentors must be selective in their choice of protégés" (p. 3). They must be careful only to embark on mentorships with those who match them well, as both brands and reputations will inherently become intertwined. Johnson and Ridley declare, "When a mentor fails at the task of selectivity and he or she is poorly matched, the mentor diminishes his or her own enjoyment of the mentoring experience" (p. 3). Johnson and Ridley suggest the following when selecting a prospective protégés:

- Consider your workload and the maximum number of protégés you are willing to mentor successfully.
- 2. Observe the protégés; hold informal talks to discern career path, intentions, and motives.
- 3. Seek protégés who share similar interests and have similar career aspirations.

4. Consider your own motivation for mentoring. (p. 5)

Mindful mentors are also authentic, transparent, and congruent. How they see themselves is consistent with who they really are. Johnson and Ridley (2008) found congruent mentors articulate awareness of their limitations. The premise of the relationship is to cultivate, produce, groom, and support. Johnson and Ridley claim, "If the protégé does not change, mature, and ultimately require less formal mentoring, something is drastically wrong" (p. 96). Johnson and Ridley assert, "The goal is to develop protégés to maximize their potential" (p. 111).

Johnson and Ridley (2008) claim, "Mindfulness is a crucial ingredient for effective and ethical functioning as a mentor" (p. 103). Mindfulness requires a mentor to self-reflect constantly, and to be aware of his or her impact on self and others (Senge, 1991). Johnson and Ridley (2008) state, "Mindful mentors take time to become reacquainted with their own feelings, needs, wishes and fears" (p. 103). To be a mindful mentor requires a "high level of self-awareness and internal locus of control" (p. 103). According to Johnson and Ridley, self-awareness "is necessary to successfully navigate powerful yet delicate relationships with protégés" (p. 103). Robbins and Judge (2007) define locus of control as the degree to which people believe they are the masters of their own fate. According to Robbins and Judge, "Internals are individuals who believe that they control what happens to them" (p. 37). Caesar and Caesar (2006) claim people with internal locus of control speak the language of creators—for example, I, me, and mine. Internal loci of control individuals accept responsibility for their actions and outcomes and use their inner guide. High external loci of control individuals speak the language of victims and use pronouns to blame others for their actions and outcomes. Externals

believe fate, luck, magic, and other external forces control and dictate their life's choices. Robbins and Judge (2007) assert, "Externals are individuals who believe that what happens to them is controlled by outside forces, such as luck or chance" (p. 37). Robbins and Judge state, "Locus of control is an indicator of core self-evaluation" (p. 37) used to gauge whether people think they have control over their lives. Those who think otherwise lack confidence in self.

According to Johnson and Ridley (2008), "Mentors should be competent in two areas: (a) their profession, and (b) how to be competent as mentors" (p. 1). Not everyone can be a mentor. A suggestion for prospective mentors is to take an honest evaluation of their motives for considering mentoring. Oftentimes, holding a position or title is equated with being a good leader. This is not always true; being placed in a leadership role alone does not make one a leader. True leaders, as with intentional mentors, inspire, influence, and encourage followers and protégés to do more than they thought they could achieve. Johnson and Ridley claim, "Holding positional authority or supervisory status in an organization is often equated with competence to lead, supervise, and mentor" (p. 113). The ability to mentor "is not always true" (p. 113). Faculty and mindful mentors must be forthright and tell the truth when discussing a protégé's area of need and improvement even though it may be a difficult conversation. Tinto (1993) states, "We should also be willing to recognize that not every faculty and staff member should be involved with student retention" (p. 175) or mentoring. Tinto declares, "The most obvious fallacy in this regard is the notion that all faculty can and should serve as student advisors" (p. 175). Such is the case with mentoring. Johnson and Ridley argue, "Some people who try their hand at mentoring lack the technical or relational capabilities required for success" (p.

113). Although some faculty members may be more seasoned or hold a leadership role within the department, this alone does not make them great mentors. Tinto (1993) asserts, "The regrettable and unavoidable fact is that some faculty are much better than others in advising students and that faculty and students might both be better served by not asking all faculty to act as student advisors" (p. 175). Johnson and Ridley encourage mindful mentors to "engage in self-analysis regarding competence and preparedness to develop a substantial relationship" (p. 113).

Johnson and Ridley's (2008) text, The Elements of Mentoring, answers the question: What do excellent mentors do? Peddy (2001) asserts, "A mentor is a teacher, coach, sponsor, counselor, advisor—to a group of one" (p. 30). Johnson and Ridley contest, "Effective mentors are engaged in the professional landscape they claim as their own. Mindful mentors assume leadership roles in their field and are frequently in contact with colleagues and collaborators" (p. 109). Peddy (2001) claims a mentor's "interest is in you as an individual" (p. 30). Excellent mentors play to their strengths (Buckingham & Clifton, 2001). Buckingham and Clifton (2001), authors of Now, Discover Your Strengths, describe strength as, "a near perfect performance—performance that is both excellent and fulfilling" (p. 131). Buckingham and Clifton make a clear distinction, as do Johnson and Ridley, between knowledge and skills, "Knowledge consists of facts and lessons learned and skills are the steps of an activity" (p. 29). Mentors improve knowledge, skills, and attitudes of their protégés (Buckingham & Clifton, 2001; Johnson & Ridley, 2008; Knowles et al., 2005; Robbins & Judge, 2007). Johnson and Ridley assert, "Mentoring entails the development of protégés to maximize their potential" (p. 111).

Johnson and Ridley (2008) also shared characteristics of what mentors don't do? First, mentorship is not meant for cloning. Johnson and Ridley argue, "Cloning entails the creation of protégés to be replicas of the mentors" (p. 111). Mentors accept protégés as they are; mindful mentors hone in on their personal strengths, help protégés to maximize their talents and strengths daily, and manage their weaknesses (Caesar & Caesar, 2006; Johnson & Ridley, 2008). Mentors are accessible, open, warm, and inviting (Peddy, 2001). Mentors do not manipulate or treat their protégés as objects. Protégés are treated with integrity and respect; they are not used for self-gain or benefit. Mentors do not exploit protégés. Outstanding mentors simply do not compete with or try to outshine their protégés. Mindful mentors make new information privy to protégés and refrain from withholding critical insider information. Last, when mindful mentors experience pushback or conflict, they do not punish their protégés. Mentors engage in matters of restoration to rebuild relationships and establish a positive rapport with their protégés. Common conflicts mentors encounter are: (a) dealing with irrational thinking, (b) dispute, (c) self-correct, (d) positive talk, (e) separate worth from performance, and (f) display fallibility and failure. Texts such as Benjamin's (2008) Perfect Phrases for Dealing With Difficult People and Ury's (1991) Getting to Yes are two tools mentors can use to resolve conflict.

The main idea in a healthy mentoring relationship is to plan for change, growth, and endings. Bridges' (1978) text, *Managing Transitions*, deals with transitions and argues for not only acknowledging endings, but also being aware of each phase of the transition: the ending, the middle, and the new beginning. Transitions within the relationship will occur—acknowledge them as such and establish a working plan for

handling difficult conversations, growth spurts, and creative tension (Senge, 1991). Management professor Kathy Kram's work (as cited in Johnson & Ridley, 2008) identified four common phases of mentorship: (a) initiation, (b) cultivation, (c) separation, and (d) redefinition.

Initiation

Initiation is marked by excitement, possibility, and new beginnings. The initiation phase usually lasts anywhere from 6 to 12 months. During this time, the protégés and mentor get to know each other, set boundaries, clearly articulate expectations and shared goals, and co-create a timeline for reaching those goals. Before, during, and toward the end of the mentorship, mentor and protégés evaluate the relationship, mentoring outcomes, and personal and professional goals. In addition, Peddy (2001) asserts, "Mentoring relationships need to be mutually satisfying" (p. 196).

Cultivation

Cultivation lasts from 2 to 5 years. It is during this phase that intensive teaching, coaching, supporting, and advocating takes place. During the cultivation phase, Johnson and Ridley (2008) state, the mentor also "provides psychosocial functions such as support, encouragement, and friendship" (p. 96). Cultivation, according to Kram (as cited in Johnson & Ridley, 2008), "is where the protégés demonstrate competence and confidence, they begin to establish their own personal professional identity, and increase autonomy and responsibility" (p. 138).

Separation

Johnson and Ridley (2008) argue, "Mindful mentors understand the importance of preparing for meaningful closure of the mentorship" (p. 146). Johnson and Ridley state,

"Separation is the phase of the mentorship characterized by leave taking and distancing" (p. 148). Separation can occur both mentally and physically. Mental separation occurs when either the protégés or mentor begins to pull away or there is a strain in the relationship. This type of separation is often felt before it is verbally addressed. It is common for both the mentor and protégés to experience turmoil, anxiety, loss, and general disruption during the transitions and separation phase. Mentors can passively engage in self-defeating behaviors such as paralysis, distancing, and appeasement when the pangs of separation are felt. Separation may take numerous forms such as a promotion within the same organization, a transfer, or a new position with another organization. The separation phase requires both parties to accept endings and celebrate the new arrival of a new relationship, perhaps one as colleagues. Johnson and Ridley contend, "The most important thing is for the mentor to welcome change" (p. 148).

Redefinition

According to Johnson and Ridley (2008), "Redefinition is the final phase of the mentorship development" (p. 149). Redefinition entails both welcoming change and saying goodbye. In this phase of the mentorship, both mentor and protégés formally acknowledge the end of the mentorship to gain closure and to begin to redefine their new relationship. Johnson and Ridley claim, "They come to celebrate protégés transition and leave-taking" (p. 146). Last, "Redefinition is marked by less intense interactions and the parties tend to experience more collegiality" (p. 97). Although the structure and dynamics of the relationships change, typically at the end of the mentorship there remains generative concern for the welfare of the protégés. Johnson and Ridley state, "Mentoring is an act of generativity—a process of brining into existence and passing on a

professional legacy" (p. xi).

Peddy's (2001) *The Art of Mentoring* is yet another text that deals with effective mentoring. According to Peddy, "Mentoring is more than a workshop, more than a program, more than this year's initiative. It's an ongoing commitment for every business, large or small, that hopes to survive" (p. 255). Peddy argues, "Organizations need to embrace the policies and practices that encourage and reward mentoring" (p. 256).

Peddy (2001) first makes a clear distinction between formal and informal mentoring. A formal mentoring relationship is marked by a clear process of accountability which includes: sharing of learning goals; checking in from time to time; updating the mentor on the protégés' progress; and/or seeking advice. According to Peddy, these sorts of "relationships come from a connection that develops naturally between two people" (p. 200). In an informal relationship, there are no clear learning goals or regular scheduled times to meet. In an informal relationship, the expectations are not clear and the outcomes are ambiguous. Peddy asserts, "There's no cookbook for mentoring, but there is a process that works" (p. 26). Great mentors plan for growth, change, and endings. In essence, mentors lead, follow, and get out of the way.

In leading, mentors focus on providing wisdom, judgment, and offering their learned experiences and perspectives. Johnson and Ridley (2008) state mentors lead by example "the life to which the young person aspires" (p. 170). Peddy (2001) provides a strategy for building trust: (a) look for common ground; (b) reveal something about yourself; tell your story first; and (c) ask broad open-ended nonloaded questions.

Peddy's (2001) second phase in mentoring encompasses following. Following entails a gradual shifting in which the protégé begins using the mentor as a sounding

board and reliable support system. The mentor begins to lead from the inside out (Cashman, 1998) and becomes transparent through storytelling. Gradually, as the relationship grows the mentor shares helpful advice, insights, and life lessons. The mentor reveals himself or herself as vulnerable through stories of courage, choice, challenges, and change (Peddy, 2001).

Peddy's (2001) final phase of mentoring is getting out of the way. Getting out of the way, much as with Johnson and Ridley's redefinition phase, "represents a challenge for both mentor and [protégé]" (p. 176). Getting out of the way involves the mentor's acknowledgment and acceptance of each protégé's unique gifts and strengths and their "right not to take advice" (p. 27). This phase marks a distinct change in the relationship. Getting out of the way means being able to see the protégé as whole, capable, and complete. Last, according to Peddy, "Getting out of the way also means preparing for endings and understanding that all mentoring relationships end at some point" (p. 27). Getting out of the way entails planning for and celebrating transitions, change, and separation. Peddy challenges mentors not to become passive and acknowledge the shift or ending of the relationship. This can occur by simply saying, "You are my colleague now."

Summary

As a whole, this chapter reviewed the literature related to AI, Andragogy, education versus learning, curriculum planning, and Web site development. Chapter 2 concluded with an overview of Web 2.0 technologies, a clear, simple, and easy to use web design followed by the importance of mentoring. Knowledge of these points is critical when designing a program for adult learners. These elements combined formed

the basis for developing an interactive hi-tech Web site.

Chapter 3 begins with the nature and history of mixed methods and selection of the sequential explanatory design, including a plan for implementation, priority, and integration of data as well as drawbacks and limitations to the design. Chapter 3 continues with the purpose statement, determination of the study, and restatement of the research questions. Chapter 3 outlines a series of request and approvals followed by the development of the survey, and multiple content and instrument validation including: (a) criteria for selecting a panel of experts to review the instrument, (b) validity rating questionnaire, (c) criteria for changing questions and amending the instrument, and (d) an alignment instrument to ensure content validity. Chapter 3 continues with the population, sample procedures, survey development, and personalization of the study. Last, chapter 3 outlines the data collection plan, an overview of emotional intelligence and an ethical decision-making model to use in conjunction with IRB policies, procedures, and protocol. Chapter 3 concludes with an overview of the design plan, data analyses, and summary of the chapter.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Procedures

"To be practical in the largest sense of that term is to so live that we can touch the sublime on the one hand and turn every ideal into a living reality on the other."

—Christian Larson (1911)

Nature of Mixed-Methods Research

The researcher selected mixed methods because it is the best model for this study. A mixed-methods approach is a process by which a researcher mixes two different methods. It involves collecting and analyzing both forms of data in a single study. Mixed methods have applications in many fields of research such as psychology, the behavioral sciences, and Creswell (2003) states, "human sciences as a distinct research approach" (p. 209). Although it is the least known research method, it has gained in popularity and led writers from around the world to develop procedures for mixed-methods strategies of inquiry and to shape procedures for research.

Creswell (2003) notes that three factors should be considered when selecting a design for a study: (a) the research problem, (b) the personal experiences of the researcher, and (c) the audience(s) for whom the report will be written. The study begins with a broad survey in order to generalize results to a population and then focuses, in the second phase, on qualitative, open-ended questions to collect detailed views from participants.

Creswell (2003) contends, "Qualitative findings will help to elaborate on or extend the quantitative results" (p. 222). Table 6 is a visual model outlining mixed-methods philosophical assumptions, methods, and practices as a researcher.

Table 6 *Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed-Methods Approaches*

Tend to or Typically	Mixed-Methods Approaches	
Use these philosophical assumptions and employ these strategies	Pragmatic knowledge claims, sequential, concurrent, and transformative	
Employ these methods	Both open-ended and closed-ended questions, both emerging and predetermined approaches, and both qualitative and quantitative data and analysis	
Use these practices of research, as the researcher	Collects both quantitative and qualitative data Develops a rationale for mixing Integrates the data at different stages of inquiry Presents visual pictures of the procedures in the stu Employs the practices of both qualitative and quantitative research	

Note. From Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (p. 19), J.W. Creswell, 2003, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Copyright 2003 by Sage. Reprinted with permission.

When determining which mixed methods to employ, the researcher will refer to Creswell's (2003) Decision Choices for Determining a Mixed Methods Strategy of Inquiry. Table 7 provides the researcher with a framework in which to operate when employing Mixed-Methods Strategies and a built-in data collection plan.

Table 7

Decision Choices for Determining a Mixed-Methods Strategy of Inquiry

Implementation	Priority	Integration	Theoretical Perspective
No Sequence	Equal	At Data Collection	Explicit
Concurrent			
Sequential-Qualitative	Qualitative	At Data Analysis	Explicit
First			
Sequential-Quantitative	Quantitative	At Data	Implicit
First		interpretation; with	-
		some combination	

Note. From Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (p. 211), by J.W. Creswell, 2003, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Copyright 2003 by Sage. Reprinted with permission.

When determining which appropriate mixed-methods strategy to use, the researcher considered one of the six proposed strategies as discussed by Creswell (2003). Each strategy has its strengths, weaknesses, and limitations. Furthermore, each mixed-method strategy details and discusses the four criteria—implementation, priority, integration, and theoretical perspective—for selecting an appropriate strategy of inquiry.

Sequential Explanatory Strategy

This approach is the most straightforward of the mixed-methods approaches (Creswell, 2003). It is characterized by collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data. The purpose of the sequential explanatory design is to use qualitative methods and results to explain and interpret the findings of the primarily quantitative study. One drawback for researchers is the amount of time involved for data collection. Figure 2 shows the movement from left to right from quantitative data collection and analysis to qualitative data collection and analysis and, last, interpretation of the entire analysis.

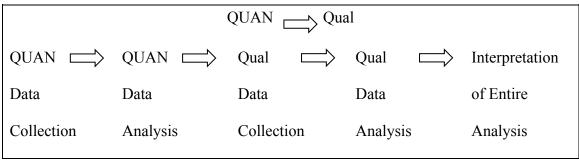


Figure 2. Sequential explanatory design. Qualitative and Quantitative are abbreviated as Quan and Qual in the above figure. From *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, (p. 213), J.W. Creswell, 2003, Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage. Copyright 2003 by Sage. Reprinted with permission.

Phase 1 collected statistical data using a 5-point Likert Scale on the: (a) helpfulness of the current dissertation support Web site, and (b) perception of the current

dissertation support Web site services. In addition, the research offers (c) recommendations, and (d) implications for future enhancements that may point to the design of a model doctoral support Web site. The survey also includes open-ended questions.

Phase 2 looks at specific individual's recommendations for enhancements to the current Web site and their suggestions for a future Web 2.0 site. The researcher employed the interview protocol to conduct audiotaped semistructured Skype interviews. The projected dates, timeline, and activity schedule is displayed in Appendix A.

Implementation

The implementation moves from quantitative to qualitative in this two-phase study. The quantitative results are displayed using descriptive analyses and statistical narratives. Creswell (2003) states the qualitative data "results will be presented in terms of themes and sub-themes supported by student testimonials, audio, and quotations" (p. 223). The researcher collected the quantitative and qualitative data sequentially in two separate phases.

Priority

In this two-phase design, the quantitative data were collected and analyzed first.

More weight was given to the quantitative aspect of the study.

Integration

Integration of the approaches occurred during data collection and interpretation of the entire analysis, which included both statistical analysis of Likert scale data and thematic analysis of qualitative data.

Drawbacks and Limitations to Design

Creswell (2003) claims, "The straightforward nature of the design is one of its main strengths. It is easy to implement because the steps fall into clear, separate stages" (p. 215). In addition, the sequential explanatory strategy is easy to describe and report findings. However, a weakness to the design includes the length of time required to collect data for the two phases.

Purpose Statement

This study seeks to assess 2nd-year doctoral students' and dissertation students' perceptions of the current GSEP dissertation support Web site, with implications for designing a model dissertation support Web site to help students (a) manage the process, (b) build connectedness, and (c) better support doctoral students through the entire doctoral process from orientation, through course work, development of their topic, and finalization of the complete practice study. The broader purpose of this two-phased, mixed-methods study is to assess the need for developing a model interactive Web site at Pepperdine University GSEP or other universities throughout the nation, which would support doctoral students through the dissertation phase at the departmental, individual, institutional, and relational level.

Restatement of Research Questions

- 1. What are 2nd-year doctoral students' and dissertation students', at Pepperdine University GSEP in the EDOL doctoral program, perceptions of the existing dissertation support Web site?
- 2. What do 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students, at Pepperdine University GSEP in the EDOL doctoral program, recommend as future enhancements to a dissertation support Web site?

3. What do 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students, at Pepperdine University GSEP in the EDOL doctoral program, recommend as a future model for a state-of-the-art dissertation support Web site?

Request Site Approval

The researcher engaged in a series of requests and approvals from the academic chairpersons of each program, the dean, and professors. A letter requesting site approval, permission to conduct the study at Pepperdine University GSEP, recruit participants using GSEP intranet, and permission to survey students in EDOL were sent to Dean Weber. The letter informed the dean of pertinent information such as the researcher's dissertation chairperson, committee members, purpose of the study, research questions, and data-collection plan. See Appendix B Site Approval.

Request Permission From Academic Chairpersons

Pending site approval from the dean, the researcher wrote a letter to the academic chairperson Dr. June Schmieder-Ramirez, director of EDOL. The letter requested permission and the best time to survey students, during the spring and summer term of 2011, in the respective program. Furthermore, a separate letter was written to the doctoral committee inquiring the best time for the survey to take place. See Appendix C Letter to Academic Chairpersons.

Pending approval from the dean and written permission from the academic chairperson, Christie Dailo, assistant director Leadership and Technology, sent an electronic e-mail invitation with the link to take the voluntary survey to all 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students in EDOL at the Irvine and West Los Angeles campuses. Students then had the opportunity to open the link and participate or simply

decline to participate in the study.

Survey Instrument Development

Phase 1 of the data collection collected both quantitative and qualitative data using an electronic online survey, created on SurveyMonkey.com. Survey Monkey is a Web site that allows researchers to collect, disseminate, and store compiled data. See Appendix D Online Survey Instrument.

The study begins with IRB approval and written approval from Dean Margaret Weber for Dailo to access students' e-mail addresses using GSEP intranet. The researcher provided Dailo, via e-mail, with the electronic link to Survey Monkey to forward to 2nd-year doctoral students. See Appendix E E-Mail Invitation to Participate in Study.

Content and Instrument Validity

The researcher took multiple steps to ensure content validity. First, the researcher replicated an alignment table used in Ghandi's (2009) study, which matches research questions with appropriate survey items and analytical techniques. See Appendix F Alignment Table. Second, the researcher asked a panel of judges to review the survey. Rosensitto (1999), who authored *Faculty Perceptions of the Need to Prepare Graduate Students to Teach*, replicated and extended Barnes's (1984) study, which set out to determine whether professors perceived a need to introduce, prepare, and teach graduate students how to teach at the college level. Rosensitto argued for more support for graduate students in their programs to prepare them for the realities of teaching at the college level, once the degree is conferred. Rosensitto (1999) stated, "The majority of graduate students, who are preparing for a life in academe, currently are not required to study instructional theory and methodology appropriate for use in higher education

settings" (p. xxvi).

In her study, Faculty Perceptions of the Need to Prepare Graduate Students to Teach, Rosensitto (1999) asked a panel of five independent judges to review items on her survey, to ensure content validity. According to Rosensitto, "This panel of judges verified the content validity of this portion of the survey" (p. 104). Rosensitto then developed criteria for selecting a panel of experts to review the survey instrument. The researcher's panel of experts was selected according to Rosensitto's criteria for selecting a panel of experts. See Appendix G Criteria for selecting a panel of experts:

- All validating judges who were employed by universities possessed an earned academic doctoral degree, and those who were employed by community or junior colleges possessed an earned academic master's degree.
- At least one of the judges held a degree in each of the four academic discipline groups: Education, Psychology and Social Sciences Humanities, and the Arts and Sciences.
- 3. At least half of the validating judges on this panel were not known personally by the researcher. (p. 104)

With this in mind, the researcher sent a cover letter, see Appendix H Validity

Questionnaire Cover Letter, asking each academic chairperson: Dr. Linda Purrington,

Director of EDEL, and Dr. June Schmieder-Ramirez, Director of EDOL, to serve as

validity judges. The letter explained the purpose of the task, and outlined expectations of

expert panel members and the timeline in which to complete the instrument. In addition,

the researcher enlisted the support of Jean Kang, IRB manager and manager of

Dissertation Support Services and Web site, John Kim, director of Technology, and Dr.

Stephen Berra, senior Instructional Technology analyst, at Pepperdine University to serve as content experts. Furthermore, the researcher sought one recent graduate from one the EDOL doctoral programs to take the survey to ensure the accuracy of the information, ensure that it was free from bias, eliminate weaknesses, ensure the questions were well understood, and that participants could respond to each question without difficulty.

The purpose of allowing the content experts to evaluate the instrument allows the directors of each program, dissertation support manager, technology experts, former student, and the researcher an opportunity to add, delete, or modify the instrument. In addition, the external evaluation affords the researcher an opportunity to reconsider wording, questioning construction, and format of the instrument. Furthermore, content experts ensured the use of appropriate jargon and/or technical terms for each program to improve the effectiveness of the instrument.

Furthermore, Rosensitto (1999) wrote:

Members of the panel will be encouraged to make suggestions for improvement of format and wording. A packet of materials will be sent to the experts, including a cover letter, a copy of the research questions and related survey items, and a copy of the survey instrument. (p. 106)

A packet containing a cover letter and a request for additional information was sent to the expert panel. See Appendix I Expert Panel Résumé.

The third measure taken to ensure content validity was to model a validity-rating questionnaire after Little's (2010) study. Little's study, A Comparative Study of the Effectiveness of Three Organizations That Help African American Women Get Elected Into Office at the Local, State, and Federal Levels, examined how African American

women can ascend the political ladder. Little claims political leadership training programs are needed in order to get women elected in office. Three political leadership organizations were defined through six dimensions. Little found in order for political leadership training programs to work, the recruitment process must be expanded.

In her study, Little (2010) created a Validity Rating Questionnaire to organize better validity ratings and comments from the expert panel of judges to enhance the instrument. The researcher used Little's Validity Rating Questionnaire. The validity-rating questionnaire was included in the packet. See Appendix J Validity Rating Questionnaire.

Rosensitto (1999) also suggests using a criterion for changing the survey instrument. Rosensitto suggests if two or more of the validating judges suggest a change, then that change should be made. The researcher adhered to this criterion when receiving feedback from directors and the expert panel using the validity-rating questionnaire. The researcher made necessary changes and amendments to the instrument based on the recommendations and suggestions of the program directors as well as the experts before it was fully deployed.

Population

The population for this study includes all 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students enrolled at Pepperdine University GSEP in the EDOL doctoral program. Second-year doctoral students are defined as doctoral students who have completed at least 1 year of course work. Dissertation students are defined as students who have successfully completed all course work, met all program requirements, and passed their comprehensive examination. The size of the population includes numbers

from EDOL and was determined based on spring 2011 enrollment. Presently, there are 243 registered students in EDOL, 96 1st-year doctoral students, 54 2nd-year doctoral students, and 93 dissertation students. The total population size is 243 students.

Sample

In Phase 1, of the two-phase study, the researcher sampled 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students in the EDOL doctoral program at the Irvine and West Los Angeles campuses, during the spring and summer 2011 term, at Pepperdine University GSEP. The total sample size includes 2nd-year students who registered in EDOL 753.20 at the West Los Angeles campus, EDOL 753.25 GAP, and EDOL 753.40 Irvine cohort. These groups total 54 registered 2nd-year EDOL students. Dissertation students are enrolled in EDOL 791.22 to EDOL 791.72. The total of enrolled dissertation students was 93 in the EDOL program. The size of the target population was 147. The maximal number of respondents was 147. The sample size was the final number of people who agree to participate in the study and is reported in Chapter 4.

For Phase 2, the interview portion of this mixed-method study, 100% of all individuals who provided contact information at the end of the survey were contacted to set up Skype interviews. All contacts were interviewed if they agree to schedule an interview time and sign a separate letter of consent for interview. The maximal number for the interview portion of the study was 147. The total number of interviewees for Phase 2 of the study is reported in the results and findings of the study.

Sampling Procedures

The data from respondents were collected from the 2nd-year cohort and dissertation students in Irvine and West Los Angeles in the form of an online survey and

the interview protocol. The principal investigator recruited all eligible participants for this two-phase study. Phase 1 of the study consisted of an online survey that collected both quantitative and qualitative data. Phase 1 of the study was an open invitation to all eligible participants. The researcher employed convenience sampling of 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students in EDOL. Creswell (2007) states convenience sampling is a process in which those invited to participate in the study are simply those who are available to the researcher.

Phase 2, the interview portion of the study, consisted of a 20-minute audiotaped semistructured Skype interviews. The principal investigator contacted 100% of all participants who provided their contact information for a follow-up interview. When contacting participants, the researcher employed the use of a follow-up script. The researcher e-mailed a confirmation of the date and time of the scheduled Skype interview, semistructured interview questions, and a letter of consent for interview, within 24 hours of the follow-up contact. Participants were to read, sign, and return the signed letter of consent to be audiotaped via e-mail or a secure fax at least 24 hours prior to scheduled Skype interview. The total number of interviewees is reported in Chapter 4.

Phase 1 Data Collection

The data-collection plan consisted of two distinct phases, and moves from quantitative to qualitative. Phase 1 consisted of collecting quantitative data collected through SurveyMonkey.com and then analyzed using SPSS. This data are shown in the form of various charts and tables.

With IRB approval and written approval from Dean Weber, the researcher sent Dailo, assistant program director, Leadership and Tech Programs, the survey link to

forward to doctoral students. The researcher did not have access to students' e-mail addresses. Dailo then sent a mass e-mailing, with the link to take the voluntary survey on Survey Monkey, to all 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students who enrolled during the spring and summer 2011 term at Pepperdine University GSEP in EDOL at the Irvine and West Los Angeles campuses.

Participants were made aware that there were two phases to the study and even though they may have given their consent to participate in the online portion of the study, see Appendix K Electronic Letter of Consent, they were not obligated to participate in Phase 2, the interview portion of the study. Confidentiality and anonymity measures are outlined in the electronic letter of consent. Once participants provided their contact information on the survey, their responses became confidential not anonymous. Finally, the electronic letter of consent explains how risk(s) to participants in the study were minimized. The principal risk to the subject is the potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentiality.

Participants were first directed to the current dissertation support Web site and asked to peruse the site for 3 to 5 minutes. Participants followed the link provided to complete the electronic online survey hosted by Survey Monkey. If students agreed to participate in the study, they read and clicked "agree" on the electronic informed consent. If students did not click the appropriate box, for example "disagree," they were not be able to proceed with the survey and a disclaimer "Thank you very much" appeared as they exited the survey. After an electronic signature was accepted, participants were given the opportunity to complete the 20-minute electronic survey administered online through Survey Monkey.

An automated follow-up e-mail reminder and web link to complete the survey were sent to students who completed at least 1 year of course work, 1 week after Christie Dailo's initial e-mail. See Appendix L Follow-Up Recruitment E-Mail. The researcher followed up and provided the participants' further opportunities to participate in the study to clarify, explain, or expound on their responses to the open-ended question using various means of communication such as an audiotaped semistructured Skype interview, within 2 weeks. Once the data were collected and stored on Survey Monkey's hard drive, the results were stored on a portable flash drive.

The researcher gained additional data by collecting the enhancements, recommendations, and suggestions of doctoral students, which led to a design of a model dissertation support Web site. Approximate time to complete the online survey was 20 minutes. Participants may have chosen to complete the survey at any convenient time during a 2-week window.

Phase 2 Data Collection

Because of scheduling, close proximity of the end of the spring term, different program format such as the GAP, and programmatic traveling for example, EDOL national and international policy trip, the researcher took into account participants' availability. Therefore, the researcher conducted Skype interviews only. Phase 2 started in the spring 2011 term, but continued into the summer 2011 term to complete Skype interviews for all respondents.

The use of Skype speaks to the very nature of the type of Web 2.0 technology that may be modeled and integrated on a dissertation support Web site. The researcher attempted to accommodate as many respondents as possible before the end of the spring

term. Skype interviews enabled the researcher to conduct multiple follow-up interviews at any mutually convenient time for participants. Skype was used as a key communication tool to accommodate the sample population.

Phase 2 included collection of additional data through scheduled 20-minute audiotaped semistructured Skype interviews. If the participant answered no to the last survey item, the survey ended with an automated "thank you very much" response. Students had an opportunity to participate further in the study via semistructured Skype interview to collect additional data if they checked yes to the last item on the survey. The next screen allowed respondents to provide their name, e-mail, and/or phone number. Respondents must have completed two of the three fields in order to complete the survey. Only those who answered yes to the last survey item were contacted. Online data collection using codes instead of names ensured confidentiality of respondent's personal information. Participant's personal information such as their name, e-mail address, IP address, or phone number will be kept confidential and were not be used in the study. This information is merely collected to follow up with participants. The researcher's next step was to contact participants who were willing to participate further in the study.

The researcher used a follow-up script to arrange tentative dates and times with willing participants. See Appendix M Follow-up Script. If participants agreed, dates and time were arranged for the interview. The interview protocol allowed participants to provide specific in-depth analyses, examples, stories, and experiences in more detail. The use of semistructured interview questions were used to extrapolate the fundamental assumptions and perceptions of doctoral students. The researcher e-mailed the semistructured interview questions, confirmation of Skype interview, within 24 hours of

follow-up phone call or e-mail correspondence. See Appendix N Semistructured Interview Questions.

Permission to adapt, copy, and distribute questions from Kouzes and Posner (2003) *The Leadership Challenge Workbook* was obtained from the author or publisher to stimulate dialogue. See Appendix O Permission to adapt, copy, and distribute material.

Permission to audiotape participants was obtained using a separate letter of consent, prior to the Skype interview. See Appendix P Letter of Consent for Interview. The informed consent required the signature of both the participant and the researcher. For Skype interviews, the principal investigator e-mailed a copy of the letter of consent to for interview to participants within 24 hours of follow-up communication. Participants were to read, sign, and return the letter of consent for interview via e-mail or a secure fax at least 24 hours prior to the Skype interview. The Researcher did not conduct the Skype interview if the letter of consent was not received at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled time. This time frame afforded the researcher an opportunity to cancel and possibly reschedule the interview at a later date.

Once received, the principal investigator signed the document, made a copy, and placed a copy in the appendices. See Appendix Q Copy of Letter of Consent for Interview. Prior to beginning the scheduled Skype interview, the principal investigator pressed record and then read verbatim the letter of consent to interview to each participant. Last, the researcher e-mailed a signed copy to the participant 1-week after the scheduled Skype interview.

Every aspect of the interview process was the same, including audiotaping. The purpose of audiotaping was to capture the nuances from the interview and to transcribe

the data. Audiotaping afforded the researcher a chance to capture intonation and interpret the data differently. It aids in creating a richer story that does not solely depend on quantitative data. Audiotaping allows the participant's voice to be added to the literature. All interviews and testimonials were audiotaped and converted to MP3 files by the researcher and saved on a flash drive. The principal investigator transcribed all Skype interviews. The researcher removed all identifying data, rendering data anonymous.

Emotional Intelligence

Goleman (1998), author of *Emotional Intelligence: Working With Emotional Intelligence*, says as one advances in an organization, emotional intelligence becomes more important that IQ. Those with high emotional intelligence and self-monitors tend to pay closer attention to the behaviors of others and are capable of conforming to new environments. Self-monitoring is the ability to show considerable adaptability in adjusting behavior to external factors. Self-monitors are emotionally intelligent.

Goleman (1998) states emotional intelligence refers to the capacity for "recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships" (p. 317). Goleman identifies five components of emotional intelligence: (a) self-awareness is knowing what one is feeling in the moment and understanding preferences; (b) self-regulation is the ability to handle one's emotions such that they are leveraged positively rather than being disruptive; (c) motivation is the drive to take initiative, improve, and overcome frustration and setbacks; (d) empathy is the ability to sense the feelings of others and being able to tune in to their state of mind in that moment; and (e) social skills are the ability to read social cues and interact with others in a fluid manner (p. 24). The

researcher integrated Goleman's components into the dissertation process by: (a) managing personal emotions and impulsive feelings when making decisions, (b) bracketing personal experiences and biases, and (c) closely monitoring personal experiences, feelings, and reactions to the data collected. As the participants and researcher interact the researcher employed four-dimensional listening, which is an activity in highly effective communication and requires critical thinking and emotional intelligence. Listening four dimensionally allows the researcher to listen deeply and intently (a) for what the person is saying, (b) think about what they are not saying, (c) remember what they said in the past, and (d) predict what they might say in the future.

Goleman (1998) argues that leaders must be cue smart and emotionally intelligent. This concept of emotional intelligence, empathy, and social awareness lends itself well to mixed-methods and qualitative research. The probing questions will allow the researcher to dig deeper in search of meaning. Ultimately, the open-ended process also allows the participants an opportunity to build and frame the context from which they answered the questions. Data collection for both phases will occur from April 2011 through June 2011.

Phase 1 Data Analysis

Creswell (2003) states, "Data analysis in mixed-methods research relates to the type of research strategy chosen for the procedures" (p. 220). Analysis occurs both within the quantitative approach and the qualitative approach. Creswell provides the following procedures to conduct data analysis and validation procedures for mixed-methods research.

The data collected from the quantitative portion of the mixed-methods research

was analyzed first and separately from the qualitative data. The following steps encompassed Phase 1 of the researcher's plan to analyze the data:

- Communicate with the dean and academic chairpersons, and obtain site approval and permission to survey students.
- Create instrument using SurveyMonkey.com; Create expert panel; Conduct validity test and modify instrument.
- Send electronic web link to Christie Dailo, assistant program director,
 Leadership and Technology Programs to forward e-mail invitation to
 participate in the study to all 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation
 students in EDOL using GSEP intranet.
- One week after Dailo's initial e-mail resend electronic link to survey to all
 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students in EDOL.
- Data were collected through SurveyMonkey.com main server downloaded into Excel and put in SPSS.
- Data were analyzed and presented using a variety of figure and tables.

Phase 2 Data Analysis

Phase 2 of the mixed-methods research incorporated Creswell's data analysis and validation procedures:

• Examine Multiple Levels: Conduct a survey at one level, survey 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students in EDOL to gather quantitative results about the sample. Sequentially collect qualitative data through Skype interviews with individuals; then explore the phenomenon with specific individuals within the program.

- Instrument Development: Obtain themes from open-ended text box and specific statements from participants in the initial quantitative data collection, which may lead to the development of a dissertation support web design that is grounded in the views and responses of the participants.
- Explore Outliers: Quantitative data may yield extreme or outlier cases.

 Follow-up with qualitative Skype interviews with these outlier cases can provide insight about why they diverged from the quantitative sample.
- Data Transformation: Researcher will quantify the qualitative data; this
 involves creating codes and themes qualitatively then counting the number of
 times they occur in the text data.

The qualitative data were transcribed and analyzed by the researcher. First, the researcher obtained themes from open-ended text box and specific statements from participants in the initial quantitative data collection. Second, the researcher quantified the qualitative data. This involves creating codes and themes qualitatively then counting the number of times they occur in the text data. Third, in transcribing the data, the audiotaped interviews were listened to several times. Transcripts were read a minimum of two times. Themes were identified and used to develop key components for a possible model Web site. All data were sorted by frequency and emerging themes were clustered. Key recommendations, suggestions, and additives to the program were identified in order to establish a thematic framework within which to work. The researcher utilized Creswell's (2007) coding system to keep track of the themes. The emerging themes were combined into a narrative description. The data were transcribed, reviewed, and analyzed and finally presented using narrative form and various figures and tables. Last, the

researcher gave an interpretation of the entire analysis for Phase 1 and Phase 2 and presented information in the form of figures, tables, and narratives.

IRB Process

The purpose of Pepperdine University Institutional Review Board (IRB) is for the protection of human subjects both minors and adults, while conducting research. The highest forms of ethical principals must be enacted and maintained. IRB is a process that graduate students go through in order to ensure the protection of individuals' rights, confidentiality, and anonymity as human subjects, in a research study. The main priority is to do no harm in conducting research. Pepperdine University IRB (2009) Web site explicitly states:

The primary goal of the [Graduate and Professional School] GPS IRB is to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects participating in research activities conducted under the auspices of Pepperdine University. Applications submitted to the GPS IRB generally encompass social, behavioral, and educational research and are usually considered medically non-invasive. (para. 3)

The primary objective of the Pepperdine University IRB (2009) is to protect the welfare and dignity of human subjects. However, the policies and procedures manual claims, "by addressing the human subjects concerns in an applicant's proposed research, the IRB also work to protect investigators from engaging in potentially unethical research practices" (p. 7). Furthermore, the IRB policy states, "In the review and conduct of research, Pepperdine University is guided by the ethical principles set forth in the Belmont Report (i.e., respect for persons, beneficence, and justice)" (p. 1). The researcher took additional safeguards to protect the rights and privacy of human participants by completing the

National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants." See Appendix R Certificate of Completion of Training. In addition, the researcher read the manual pages 1 through 31 and viewed the PowerPoint presentation on the GPS IRB Web site. Furthermore, the researcher purchased HIPAA Compliance Training & Consulting Services Online Anytime Course. See Appendix S HIPAA Basic Certification.

The researcher filed an expedited application along with an application for wavier or alteration of informed consent procedures with GPS IRB manager, Jean Kang. See Appendix T IRB Expedited Application and Application for Wavier or Alteration of Informed Consent Procedures Appendix U. Once the expedited application and alteration of informed consent were approved and modifications were made, a copy of the IRB approval letter was placed in Appendix V Copy of IRB Approval Letter.

Security of Data

The principal investigator employed the assistance of statistician Tom Granoff, Ph.D for data analysis. Granoff holds a Ph.D in clinical psychology. He is a research and statistics consultant. Granoff assists Master's and dissertation students with statistical analyses. He designs surveys and analyzes data. He assists dissertation students with writing statistical reports.

Granoff has more than 30 years of experience working with graduate students and providing research methological and data analysis support. Granoff currently teaches research methods and statistics courses at Pepperdine University. He has also taught statistics at Loyola Marymount University and California State University Long Beach.

Granoff assisted the principal investigator with creating suitable SPSS files,

helping prepare the quantitative dataset for analysis, and assisting the principal investigator with transforming SPSS output into APA style tables and statistical narratives. Granoff, along with principal investigator, had access to Phase 1 quantitative and qualitative data stored and compiled on Survey Monkey. Granoff did not have access to cofidential qualitative data collected during the interviews. His services were used to run statistics on Phase 1 of the study only. Being a faculty member of Pepperdine University GSEP, he is familiar with the culture, standards, and expectations of GSEP IRB process. Granoff is aware and adheres to ethical research standards and the protection of human subjects. Because of his extensive research training and psychology background, Granoff will keep all information confidential.

In compliance with IRB, the researcher transcribed content of the Skype interviews. Electronic statistical and qualitative data were stored on a flash drive and on researcher's personal computer, which is password protected. All information collected is backed up on an external hard drive, which is also password protected, at the principal investigator's residence. Sensitive material is stored according to IRB transcriptions coding sheets and files will be kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher's residence for 5 years. After the 5 years has expired, the researcher will shred information collected in the study.

Minimizing Risks

The principal risk to the subject is the potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentality. Participation in this study was associated with no more than minimal risks and/or discomfort. GPS IRB manual describes minimal risk, as the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of

themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. Risks were minimized in the following ways: (a) participants' identities are known only to the researcher and were not used in this study; (b) no specific identifying information was used or reported in any way or in any part of the study; and (c) if a participant experienced exhaustion, fatigue, or irritability while taking the survey or during the interview portion, a break was provided. Participants were made aware that their participation in this survey was completely voluntary. If they so desired, participants could choose to discontinue this survey at any time without penalty. Unless the participants agreed to participate further in the study, checked yes to the last survey item, and voluntarily provided their contact information for a follow up, no identifying information was requested on the electronic survey. With that exception, no specific identifying information was used or reported in any way or in any part of the study. The researcher secured informed consent from all participants, which explains that the participants have a right to withdraw at any time, understands their participation is strictly voluntary, agrees to the confidentiality measures that will be taken, and will be able to review the results of the study for accuracy. Last, participants were made aware of their rights and were provided with the GPS IRB Interim Chairperson Dr. Yuying Tsong's contact information.

Anonymity

No identifying information was required on the survey unless students were willing to participate further in the study in the form of a Skype interview. Once participants provided their contact information, their identities were not anonymous.

Participants' information will be kept confidential. Students read and clicked "agree" to

the electronic informed consent before completing the survey. Only those who agreed to an interview by providing their contact information were contacted. Completed surveys received a generic code.

Confidentiality

Once participants provided their contact information, their identities and responses were kept confidential. The principal investigator took the following measures to ensure confidentiality: (a) names of interviewees and all participant's information will be stored separately, as the consent document is the only form linking the subject to the research; (b) hardcopies or data files with will be kept in a locked file cabinet at the investigator's residence; (c) electronic statistical and qualitative data will be stored on a flash drive and accessed on researcher's personal computer, which is password and screen saver protected; (d) IP addresses will not be linked to student responses; (e) all information collected will be backed up on an external hard drive, which is also password protected, at the principal investigator's residence; (f) only the researcher will have access to qualitative data; (g) sensitive material will be stored according to IRB transcriptions coding sheets and files will be kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher's residence for 5 years; and (h) after 5 years has expired, the researcher will crosscut shred information collected in the study and destroy all audio and digital recordings and electronic files using a magnet.

The following safeguards were employed to protect the participant's rights (Creswell, 2007): (a) the research objectives were articulated verbally and in writing so that they were clearly understood by the participants; (b) participants were provided with principal investigator, dissertation chairperson Dr. Michelle Rosensitto, and IRB Interim

Chairperson, Dr. Yuying Tsong's contact information if they had questions, comments, concerns, or complaints regarding their rights or research practices; (c) written permission to proceed was articulated from the dean; (d) a research expedited application and application for waiver or alteration of informed consent was filed with IRB; (e) the participants were informed of data-collection devices and activities such as digital auto recording procedures during the interview; (f) all Skype interviews were transcribed by the principal investigator, and verbatim transcriptions and reports were made available to the participants; and (g) the participant's rights, interests, and wishes were considered when choices were made regarding reporting the data. Last, before, during, and throughout the data collection process, participants were reminded that they could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or retaliation.

Ethical Framework

According to Creswell (2003), "Most authors who discuss qualitative research design address the importance of ethical considerations" (p. 201). Creswell purports, "The researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values, and desires of the informant(s)" (p. 201). When conducting researcher, it is best to operate within a self-imposed ethical framework. This framework flows from the researcher's character.

Cashman (1998) states, "Character is the essence, the being of the leader, which is deeper and broader than any action or achievement" (p. 43). Cashman argues leaders have two selves: the persona and inner character. Cashman asserts character transforms; persona copes. Leadership arises from personal character. Researchers must know what they stand for in order to make sound ethical decisions. Josephson (2002), who wrote *Making Ethical Decisions*, and The Josephson Institute on Ethics outlined six pillars of moral

character: (a) caring, (b) responsibility, (c) trustworthiness, (d) respect, (e) honesty, and (f) citizenship. According to Josephson, "The six pillars act as a multi-level filter through which to process decisions" (p. 7). The six pillars of character offer a balanced universal platform that Western cultures tend to value highly.

Moral Authority

As a researcher, it is not enough to abide by the policies and procedures of the GPS's IRB constitutions; most important, moral imperatives, moral authority, and prima facie duties can be used as guides.

Ross's (as cited in Arthur, 2005) article "Intuitionism" outlines six prima facie duties or conditional duties for moral development: (a) Duties of fidelity, (b) Duties of reparation, (c) Duties of gratitude, (d) Duties of justice and "not injuring others" (p. 75), (e) Duties of beneficence, and (f) Duties of self-improvement. He distinguishes between duty actual and duty proper admitting, "There are various and often conflicting types of prima facie duty" (p. 75). Central to his argument is the prima facie duty of keeping promises and truth telling. Ross asserts:

In using the prima facie duties as a moral guide, it might be said that it is really the duty to prevent ourselves from acting either from inclination to harm others or from the inclination to seek our own pleasure. (p. 75)

With this stance in mind, the researcher sought to do no harm, tell the whole truth regarding the data-collection process, and reveal how the data will be used.

Bracketing

Statement of personal biases. Prior to stating how the data were analyzed it is important for the researcher to bracket her biases in a statement of personal biases. When

incorporating qualitative research methods into the design, it is appropriate for the researcher to set aside personal views, assumptions, biases, and beliefs before delving deeper and proceeding to gather the experiences of others in the form of one-on-one interviews. Moustaka's (as cited in Creswell, 2007) transcendental phenomenology focused on epoche or bracketing personal experiences. Bracketing is a process by which the principal investigator or researcher sets aside his or her personal experiences.

Creswell (2007) claims bracketing "allows the researcher to take a fresh perspective toward the phenomenon under examination" (p. 59). According to Moustakas, "This state is seldom perfectly achieved" (p. 60). It is an attempt by the researcher to share experiences explicitly before proceeding with the collection of experiences and insights of others. With this in mind, the principal investigator took this time to share background information with participants:

This is my fourth year in the Organizational Leadership program. I embraced the program and decided during orientation that I would strive for the million-dollar terminal degree. Seeing how I would not walk this way again, I chose to brand myself differently throughout the program by attending and presenting at national, regional, and international conferences as well as publishing papers. I used class projects to meet business leaders as well as local, state, and federal leaders. I created informational DVDs, designed educational programs, and applied organizational leadership theory to practice, while working for LAUSD. I was shocked when I was unable to locate materials beyond technical writing to support doctoral students. I searched for books, support groups on campus, and outside professional alliances and organizations to help me better manage the

entire doctoral experience. I collaborated with other doctoral students and made it a point to write a book and create an informational DVD, which includes our personal experiences to help others manage their journey. It is my hope to collect data that supports the need to support doctoral students and design a hi-tech doctoral support Web site that focuses on building connectedness and managing the process by forming an online community, blogging, live streaming, webinars, e-coaching, e-mentoring, virtual office hours, podcasts, and virtual guest speakers.

Overview of Design Plan

- January 2011 Design Survey Instrument; Choose panel of experts to review survey instrument.
- February 2011 file expedited application to GSP IRB Jean Kang; Engage in a series of requests and approvals from the dean, academic chairpersons, and assistant directors.
- March 2011 make modifications to IRB application.
- April 2011 obtain final IRB approval; May 2011 make corrections to instrument before deployment in June 2011.
- June 2011 conduct phase 1 data collection; Send electronic web link to Christie Dailo to forward to 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students; send follow up e-mail 1 week after Dailo's initial e-mail.
- June 2011 continue Phase 1 data collection and analysis; Begin Phase 2 schedule interviews.
- June 2011 continue with Phase 2 data collection; interview 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students in EDOL.

- Utilize statistical software, SPSS, to analyze quantitative data.
- June 2011 analyze, code, and transcribe data; develop possible themes for
 Web site; Begin designing Doctoral Essentials Web site on Groupsite.com.
- July 2011 continue developing Doctoral Essential Web site an online community using Groupsite.com; write Chapter 4 results.
- July 2011 write Chapter 5; Upload content to Web site; Schedule Final Oral.

Summary

Chapter 3 provided the reader with a history of mixed methods as a viable researcher strategy, followed by the restatement of the purpose, and last a restatement of the research questions. Chapter 3 fully detailed the methodology chosen for this study, population, sample procedures, survey development, and multiple content and instrument validation procedures. Last, Chapter 3 outlined proposed data collection plan, overview of emotional intelligence and an ethical decision-making model to use in conjunction with IRB policies, procedures and protocol, and finally the design plan and analyses for the research questions.

The results from the study appear in Chapter 4. Data were analyzed and presented using a variety of statistical figures and tables to answer the study's research questions. In addition to the statistical and visual representation of the data, short narrative descriptions and student testimonials accompany some data. Furthermore, the results are implemented into the development of the Web site.

Chapter 5 presents a summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for further research. Chapter 5 showcases a model dissertation support Web site, informational DVD, and student testimonials.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of the mixed-method study sought to assess 2nd-year doctoral students' and dissertation students' perceptions of the current GSEP dissertation support Web site, with implications for designing a model dissertation support Web site to help students: (a) manage the process, (b) build connectedness, and (c) better support doctoral students through the entire doctoral process from orientation, through course work, development of their topic, and finalization of the complete practice study. The broader purpose of this two-phased, mixed-method study was to assess the need for developing a model interactive Web site at Pepperdine University GSEP or other universities throughout the nation, which would support doctoral students through the dissertation phase at the departmental, individual, institutional, and relational level.

Tinto's (1985, 1993) Undergraduate Persistence Model (a) adjustment, (b) incongruence, (c) difficulty, and (d) isolation and Tinto's (1993) Model of Institutional Departure were used as a theoretical framework for this study to develop a doctoral support Web site. Tinto's (1985) Model of Institutional Departure takes seriously that both forms of integration, social and intellectual, are essential to student persistence. Tinto (1985, 1993) claims two systems, the academic and social domain, overlap and are equally important to the development of students' academic and social integration.

Tinto's (1993) Model of Institutional Departure Principle III Social and Intellectual Community served as the justification for the dissertation support Web site. Principle III stated effective student retention programs should evaluate the services, programs, and actions of the institution. The models formed the conceptual basis of the research on social and intellectual integration.

Prior to deploying the survey to students the researcher used Rosensitto's (1999) criteria for changing the instrument based on the feedback received from the expert panel. Of the suggested seven-member panel, three returned the validity-rating questionnaire with comments and/or suggested changes. Where two or more expert reviewers agreed on the same item, a change was noted and made to the instrument.

This two-phase mixed-method study utilized Creswell Sequential Explanatory Design. The survey was deployed June 3, 2011. June 10, 2011, 1 week after the initial email, Christie Dailo, assistant program director of Leadership and Technology, sent a follow-up e-mail to sample population. The survey closed on June 18, 2011.

In Phase 1, participants took and anonymous online survey. Of the maximum 147 sample population, 45 respondents started the survey, and 36 respondents (80%) completed the survey. Thirteen respondents (28.9%) declined to participate, while 32 respondents (71.1%) agreed and completed the electronic survey in its entirety.

Researcher contacted 100% of all respondents who provided their contact information, using a follow-up script. Creswell (2007), citing Spradley, claims, "Good informants/participants are those who know the information required, are willing to reflect on the phenomena of interest, have the time, and are willing to participate" (p. 195). Phase 2, consisted of six semistructured Skype interviews. Interviews were conducted June 3, 2011 through June 20, 2011. The principal investigator recorded and transcribed all interviews. The following is a representation of data collected in Phase 1 of the two-phased mixed-method study.

Results from Survey Item 1

Question 1: Electronic consent. The frequency distribution of informed consent

reported 45 respondents answered survey item 1. Of these, 32 respondents or (71.1%) agreed to participate and take the survey. Thirteen or (28.9%) disagreed and did not participate in the survey. See Table 8 below.

Table 8

Frequency Distribution of Informed Consent

Answer	Percent	Count
Agree	71.1	32
Disagree	28.9	13
Total	100.0	45

Results From Survey Item 2

Question 2. What is your current status in the EDOL program? The frequency distribution of respondent's program status reported 32 respondents answered survey item 2 and 13 respondents skipped this question. The data collected reported 22 (68.8%) were dissertation students, while 10 (31.3%) were 2nd-year doctoral students. See Table 9.

Table 9

Frequency Distribution of Respondent's Program Status

Status	Percent	Count
2 nd Year	31.3	10
Dissertation	68.8	22
Total	100.01	32

Results From Survey Item 3

Question 3: Please indicate you gender. Thirty-two respondents answered survey item 3 and 13 respondents skipped this question. Twenty respondents (62.5%) were female and 12 respondents (37.5%) were male. The frequency distribution of respondent's gender displays the demographic breakdown of male and female respondents. Table 10 displays the demographic breakdown of male and female

respondents. The frequency distribution of respondent's gender is shown in Table 10.

Table 10

Frequency Distribution of Respondent's Gender

Answer	Percent	Count
Male	37.5	12
Female	62.5	20
Total	100.0	32

Results From Survey Item 4

Question 4: Please identity your ethnic group. Thirty-two respondents answered survey item 4 and 13 respondents skipped this question. Table 11 displays the ethnic demographic distribution of respondents who completed the survey. The frequency distribution of respondent's ethnicity data reported 17 respondents (53.3%) are Caucasian, nine (28.1%) African American, three respondents (9.4%) are Latino/Hispanic, one Native American, one Asian, and one Pacific Islander (3.1% each respectively). See Table 11.

Table 11

Frequency Distribution of Respondent's Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Percent	Count
African American or Black	28.1	9
Native American	3.1	1
Latino/Hispanic	9.4	3
Caucasian	53.1	17
Asian	3.1	1
Pacifica Islander	3.1	1
Other (please specify)	0	0
Total	99.9	32

Results From Survey Item 5

Question 5: How helpful is each of the following aspects of Pepperdine

University GSEP current dissertation support Web site? Descriptive statistics of respondent's perception of helpfulness results are displayed using a rating scale ranging from very helpful to not at all helpful. Twenty-six respondents answered survey item 5 and 19 respondents skipped this question. See Table 12.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics of Respondent's Perception of Helpfulness Data

Answer	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Not Very Helpful	Not at all Helpful	Rating Average	Count
Finding/selecting/procuring a Dissertation Chair	1	2	2	11	10	4.04	26
Dissertation Development Guidelines	6	5	5	9	1	2.77	26
Dissertation APA Support	9	5	7	3	2	2.38	26
Dissertation Writing Support	6	6	7	6	1	2.62	26
IRB Clearance Support	3	8	8	5	2	2.81	26
Dissertation Support Usability	1	7	8	9	1	3.08	26
Visual Appearance of Dissertation Web site	6	1	10	7	1	2.84	26
Dissertation Support Web site Forms and Resources	6	3	11	5	1	2.69	26
Dissertation Support Web site Policies and Procedures	6	5	10	4	1	2.58	26
Dissertation Support Web site Links	3	6	9	6	2	2.92	26
Dissertation Support Web site Manuals	6	3	9	6	1	2.72	26
Selecting a dissertation Topic	1	1	5	12	7	3.88	26
Writing a Dissertation Prospectus Proposal	1	1	8	10	6	3.73	26

In summarizing the Helpfulness Data, the data suggest the lower the average on the 4.0 scale the more helpful the component. The higher the average the least helpful the component on the current dissertation support Web site.

Finding, selecting, and procuring a dissertation chair on the current Web site average rating was 4.04. Eleven (42.3%) students reported it as not very helpful, while 10 students (38.5%) chose not at all helpful. The average for dissertation usability was 3.08.

Eight (30.8%) students chose helpful, while nine (34.6%) chose not very helpful. The average rating for selecting a dissertation topic was 3.88. Twelve (46.2%) students chose not very helpful, while seven (26.9%) chose not at all helpful. The average rating for writing a dissertation prospectus proposal was 3.73. Ten (38.5%) students chose not very helpful and six (23.1%) chose not at all helpful.

Results From Survey Item 6

Question 6: How useful is each of the following aspects of Pepperdine University GSEP current dissertation support Web site? Descriptive statistics of respondent's perception of usefulness results are displayed using a rating scale ranging from very useful to not useful at all. Twenty-five respondents answered survey item 6 and 20 respondents skipped this question. See Table 13.

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics of Respondent's Perception of Usefulness Data

Answer	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Useful	Not Very Useful	Not Useful at All	Rating Average	Count
Finding/Selecting/Procuring a Dissertation Chair	1	1	4	10	9	4.00	25
Dissertation Chair Dissertation Development Guidelines	4	2	7	10	1	3.08	24
Dissertation APA Support	5	3	10	5	2	2.84	25
Dissertation Writing Support	6	3	8	5	3	2.84	25
IRB Clearance Support	5	8	4	6	2	2.68	25
Dissertation Support	1	5	10	8	1	3.12	25
Usability							
Visual Appearance of	7	0	9	7	1	2.79	24
Dissertation Web site							
Web site Forms and	8	3	9	4	1	2.48	25
Resources							
Support Web site Policies and	7	3	11	3	1	2.52	25
Procedures							
Dissertation Support Web site	4	5	8	6	2	2.88	25
Links							
Dissertation Support Web site	4	4	10	6	1	2.84	25
Manuals							
Selecting a Dissertation Topic	2	2	2	11	8	3.84	25
Writing a Dissertation	2	3	4	10	6	3.60	25
Prospectus Proposal							

In summarizing the Usefulness Data, the data suggest the lower the average on the 4.0 scale the more useful the component. The higher the average the least useful the component is on the current dissertation support Web site.

The average rating for finding, selecting, and procuring a dissertation chair was 4.00. Ten (40.0%) chose not very useful and 9 (36.0%) chose not at all useful. The average rating for dissertation development guidelines was 3.08. Ten (41.7%) chose not very useful and 1 (4.2%) chose not useful at all. The average usefulness rating for APA Support was 2.84. Five (20.0%) chose very useful, 3 (12.3%) chose somewhat useful, and 10 (40.0%) chose useful. Eight or (32.0%) chose somewhat helpful for IRB clearance support. The average usefulness rating for dissertation writing support was 2.84. Six (24.0%) chose very useful, three (12.0%) chose somewhat useful, and eight (32.0%) chose useful. The average rating for dissertation support usability was 3.12. Five (20.0%) chose somewhat useful, while 10 (40.0%) chose useful. The average rating for dissertation support policies and procedures was 2.52. Seven (28.0%) chose very useful, three (12.0%) chose somewhat useful, and 11 (44.0%) chose useful.

The average usefulness rating for selecting a dissertation topic on the current dissertation support Web site was 3.84. Eleven (44.0%) chose not very useful, while eight students (32.0%) chose not useful at all. The average rating for writing a dissertation prospectus proposal on the current dissertation support Web site was 3.60. Ten students (40.0%) students chose not very useful, while six chose not at all useful.

Results From Survey Item 7

Question 7: What services/information are needed on the dissertation support
Web site that are not already available? Nineteen respondents answered survey item 7

and 26 respondents skipped this item. Respondents commented in narrative format. The three-digit number corresponds to the order in which respondents completed the survey. Some respondents elected not to answer each item.

- 003: I found all needed resources at the GSEP dissertation Support webpage.

 004: Services might include online writing support or writing workshops with professors to start generating topics or formulating researchable questions

 007: There should be a model or chart that shows the various steps and stages for dissertation students from course work, to comps, development of the topic, turning the topic into researchable questions and drafting the first three chapters.

 008: I don't use the site much at this point.
- 011: More detailed information regarding the difference between Chapters 4 and 5.
- 012: A list of available chairs and their research interest would be very useful.
- 024: There needs to be more promotion of the site.
- 025: A sample timeline for completing the dissertation from start to finish.
- 026: Directing student to the site would be helpful. A as a 2nd-year student, I wasn't even aware of the site until the survey!
- 029: A sample timeline of the dissertation process from start to finish. Including deadlines based on when a student hopes to graduate
- 030: Information about dissertation support groups that might be available to students who are interested
- 032: There should be a system in place that holds Pepperdine faculty responsible to respond in a timely manner with a decision to chair or not to chair

- someone's dissertation.
- 033: Current list of faculty with interest to help form committees.
- 034: It would be good to have a list of professors available to chair dissertations.
- 036: Pepperdine University Wavenet and information services causes all GSEP students some level of online Internet problems.
- 037: After studying all the links, the Web site seems very comprehensive.
- 039: A status update that shows when IRB application or other forms have been submitted indicating receipt of the forms and a progress update.
- 042: A clear thorough APA guide. A map showing the whole process.
- 044: There is little to nothing beyond forms. It would be more helpful to have guidance in the process of finding a chair that is well matched with ones in the field. It would be nice to have a clearly defined timeline.

Question 8: What do you find most useful about the current dissertation support Web site? Twenty-one respondents answered survey item 8 and 24 respondents skipped this question. Respondents commented in narrative format. The three-digit number corresponds to the order in which respondents completed the survey. Some respondents elected not to answer each item.

- 003: Dissertation protocol/policy webpage and IRB resources.
- 004: The policies are clear and the Power Points are helpful. The forms and resources are easy to download.
- 007: The electronic forms and manuals are available and easy to download. The IRB checklist is also helpful.

- 011: The support available at the writing center/APA is very useful.
- 012: The links to the forms are very useful. The easy to understand manuals are also helpful.
- 022: Forms
- 024: Forms are available and the APA manual.
- 025: IRB information
- 026: Knowing it exists.
- 029: The IRB information
- 030: Well structured, easy to navigate.
- 032: Not a whole lot. First you have to find it and then try and then try to work through it on your own.
- 033: Clarity of the process—especially forms section and policies and procedures section.
- 034: It's very easy to navigate. The links are very useful. The samples are well selected.
- 036:
- 037: I don't find it user friendly.
- 038: It is well organized and functional.
- 039: Examples of forms.
- 041: Nothing useful at all. The whole dissertation process at Pepperdine is useless.
- 042: Nothing
- 044: Aggregation of all the necessary forms in one location.

Question 9: What do you find least useful about the current dissertation support Web site? Nineteen respondents answered survey item 9 and 26 respondents skipped this question. Respondents commented in narrative format. The three-digit number corresponds to the order in which respondents completed the survey. Some respondents elected not to answer each item.

- 004: The tabs to the right with the Colleague Magazine, Urban Initiative, and

 Boone Center. Also acceptable dissertation structures could be elaborated on
 possibly with examples of recently approved five-chapter and four-chapter
 studies
- 007: The site seems static and technical based, it is just forms policies and procedures. There is a lack of social support, connection, or interaction for dissertation students after they finish comps.
- 011: Information about finding a dissertation chair.
- 012: The brief description of how to find a chair and how to go through IRB are less than useful.
- 022: Hard to find-seems to be disjoined.
- 024: There should be more human support for locating a chair and also information on connecting with others who are in the process, titles of current dissertations in process, and other networking opportunities.
- 026: Seems pretty static.
- 029: The lack of a timeline.
- 030: There's really nothing I don't like about it.

- 032: There is not enough information of the current dissertation support Web site.
- 033: None
- 034: Nothing
- 036: The dissertation support processes do not appear to flow smoothly from 1.

 Introduction to the available qualitative and quantitative (statistical)

 processes and procedures through 2. Guidance for general identification of topic
- 037: Again, it's not user friendly.
- 038: Not very interactive and is visually uninteresting.
- 039: It is not very well organized, I have to bounce from one Web site to another fishing for information.
- 042: It is very weak in helping with the dissertation.
- 044: Lack of guidance on the more vague components of the dissertation process.

Question 10: If you could redesign the dissertation support Web site, what would be your top three changes? Twenty respondents answered survey item 10 and 25 respondents skipped this question. Respondents commented in narrative format. The three-digit number corresponds to the order in which respondents completed the survey. Some respondents elected not to answer each item.

003: N/A

004: Instead of tabs with the colleague magazine, Boone Center for Family, and
Urban Initiative replace with current events for dissertation students, voices
and video from current students or recent grads of the program and welcome

- message from professors, chairpersons, IRB chairperson, or dissertation support manager.
- 007: 1. Adding a model or chart of the entire process, keeping in mind the process/journey will look different and vary for each person. 2. Using meaningful student testimonials with a short audio or video clip sharing their personal stories.
- 011: Include links regarding realistic turn around time for administrative fillings/feedback. Include information regarding who to contact when there are difficulties with your chair.
- 012: 1. Include a section on frequently asked questions. 2. Include a list of available dissertation chairs and their interest. 3. Make a list of included items on the first page of the Web site so that students know where they can find them.
- 022: More defined menu on the first page to avoid going layers deep to find info.
- 024: Selecting a chair, What to expect from your chair, Selecting a topic
- 025: 1. Add a timeline 2. Add a message board/online support group for dissertation students. 3. Have chairs discuss Web site with students (not a change to the Web site, I realize, but I think it's important)
- 026: Have more web 2.0 functionality. Use of video. Use of stories.
- 029: 1. Include a timeline with deadlines. 2. Find a way for dissertation students to connect. 3. Instruct dissertation chairs to tell students about the site.
- 030: Make it easier to find.
- 032: 1. There should be a list of possible dissertation chairs and their preferred

- subject matter. 2. There should also be an area that would allow one to see remarks about the chair from other students. 3. There should also be a timeline for the chair's response.
- 033: 1. Link to a few "model dissertations using the 4 chapter or 5 chapter approaches.
- 034: No redesign, but the following additions. 1) A sample of a successful preliminary defense, with notes indicating what is correct about it—for example using future tense instead of past tense like in the final dissertation.
- 036: Begin with a clear statement of the GSEP mission and vision relating to the dissertation processes and procedures. Create a clear set of line drawings showing the progression from step to step.
- 037: I can't think of anything at this time.
- 038: 1. More personal 2. More introductory narrative.
- 039: Online chat, restructure the site to be more aligned with not only the progress of a dissertation but one that has a timeline, for example a calendar tool that a student enters pre-IRB application and it will forecast a set date.
- 042: APA clear guide overarching map showing the whole process so I can judge where I am in the process.
- 044: 1. Focus more on guidance regarding project conception. 2. Focus more on dissertation chair selection process. 3. Provide timeline of tasks based on built in wait order of operations, etc.

Question 11: On average how often do you visit the current dissertation support

site is reported below. Twenty-four respondents answered survey item 11 and 21 respondents skipped this question. Twelve respondents (50%) visit the current dissertation support Web site less than once per month. Five (20.8%) visit the current Web site at least once per month. Another 5 respondents (20.8%) reported visiting the current Web site not at all. Two respondents (8.3%) reported visiting the current Web site at least once a week. See Table 14.

Web site per month? The frequency distribution of number of visits to the current Web

Table 14

Frequency Distribution of Number of Visits to Current Web Site

Answer Options	Percent	Count
Four or more times (at least once/week)	8.3	2
One to three times (at least once a month)	20.8	5
Less than once per month	50.0	12
None (not at all)	20.8	5
Total	99.9	24

Response From Survey Item 12

Question 12: What would make you visit the dissertation support Web site more often? Twenty respondents answered survey item 12 and 25 respondents skipped this question. Respondents commented in narrative format. The three-digit number corresponds to the order in which respondents completed the survey. Some respondents elected not to answer each item.

003: N/A

004: If there were new dissertation models uploaded to read and review possibly recommended by professors and some sort of interaction between other dissertation students, a community of sorts.

007: If there were more social interaction, between professors or chairpersons,

- and other dissertation students, perhaps a forum to get feedback. I would go more often if the IRB checklist had an electronic checklist.
- 008: If marketed better.
- 011: If there was fresh content available.
- 012: I would visit if there was an accountability page. If I had an incentive to visit the Web site I would. For example, if I have to go to the page to click after each step in the process if completed.
- 024: Now that I am aware of it, I will go there more. I am not confident, however, that it will be of much use except for process and procedure information.
- 025: Online support group/message board.
- 026: Knowing it was available. 2. Information that is engaging.
- 029: Perhaps a message board where students could post about their progress, roadblocks they are facing, etc.
- 032: If the information was more user friendly. If, the data somehow met the needs of a dissertation student.
- 033: As I progress through the writing, I will be using it more often. I had forgotten about it.
- 034: Being informed that there is a dissertation Web site. I have been working on my dissertation for more that 4 years and I have found about the support Web site this year.
- 036: Ease of information access, clear Internet links and optional sources of information.
- 037: If resources were more clearly organized.

- 038: Just the natural progression through the dissertation phase.
- 039: More interactive tools, better Web site design, online chat, electronic submission, (which will include electronic approval from faculty).
- 042: See changes requested.
- 044: I will go more when I am in dissertation, which I am not currently. A more compelling and intuitive interface would make me visit more.

Question 13: Overall, how satisfied are you with the current dissertation support Web site? The frequency distribution of respondent's satisfaction with current dissertation support Web site is shown below. Twenty-four respondents answered survey item 13 and 21 respondents skipped this question. Two respondents (8.3%) reported being very satisfied. Four respondents (16.7%) reported being satisfied. Eight (33.3%) reported being neutral, while another eight (33.3%) reported being dissatisfied. Last, two respondents (8.3%) reported being very dissatisfied with the current Web site. See Table 15.

Table 15

Frequency Distribution of Respondent's Satisfaction With Current Web Site

Answer	Percent	Count
Very Satisfied	8.3	2
Satisfied	16.7	4
Neutral	33.3	8
Dissatisfied	33.3	8
Very Dissatisfied	8.3	2
Total	99.9	24

Response From Survey Item 14

Question 14: Visually, what might an ideal dissertation support Web site look

like? Eighteen respondents answered survey item 14 and 27 respondents skipped this question. Respondents commented in narrative format. The three-digit number corresponds to the order in which respondents completed the survey. Some respondents elected not to answer each item.

- 003: More concerned with resources being available rather than visual appeal of the site.
- 004: The site should feel welcoming and easy to navigate. The tabs and folders should be clearly organized, useful dissertation structures and examples of each should be uploaded. Visually, it will convey that this is a one-stop shop.
- 007: You've arrived. We are here to help you through the journey. You are not alone. If you look to the right of the screen there is a list of video clips of professors sharing their interest, underneath are student videos.
- 008: Something that can be accessed through Sakai and look like a social networking site where you can connect with others who are doing similar research.
- 011: Easy to navigate.
- 012: Not sure. I'm not good at web design.
- 024: I have no changes to the visual. I would put a link for the Web site in the student services or academic resources section.
- 026: An interactive site that provides useful tools and student accounts of how and when to utilize.
- 030: I think the format is fine the way it is.
- 032: If, the information was easily recognized and the ability to follow it was

easy.

- 033: I think this one is good. It needs to have utility first, bells and whistles second. Perhaps a couple of video clips explaining a few of the more complex processes...like the IRB process would be nice.
- 034: I like it the way it is.
- 036: Individual adult learners have numerous preferences so using the standard for Internet handicapped access to information provides the broadest base.

 Color blind students limits must be considered in Web site design.
- 037: Well organized with many links to resources and supports.
- 038: I don't know.
- 039: Creating the Web site by steps, such as tabs or visually easy to follow the process and under each tab its relevant links or documents.
- 042: This makes no difference to me. I am not looking for form.—I want function. Clean, clear, easy to follow with good support information.
- 044: Hands on, ability to view stories from current and past dissertation students.

Results From Survey Item 15

Question 15: Which of the following technologies would you like to see implemented on the dissertation support Web site? Please check all that apply. The frequency distribution of preferred technologies is displayed below. Twenty-three respondents answered survey item 15 and 22 respondents skipped this question. The preferred technologies with a percentage more than 50% that respondents would like to see implemented on a dissertation support Web site are: E-mentoring, Webinars, Skype communication with professors, Links to professional doctoral student organization, and

Virtual office hours. Eighteen respondents (78.3%) elected e-mentoring, followed closely by Webinars. Seventeen respondents or (73.9%) checked webinars. Sixteen respondents (69.9%) would like Skype communication with professors. Fourteen respondents, (60.9%) checked links to professional doctoral student organizations. Twelve respondents (52.2%) checked virtual office hours. The data concluded that e-mentoring was the most desired preferred technology. The preferred technologies are presented in Figure 3.

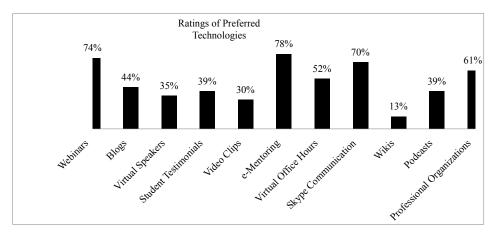


Figure 3. Frequency distribution of preferred technologies.

Results From Survey Item 16

Question 16: Please indicate whether you would participate in any of the following formal and/or informal social activities or events, if offered at your university or another university during your graduate experience. Check all that apply. Twenty-four respondents answered survey item 16 and 21 respondents skipped this question. The preferred formal and/or informal social activities or events with a percentage more than 50% respondents would attend if offered at GSEP or another university are: Dissertation Retreat/Bootcamp, Monthly Faculty Check-in via Skype, Student Support Groups, 2nd-Year Course Work Completion Dinner Monthly Webinar with professor, End-of-1st-Year Luncheon, Writing Seminars/Online Writing. Twenty (83.3%) respondents elected

Dissertation Retreat/Bootcamp. Sixteen respondents or (66.7%) elected Monthly faculty check-in via Skype and Student Support Groups. Fifteen respondents (62.5%) each elected 2nd-Year Course Work Completion Dinner and Monthly Webinar with a professor. Thirteen respondents (54.2%) respectively elected End-of-1st-Year Luncheon and Writing Seminars/Online Writing Support. The data indicated the Dissertation Retreat/Bootcamp is the preferred formal or informal event students would attend if offered. Twenty (83.3%) out of 24 respondents selected Dissertation Retreat/Bootcamp as the most desired social activity. The frequency distributions of preferred social activities are displayed in the Figure 4 the most preferred social activity.

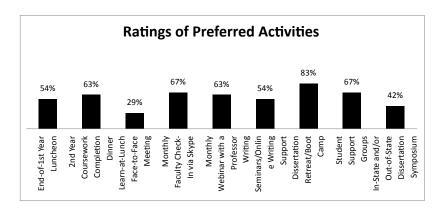


Figure 4. Frequency distributions of preferred social activities.

Results From Survey Item 17

Question 17: Would you use the dissertation support Web site more frequently if more web-based social tools were made available? The frequency distributions of respondent's future visits to dissertation Web site are shown below. Twenty-four respondents answered survey item 17 and 21 respondents skipped this question. Using an ordinal scale, respondents were asked if they would visit the current site if enhanced with social tools. Eight respondents (33.3%) reported definitely, another eight (33.3%) reported probably, six respondents (25.0%) reported maybe, two (8.3%) reported

probably not, and no respondents reported definitely not. See Table 16.

Table 16

Frequency Distributions of Respondent's Future Visits to Dissertation Web Site

Answer	Percent	Count
Definitely	33.3	8
Probably	33.3	8
Maybe	25.0	6
Probably Not	8.3	2
Definitely Not	0.0	0
Total	99.9	24

Results From Survey Item 18

Question 18: Interview Consent: Would you like to participate further in this study in the form of a 20-minute Skype interview? The frequency of respondent's consent for Skype interview is displayed in a bar graph. Twenty-four respondents answered survey item 18 and 21 skipped question. Nine respondents (37.5%) checked yes, 15 respondents (62.5%) checked no. The results of the interview consent are shown in Figure 5.

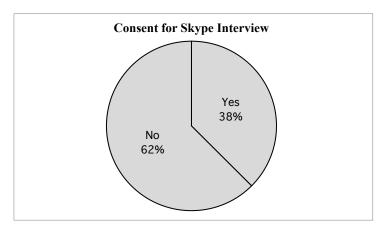


Figure 5. Percentage of participants who consented for Skype interview.

Following D. Davis's (2010) dissertation, *Online Learning: Quality Benchmark*, as a model, respondents' uncoded comments collected during Phase 1 were reexamined to determine if by frequency, any themes were represented. There were seven major

themes that were represented in Phase 1, which collected both quantitative and qualitative data. Those comments focused mainly on relational and departmental issues such as assistance selecting a dissertation chairperson, faculty mentoring, how to relate with chairperson, and making the dissertation support Web site known during orientation.

Other comments focused on procedural issues, online tools, and formal and informal events. The researcher summarized the qualitative data and provided examples of both positive and negative comments both with and without explanations below.

Positive comments without explanations:

- Would not want to redesign dissertation support Web site.
- I like the current layout and it's easy to use.
- Knowing dissertation support Web site exists.

Negative comments without explanations:

- Integrate in class work.
- Make Web site more highly visible.
- No support provided.
- It's really about procedures and fees.
- No links to dissertation samples or similar resources.
- Not having it utilized or introduced more interactively in course work.

Positive comments with explanations:

- I find the section pertinent to writing support the most useful on the site.
- IRB information is thorough.
- The current dissertation support Web site is a common area to find multiple resources, one stop shopping.

Negative comments with explanations:

- No information regarding whom to contact if you have questions on dissertation planning, ideas, topics, and chairs.
- Add a forum for issue discussion.
- The dissertation support Web site would be helpful if it was organized and the site was shown by professors.

Relational issues:

- Obtaining a mentor within my program.
- When is the appropriate time to contact professors, during the summer, right before comps, after comps, in year one, two, or three?
- One-on-one interactions with professors and dissertation chairperson.
- Dissertation chairs availability and capacity to accept new students.
- How do I approach a professor outside of my program when seeking a chair?

Departmental issues:

- Selection of dissertation chairperson.
- More chair options for example obtaining a chair outside of my program.
- Interaction with dissertation chairs.
- More help with topics, locating chairs, and due dates.
- Being informed by where the site is located and how to access it.
- Adding current information and resources that would benefit GAP students.
- Organizing workshops and place for dissertation students to gather and network.

Procedural issues:

- Listing possible dissertation chairs information regarding their limits and capacity to accept new students.
- More help regarding the entire dissertation process start to finish.
- Lack of clarity regarding what topics are appropriate for degree.
- More IRB information and timelines for administrative tasks are needed on the site.
- Recent sample approved IRB applications sample modification letters.
- Adding newly released information such as current comp exams and dissertations.
- Sending e-mail to inform students of the new resources uploaded on the site.
- Links with current dissertations sorted by types.

Online issues:

- Add a forum for discussion and a place to seek input on specific elements.
- Post reflections from students who completed their dissertation and their suggestions to proceed.
- No community blog page.
- Add video—For example coaching tips from professors.
- Make site more interactive.

Six additional comments were neutral and did not seem to fit into any particular category or theme.

Results From Survey Item 19

The frequency of the total number of interviewees is reported below. Eight respondents answered survey item 19 and 37 respondents skipped this question. Eight

respondents completed at least two of the three fields in order for the researcher to contact them for a follow-up Skype interview. All eight were contacted. A total of six interviews were conducted between June 3, 2011 and June 20, 2011. See Table 17 Frequency of total interview respondents.

Table 17

Frequency of Total Interview Respondents

Answer	Percent	Count
Name	100.0	8
Phone Number	100.0	8
E-Mail	100.0	8

In collecting and storing the qualitative data, the researcher engaged in a series of steps to organize the qualitative data first.

- 1. Researcher first created a table, coding system, to store initial information such as the participant's name, date of Skype interview, MP3 file number, start and end time, and summary/emerging themes. Researcher then summarized the written notes and highlights of the audiotaped interview including exact quotation whenever possible. Researcher showed this by enclosing the exact quote in quotation marks. Also, in storing the data the researcher created individual labels and file folders with the date of the interview and generic numbered code for each interviewee. The coding system along with all notes and a copy of the signed letter of consent for interview were placed inside of the file folder, and placed in a locked cabinet at the researcher's residence.
- 2. The researcher then created a list of possible categories after rereading the summaries from each interviewee. The researcher derived initial categories

from the summaries and research questions, and created a list of seven broad topics. The researcher then named the seven broad topics principal categories. Seven principal categories emerged: dissertation chairperson, e-mentoring, interactive tools, student recommendations/student responses, critical questions, types of support, and Web site content. The researcher then used the first letter of each word to represent each category, for example dissertation chairperson became DC, E-mentoring became (EM), Interactive Tools became (IT), and so on.

- 3. The researcher then proceeded to develop subcategories based on the qualitative responses from the textbox questions derived from the online survey. Six subcategories emerged: dissertation support; finding, selecting, and listing available chairs; mentoring; coaching; online support; and face-to-face events. Step 3 also included adding a value of "positive," "neutral," or "negative" relation to each category.
- 4. Step 4 entailed creating a new chart with only principal categories, codes, and theoretical references.
- 5. Putting it all together—This chart served as a visualization tool to clearly see the principal categories, codes, subcategories, value, and theoretical references side by side. This technique aided in putting structure to the qualitative data.

This system was developed and put in place by the researcher early on, while

Phase 1 was still being conducted. Collection of both quantitative and some qualitative

data through the electronic survey lasted 2 weeks. The coding system served to assist the

researcher in maintaining the integrity of the data, classifying the data, and properly

analyzing reoccurring themes that may repeat in other interviews. While reading, the researcher tagged reoccurring categories using the coding system and codes. New or emergent themes were classified under principal categories, similar or like categories were placed under the subcategory heading. This system proved useful and also served as a mechanism for systematically coding and managing large amounts of qualitative data.

To ensure accuracy of the quotes, the researcher paused and restated pertinent comments. The researcher was prepared to contact participants for further clarification while transcribing the data. Participants were provided the narrative description and the opportunity to review the transcription of the data prior to final submittal. Each interview was numbered and participants were given a generic code in the order of their scheduled interview. The following is a verbatim narrative of the six participants' responses from the Skype interview.

Description of participants. The researcher contacted 100% of all respondents who completed the electronic survey and provided their contact information. The participants' profiles are outlined below. Eight respondents agreed to a follow-up Skype interview. A total of six participants confirmed and scheduled an interview. Six out of eight respondents participated in a 20-minute semistructured audio taped Skype interview. Participants were given a generic code in the order of their scheduled interview. Below is a profile of each participant. The following are direct quotes obtained from participants in the study. See Table 18.

Table 18

Participants' Profiles

Participants Generic Code	Ethnicity	Gender	Program Status
001	Latino/Hispanic	Female	2 nd -year Doctoral Student (GAP)
002	Caucasian	Female	Dissertation Student
003	African	Female	Dissertation Student
	American		
004	Caucasian	Female	Dissertation Student
005	African	Female	Dissertation Student
	American		
006	African	Female	Dissertation Student
	American		

Responses From Semistructured Interview Q1

Interview Question 1: What message would the dissertation support Web site convey upon clicking on it?

Participant 001: Uhm I would probably start by saying it would be good to know there was a dissertation support Web site when you're starting out as a student-because probably until your study it was mentioned a coupled of times but we were never directed there. When I got to participate in your study I decided to go check it out. It's pretty bland at this point for lack of a better word at this point. It is very static. The message I would like to see it convey...convey support and it would convey an obvious place for tools and resources. It would convey a place where I would want to return to not just every semester but I would want to be driven there for every course.

Participant 002: Some kind of encouraging message, maybe a picture of someone being hooded (laughter) something the outcome would be there. Something very

encouraging very people friendly or user-friendly—inviting.

Participant 003: I think the message should convey...it should be user-friendly and should contain answers to any questions we might have...it should be up front...and there should also be something that we could pose a question if it doesn't—if everything that's in the support Web site upon clicking on is not readily available, so if we have something else a there should be a little section that says comments or asks questions. See the main thing, the whole thing is that the Web site should say to you is that Pepperdine is here for you. Pepperdine wants to help you get from point A to point B you have all these classes and we know that you're going to go through them and be successful because you got these great professors here—we want you to know that when you get closer to this...this is what you need to start thinking about. As you go through your classes be aware of who your professors are and how you interact with them because they might become your chair. So those are things that should be going through your mind. Build your relationship. A lot of people did that early on I wish I would've paid more attention to it. But I didn't. That Web site...it should be friendly so that we know we are working towards something with Pepperdine not in it by ourselves.

Participant 004: It conveys the message that I'm going to have help. I hope I'm understanding your question properly. When I clicked on it I thought oh good this is going to help me design and set up and come up with a method to get this done.

At first I didn't even remember that it was there. I just didn't feel very much help from it. The forms were easy to find. And I think that's what I've been using it for specifically only for forms because any other help has not been forth coming.

Participant 005: Uhm you mean the text of the message or the feel of the Web site? I think as the viewer I would like to have the feel of it be very welcoming it needs to convey the message that this is the place that you are going to be able to get all the information you need as you move through the dissertation process. It needs to be very well organized. Having a timeline on there will be really helpful. It's hard to predict how long everything is going to take but just general estimates about how long things might take, for example IRB. If it could even be organized by what you do when—first you have to pick your chair, then you need to get your topic and then you need to start your research and what happens when you write your first three chapters what happens leading up to prelims what happens after prelims, and IRB. I sorts got off topic I think. I think there's not really a section of the Web site that has that information. It should feel like it is a gathering place for students. A place where students can gather and be supported and get their questions answered I think is helpful.

Participant 006: I think it is pretty bland and to the point. It is like here's the basic steps of the dissertation. Here is the basic process you have to follow, to go through the dissertation. It's not very detailed. I think there is lot left up to the student to kinda further research on how to get through the whole process. An

outline would be nice on how to go through the process.

Responses From Semistructured Interview Q2

Interview Question 2: Is there anything else you would like to see more of on the dissertation support Web site (i.e., graphics and pictures, text, audio, or testimonials)?

Participant 001: It's got some static pictures on there right now and some static text and a few hyperlinks. I would definitely love see it be definitely more interactive. I love the idea of a web 2.0 kind of an environment. Perhaps a picture of the things a picture of the process a visual graphic—that shows here's what the comps process looks like from the standpoint you got to select a chair, submit your proposal Some graphics or visuals of a would be helpful. All through our course of study we've seen models and graphics that show a process. Whether it's linear or cyclic something like that would be helpful. Perhaps an audio component might be a link to the testimonial piece. I don't know if just reading testimonials would be helpful but if you could hear a student's voice it conveys so much more meaning about [when I went to this site I found and it really] helped me to hear their story and what their process like was that could be helpful for the audio component. Definitely graphics and picture but I think the biggest key for me would definitely be models or diagrams or something that illustrates what the process will look like.

Participant 002: When I was looking at this something I thought I would like to see a flowchart that shows how you begin and then each step, and within the flowchart somebody's name and e-mail. If you clicked on the flowchart it would

hyperlink to the information you needed. Okay what would be super cool would be when you hyperlinked and clicked on the flowchart you would see a video of the person, for example Dr. Yuying Tsong talking about the IRB process. "Congratulations on getting to this next step these are the things you need to remember when you're ready to submit." Sort of a welcome video for each step. Somebody welcomes you to each step of the process and gives you encouragement.

Peer mentoring might be good somebody you could actually e-mail back and forward with or talk on the telephone. Offer e-mentoring or a mentoring hotline. You could have a hotline three days a week for an hour. Real time e-mentoring somebody makes that commitment to be online during that set hour. Like if I had a question, I know I can connect with this person and get a response within 10 to 15 minutes. One of the hardest things for me as a doctoral student like many doctoral students is I'm working full-time. The longer you wait for a response it breaks up the flow of the process.

Participant 003: I think a tool, a training tool walking you through the process will be great. I think also there should be something on that Web site that lists all of the professors that could chair and what their interests are. We had something like that but we had to wait for it that should be readily available on that Web site. And also it would be good I think to have testimonials. Like if someone used a particular chair they can state why this chair might be good. It doesn't have to be a negative but it can be a positive. Pictures of what the chairperson looks like.

And let's see...

Interviewer: So a use of the testimonial could be for example a picture of the chairperson and on then on the side a recent student's remarks?

Participant 003: Yes. Why they would use that person again or why they wouldn't. I think that sometimes that saves time if students were aware of certain things ahead of time.

Participant 004: I would like to see all of that I would love to see some kind of networking because it's a very lonely process. I really don't know who to ask any questions of. I had to rely on my husband as a coach because I don't have a coach. It would be nice to have a coach. My husband is also a doctoral student he's getting his Ph.D. He helped me figure out how to map out the dissertation and how to take my idea and generate it into an outline. That was crucial and extremely helpful for me. He continues to help me stay on track when I start to veer off my topic.

Participant 005: A sample timeline for completing the dissertation from start to finish, and also a message board or online support group for dissertation students. Not to harp on it but a timeline would really be helpful and just knowing what steps to take when and links to important things on the Web site. The IRB checklist was something I didn't know anything about. If there was a section about what happens when your getting ready to submit your IRB there would be a link there's this checklist to go do all of these things—I think something like that

would be helpful. Going back to selecting a topic if there was a link to sources for research or potential topic ideas or ways to go about finding a topic—things like that would be helpful and little bit more interactive.

Maybe if students posted their timelines [and said this is my experience] and you could kind of go by study [it took me this long to write chapters 1, 2, and 3, 2 months to get to prelims 4 weeks to get IRB approval, it took 3 or 4 weeks to collect my data]—maybe that could be a way to get timelines on the Web site without Pepperdine saying this is how long we think it is going to take to complete the dissertation. It will helpful to see what students who are doing a similar study to yours have had to go through and how long it has taken at each step of the process. Keeping the expectations realistic instead of feeling like you're going to fly through the process.

Participant 006: I would like to see a coaching component because you know during the process you are all out on your own and it is nice to have accountability to someone. It would be nice to have ways for people to connect or opportunities to connect with other people who are in the same stage of the dissertation phase. I've heard of events and dissertation support at Pepperdine by word of mouth. I think the Web site could be a perfect place to show different events.

Responses From Semistructured Interview Q3

Interview Questions 3: How might GSEP EDOL dissertation Web site become an exceptional highlight of your program?

Participant 001: I'm in the EDOL program and I'm the first GAP cohort. That adds another layer of complexity. I think how it can be exceptional is one it needs to be introduced early on in the process, I would say in orientation. There could be very simple components that get introduced during orientation which say hey here it is [here's a tool called ref works here's how you put together a reading bibliography] anything that could be introduced like that early and you're driving students there early and often not just every semester but through the various classes where it is linked to assignments then people will know it is there and know how robust it is. You're starting to navigate the process early on, it could be a really heighten learning experiences for students. Because I am an EDOL student in the GAP program I would suggest the site be designed with the distance learning or e-learning component in mind and not designed in a way that is intended for a face-to-face classroom. So right now it is very very dry and kind of boring and it would be nice to see it punched up and engaging and inviting so that people want to go there. I think keeping the distance-learning component in mind I think would be helpful not just for GAP students but students in the Irvine and West LA cohorts. To have that engaging would be a lot more robust.

Participant 002: If it could help me finish this dissertation [laughter from participant]that's how it would exceptional. Anything on it to help me move forward if it helps to harness the process and keep me moving forward. What I could really use at this point is a flowchart. The use of testimonials would be good if it is tied into...what I think is more effective if it is a purposeful interactive

testimonial. I would like to see testimonials are more throughout the process in that flowchart idea, insert the videos there. For example, a student testimonial stating [when I was working on my methodology these are some of the steps I tried that I found to be useful] more of a facilitative video. Students can provide advice about the process. The site could contain student tips/videos for preparing for each step such as preliminary oral defense. Getting started would be a step. Another step might be how often is it appropriate to communicate with your chair? I think people need coaching in terms of how—how to break it down, what are the steps, when is it appropriate to e-mail your chair how often should you stay in communication with your chair. These are things busy people want to know.

Another recommendation would be for professors to make a video talking about what their interests are. That would be very interactive on the dissertation support Web site. I see the Web site as sort of a one-stop way to preview the process, begin the process, and take you all the way through.

A glossary would also be a great thing to have on the Web site and a list of frequently used mixed-methods terms or possible theoretical frameworks. There's no obvious place to look for these things on our Web site. Having all of that in one place on the dissertation support Web site would have saved me a lots of time researching.

Participant 003: The first thing that comes to mind is that students need to be aware of this very early on. There should also on that Web site be something that

tells us when it is acceptable to get a chair. In other words, like some of the students were further ahead in the process. Because they either knew after going through a particular session of the doctoral studies it was acceptable for them to get a chair.

Interviewer: Like start pursuing.

Participant 003. Yes. Right. Where others didn't.

Interviewer: Do you believe some students were more advanced or knowledgeable of the process? Do you think it was more intuitive or soft skills that were taught before school?

Participant 003: Some students might have known to ask whereas other students didn't know to ask. I think that would help if we had a better site. I never knew about the dissertation Web site until I started working on my dissertation. I did not know we even had one. I think the terminology needs to be simple and easier to understand.

Participant 004: I think one part would be providing networking opportunities, helping us find coaches and dissertation chairs providing support if we do veer off the topic. Give us an avenue for that or a person we can call. I would like to know how to work with a chair. I don't know how. Some guidance is needed on how to work with a chair. Especially, in the beginning I didn't have any help whatsoever I just had negative comments. I would suggest offering—putting up a schedule that says these are the dates of the dissertation support group meetings. Those

meetings should take place once a month. The schedule should be listed on dissertation support Web site. We did have a research course through Pepperdine that offers support—that's a great course but it is too early in the process. We were not at the dissertation stage. That course happens even before comps. Interviewer: Possibly restructure the program are you thinking of? Participant 004: Absolutely. Restructure the program. What good is the dissertation class if were not in the dissertation process. It's not helpful. I think it is the final course you need to be taking. I think this is so needed. It doesn't have to be this lonely. There's a gap and somebody needs to fill that gap.

Participant 005: I think everything I mentioned previously I think if it is more interactive I think if it is a place where students are encouraged to go...I don't know about your chair but my chair isn't always talking about look on the Web site...if you can get the professors in the beginning to say one of the first things you're going to need to do is look at this site--it is really useful and answers a lot of questions for you. Also for professors to know what's on the site so the student and professor can have a conversation based on what they are seeing on the site.

I think if professors chairing the dissertations used it as a tool—if the Web site itself became more interactive then I think professors could be encouraged to use it with their students. Once you're in dissertation it's pretty much you and your chair floating on an island together out in the universe. It's not much linking anybody together at that point. If that site became more of a community for people who are working on the dissertation—I know it's hard to physically meet

sometimes. I meet with my dissertation chairperson once a month—online communities are a great way to address that need and that desire for a sense of community while you are going through the process. I'm so excited. I was excited to see your survey. I was thinking it's got to be leading to a change in the Web site. So that would be great. It's hard because you kind of expect...if you had your chair as a professor you expect the same turn around you got in class on dissertation stuff. If they take a long time you kind of feel stuck. I think that's a lot of frustration that dissertation students face. I think having someone to talk to would be a good thing. You should probably—when you find your chair have a conversation where everything is laid out so that you're not frustrated later on down the line I didn't do that with my chair in the beginning and he'll disappear for a couple of weeks and I won't hear from him. If he had told me in the beginning "there will be times I won't be available" that could have helped managed my expectations. It's important to talk about the dissertation process in general and how it can be improved.

It's an interesting process to go through. It's unlike anything you do prior. It's hard to even know what you don't know going into it.

Participant 006: It would be really good if it were not just text but more interaction. So if there's a checklist on everything you need to do in the dissertation process—from the little tiny turn in this paper fill out this form, all the way to complete Chapter 1—if they could break it down into milestones and a common place to check it off and maybe get some feedback. [Congratulations on

this step] now you can do this. The site should be positive. You can check-in and say okay where am I in this process? It would be neat if you could put your personal goals in, and get reminders. An electronic file or progress bar would be nice. The Web site should be electronic and have an automated system, process bar and interactive calendar.

Emergent Themes

Four themes emerged from the six Skype interviews: (a) mentoring, (b) student support groups, (c) explicit functions and roles of dissertation chairpersons, and (d) the opportunity to network and interact with dissertation students face-to-face or online. Each of the themes relate to Tinto's Model of Institutional Departure and correlates to the institutional level, departmental level, relational, or individual level. Researcher created a coding system, transcribed data, wrote summaries, reread summaries, and highlighted reoccurring themes. The Table 19 outlines the four reoccurring themes that correlate with each of Tinto's Model of Institutional Departure.

Table 19
Four Emergent Themes

Emergent Themes	Tinto's (1993) Levels
Mentoring	Institutional
Student Support Groups	Departmental
Explicit Functions and Roles of Dissertation Chairpersons	Relational
Opportunity to Network Face-to-Face or Online	Individual

Summary

Chapter 4 provided the results of Phase 1, the quantitative portion of the study through the use of figures, tables, and narratives. The researcher utilized a coding system to organize data and track emergent themes in Phase 2. Findings from the qualitative

portion of the study were displayed through the use of tables and verbatim narratives. The researcher replaced names with numerical codes, and provided background information on each of the participants. The researcher also created a table to align emergent themes with theoretical framework.

Chapter 5 presents the conclusions and recommendations for further study.

Chapter 5 also highlights a model Web site to support doctoral students through the dissertation phase.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter further discusses the key findings as reported in Chapter 4, compares them with a broad base of existing body of literature, provides implications for the findings, and offers recommendations for future study. Based on the emergent themes, there were implications that led to the development of a model dissertation support Web site. The model Web site was developed employing recommendations and suggestions reported in the data. The model site was developed on an external web host, Groupsite.com.

Key Findings

This two-phase mixed method study assessed 2nd-year doctoral students' and dissertation students' perceptions of the current GSEP dissertation support Web site, with implications for designing a model dissertation support Web site. Phase 1 collected quantitative and qualitative data through an anonymous electronic survey. Phase 2 consisted of six semistructured qualitative Skype interviews. Four themes emerged from the qualitative portion of the study: (a) mentoring, (b) student support groups, (c) explicit functions and roles of dissertation chairpersons, and (d) opportunity to network and interact with dissertation students face-to-face or online. Among the respondents, 42.3% found the web content such as forms and resources helpful; 40% indicated the visual appearance was helpful. Overall, 8.3% were very satisfied, 16.7% were satisfied, 33.3% neutral, 33.3.% were dissatisfied, and 8.3% very dissatisfied with the current Web site. The data indicated 78.3% would like to see e-mentoring implemented on the Web site and 83.3% would participate in a dissertation retreat/bootcamp.

The findings concluded e-mentoring and webinars were the two most desired

Web 2.0 technology to enhance the current Web site. The most desired type of formal or informal event to add to a model Web site is a dissertation retreat/bootcamp.

Decision makers at the departmental and institutional level should strongly consider incorporating e-mentoring/peer mentoring, increased availability of dissertation chairpersons to walk students through the various stages of the dissertation process, a model of the entire process from start to finish, and the use of Web 2.0 tools to foster support and keep students connected on the dissertation Web site. Using (Cooperider & Whitney, 2005) AI 4D Model, respondents highly recommended day-to-day support such as an dissertation hotline, real-time support, use of multimedia, student testimonials, and early awareness of the Web site resources and tools to make the dissertation Web site an exceptional highlight of the GSEP. Other recommendations included the need for peer mentoring, increased availability of dissertation chairpersons to walk students through the various stages of the dissertation process, the use of an interactive flowchart or model of the entire process from start to finish, and the increase use of social media to build a community and keep students connected, during the dissertation phase.

Interviewees highly recommended day-to-day support such as a graduate manned dissertation support hotline 2 to 3 days a week, real-time support from faculty in the form of a chat box to ask questions and get answers within 24 hours, an electronic checklist or progress bar to keep track of materials submitted to IRB and monitor progress to the completion of the dissertation. Interviewees across the board suggested the use of welcome videos from professors sharing their name, research interests, and what they seek in a dissertation student. Other suggestions included a welcome video from the IRB chairperson explaining the IRB process, estimated turn-around times, and a standard or

typical administrative calendar for tasks as it relates to student submission. Three out of six interviewees said the use of meaningful student testimonials sharing personal insights and experiences would be helpful. All six respondents stated how critical early awareness of the dissertation support Web site, resources, and tools are to the completion of the doctoral program. Last, interviewees suggested weaving the use of the dissertation support Web site resources and tools into the 2 years of course work.

Restatement of Research Questions

- 1. What are 2nd-year doctoral students' and dissertation students', at Pepperdine University GSEP in the EDOL doctoral program, perceptions of the existing dissertation support Web site?
- 2. What do 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students at Pepperdine University GSEP in the EDOL doctoral program recommend as future enhancements to a dissertation support Web site?
- 3. What do 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students at Pepperdine University GSEP in the EDOL doctoral program recommend as a future model for a state-of-the-art dissertation support Web site?

Summary of Tinto's Models

The following implications of the results of this study are related to Tinto's (1985, 1993) Undergraduate Persistence Model and Model of Institutional Departure, which served as the theoretical framework for this study. Tinto's stages of undergraduate persistence are: (a) preentry, (b) incongruence, and (c) isolation leads to withdrawal or institutional departure. Departure may be voluntary or forced. Voluntary departure might include not registering for classes with cohort, completing only course work, or leaving

the institution without completing or defending the dissertation. A forced departure might entail academic dismissal or failure to pass successfully the dissertation. Tinto's earlier models focused solely on undergraduate persistence.

However, Tinto's (1993) model of instructional departure highlights six principles and actions that institutions can take to diminish withdrawal and reduce isolation. Tinto claims two systems overlap, academic and social domain, and both are important to the development of the student and social integration. His model of institutional departure argues for dual responsibility between the university and the individual. Here, Tinto argued for the academic and social domains to have equal importance, as both domains are important to persistence and completion of the program.

Specifically, Tinto's (1993) Principle III Social and Intellectual Community serves as further justification for enhancing the dissertation support Web site at Pepperdine's University GSEP, as indicated by the results of the study. Principle III states that effective student retention programs should evaluate the services, program, and actions of the institution. The goal is not merely retention, but understanding the complex and dynamic relationships among the institution, individual, and faculty members when earning the doctorate. From the data presented in Chapter 4, each implication in the study directly correlates with an action that could be taken by the institution, department, or the individual.

Implications

RQ1. As presented in Chapter 4, the results of the data collection for RQ1 seem to indicate respondents are neutral or dissatisfied with the current dissertation support Web site. These results appear to show the current Web site to be static, hard to locate,

and not user-friendly. The data collected seem to indicate the forms and procedures as being most helpful. This could mean the web content is solid and needs very little if any revisions. Overall, that data implied that the current site is not very helpful with prewriting or day to-day writing support for starting or finishing the dissertation. Thus, it is likely that students would visit the site more often if it were more interactive and more writing support were offered.

Implications. Therefore, decision makers at the institutional and departmental level might consider including social-based web tools such as the use of video, audio, voice thread, and other means of multimedia, whereby students are engaged and physically interacting on the dissertation support Web site. These corroborate findings by Shuen (2008), "Web 2.0 is so much more than the technology. Web 2.0 is read-write. New applications are more interactive and dynamic, encouraging users to be more involved and upload content onto the Web" (p. xvi). The use of multimedia would offer students the opportunity to upload and download forms, post responses, ask questions, and join a community. Tinto's (1993) early theories on doctoral persistence are related to students' successful socialization. In addition, Shuen argues "Web 2.0 is ultimately about harnessing network effects and the collective intelligence of users to build applications that literally get better the more people use them" (p. x).

To ensure the Web site is user-friendly, the site should be easily accessible to all and compatible on mobile devices and touch devices such as iPad technology. The site should be clear, simple, and eliminate thought bubbles. Krug (2006) these findings, and he claims good Web sites don't make me think or frustrate the end user. Smart, user-friendly, and efficient Web sites make the users feel smart. When end users are frustrated

or unable to find what they are seeking on the site, they tend not to return. Incorporate the use of tabs for ease of navigation from page to page. Tabs aid in simplifying the site and quickly locating information. Krug "thinks they're an excellent navigation choice for large sites" (p. 80). Krug asserts, "They're self-evident, they're hard to miss, they're slick, they suggest a physical space, they were drawn correctly, and they were color-coded" (p. 80). Krug admits, "The problem is there *are* no simple 'right' answers for most web design questions. What works is a good, integrated design that fills a need—carefully thought out, well executed, and tested" (p. 128). High visibility and placement of the dissertation support Web site's resources and tools at a centralized location is also critical.

The dissertation is a complex mental and written exercise. Synthesizing, condensing, and breaking down each phase offer students a point of reference and helps with making sense of the entire process. Weick's (2001) earlier findings conclude, "Helping other people make sense of complexities is to help with sense-making" (p.4). To address the issue of starting and completing the dissertation, a visual representation such as interactive flowchart or model of the entire process from start to finish are useful.

Institutions cannot underestimate the need for writing support even at the graduate level. The dissertation is unlike any other piece of writing the graduate student will undertake in his or her graduate career. Single (2010) author of *Demystifying Dissertation Writing*; *A Streamlined Process from Choice of Topic to Final Text* said, "I use the metaphor of being in the conversation as a way to consider entering, learning about, contemplating, and contributing to a field, which is what you are doing while working on your dissertation" (p.34). The dissertation is a technical, specialized writing, whereby

students being "entering the conversation" (p.34) through immense research, reading, and synthesizing of the literature in his or her given field. According to Single, "Entering the conversation takes patience, humility, recognition of others' expertise, and a healthy dose of self-awareness" (p.34). The evidence suggests that this skill must be explicitly taught and refined during the doctoral program. Hyatt (personal communication, February 26, 2011) full-time professor at GSEP concurs, "Learning how to synthesize the material from the literature review is an important skill." Bloom, Karp, and Cohen's (1998) research confirms, "It is extremely hard to sit down and write. The task is so huge that many do not even know how to start, or they have trouble pulling everything together" (p. 189). For many doctoral students, this will be the first time writing a literature review. These findings concur with Single Demystifying Dissertation Writing; A Streamlined Process from Choice of Topic to Final Text. Single states, "Now is the time for you to hone the habits necessary to complete long writing projects with minimal deadlines and amid multiple demands" (p. 18). During this period of reading and reflecting on the literature, many doctoral students discover their doctoral voice. Single argues, "Your ability to write a dissertation signifies your ability to enter and contribute to the conversation" (p. 19) and adds to the body of literature in your chosen field. Pre-, during, and postwriting support is critical to the completion of the dissertation.

RQ2. Using the AI 4D Model, students reported adding to what is best at GSEP by recommending resources and tools such as recently approved IRB applications, samples of current dissertations, providing a list of conceptual and theoretical frameworks, and common terminology. The data seem to indicate 81.3% of students highly recommended the use of e-mentoring. This could mean doctoral students are open

to the idea of online mentoring at the university; 73.8% recommended the use of webinars. These data imply that students would participate in a webinar, in addition to their course work. Furthermore, the results appear to show 81.3% overwhelming selected a dissertation retreat/bootcamp as the number-one type of formal or informal event most desired. Thus, it is likely that students would utilize these tools and participate in these types of events if offered at the university.

Implications. Therefore, at the departmental level, the dissertation support manager might consider uploading sample approved exempt and full review IRB approvals, current dissertations, providing a list of frequently used methodological terminology, as well as conceptual and theoretical frameworks to expand on the five chapter structure and the four chapter structure to the current Web site.

In regard to mentoring, decision makers at the institutional, departmental, and relational level might consider developing and incorporating a mentoring program to enhance the current doctoral program. The mentoring program could be multifaceted and utilize both traditional face-to-face mentoring as well as e-mentoring (Bloom et al.,1998; Green & Scott, 2003; Luecke, 2004; Peddy, 2001; Peters 2007; Johnson & Ridley, 2008; Single, 2010). Findings on mentoring support this conclusion.

Webinars are a form of social media in which events, lectures, and classes can be taught live or live streamed to students. Webinars have the capacity to be archived and viewed at a later date. The results indicated many students would utilize webinars during the dissertation process.

The data argues strongly for the development of a dissertation retreat or dissertation bootcamp for doctoral students. *The American Heritage Dictionary* defines

bootcamp as training for military recruits. The term bootcamp implies a strenuous or rigorous period of time to get physically and mentally in shape. In this sense, a dissertation retreat/bootcamp would entail a set period of time in which doctoral students psychologically get in the right frame of mind to endure the stresses and challenges to complete the dissertation. These findings are supported by Bloom et al. (1998) and Green and Scott (2003).

RQ3. When asked what would make GSEP dissertation support Web site an exceptional highlight of the program, the results appear to show students envisioned ementoring, webinars, formal and informal events to stay connected, development of student support groups, and day-to-day support.

Implications. Decision makers at the institutional, departmental, and relational levels might consider supporting or sponsoring student-led dissertation support groups. The evidence suggests other types of supports such as a dissertation support hotline, day-to-day support such as Skype communication with professors, and e-mentoring for students are highly desired. In addition, the data revealed a visual model of the entire dissertation process from start to finish and the use of welcome videos, which can also serve as instructional support for students, are highly desirable. The data imply students envision a dissertation support site as a one-stop shop for writing support, connectivity, forms, procedures, and resources, as well as guidance through the entire process. This could mean the dissertation support Web site would serve more than just functional or technical needs, but also the need for connectivity and social integration.

Summary of Respondents

The maximum sample size was 147. A total of 45 started the survey. A total of 36

(80%) completed the survey. Of the 36 participants, eight agreed to a Skype interview and six confirmed. All six participants were women. The breakdown of the six participants is as follows: Three African American, two Caucasian, and one Latino/Hispanic. Five of the six participants were dissertation students. One 2nd-year GAP doctoral student participated in the interview process.

Conclusions Related to Semistructured Research Question 1

Participants stated the need for early awareness of the dissertation Web site resources and tools early in the doctoral process. It is not enough simply to upload documents, provide electronic tools, and refer students to the Web site. Traditional faceto-face and online learners must be explicitly directed to locations and provided an opportunity and assistance navigating the site and the resources. D. Davis's (2010) study corroborates these findings, "Students must be provided both information and training on the use of these electronic resources" (p. 55). Participants suggested weaving and incorporating assignments from their course work that might drive students to the dissertation Web site. At the departmental level, when possible, professors might align course work with research on the dissertation Web site. For example, small groups can critique dissertations focusing on design, methodology, and technical writing. Students might conduct a web search, which entails locating five to 10 items on the dissertation Web site. Other assignments might include downloading and printing forms such as the IRB checklist, reviewing IRB PowerPoint slides, and in-class practice writing a 50-word description of their tentative project, which would complete form A1 on the dissertation support Web site. Professors might encourage students to create a dissertation timeline and present it using Voice Thread, an audiovisual online tool that allows participants to

upload, view, share, and record their responses. Voice Thread also permits its users to call, text, or post a response online.

Conclusions Related to Semistructured Research Question 2

Participants recommended day-to-day support such as a dissertation support hotline. This hotline, as one participant noted, need not be 24 hours but available to students 2 to 3 days a week. D. Davis (2010) argues, "online students need to be provided the same range of services as there traditional counterparts" (p. 55). D. Davis asserts, "Technical support should be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and if that is not feasible, at a minimum there should be some evening and weekend hours available with some provisions for emergency situations" (p. 55). Decision makers at the departmental and institutional level might consider offering a graduate assistant or adjunct professor the task of scheduling and being available by phone or online during set hours for doctoral students. The qualitative data suggest that students are open to this form of support.

Conclusions Related to Semistructured Research Question 3

The respondents in both the traditional EDOL format and the GAP program expressed the need for more faculty support and promotion of interaction between students and professors. Instead of placing a traditional face-to-face class online, more measures can be taken to develop thorough online classes and assignments, which promote connectivity, social interaction, and more interaction with professors. Online professors might keep in mind that the types of assignments and group projects that work in a face-to-face classroom setting might not work so well online. These conclusions concur with D. Davis's (2010) study, "Faculty must be prepared to meet the special

requirements of teaching at a distance. Stated more simply, faculty teaching in a distance learning setting must be proficient in the technology employed in the course" (p. 18). Faculty development, according to D. Davis, "should address distance education pedagogy, instructional strategies to promote interaction, assessing student learning via a new mode, and how to translate the traditional f2f course to a new distance learning medium" (p. 54). D. Davis purports, "Online students should be able to consult with academic advisors from a distance just as effectively as their f2f counterparts" (p. 55).

Not all literature on dissertation support came to the same conclusions or findings. Green and Kluever (1997) came to a different conclusion. This study found barriers to doctoral dissertation completion. The study concluded it is useful to understand barriers to assist students and help institutions restructure the doctoral program.

Some researchers focus solely on the responsibility of the graduate student to make connections, be interdependent, and ready for the research and writing demands of higher education. These positions are a hard-line approach to learning and teaching and tend to fall under the deficit theory and the instructional paradigm versus the learning paradigm.

Still others (Lovitts, 2001; Nettles, 2006; Tinto, 1985, 1993) tend to view the academic and social integration of students as a dual responsibility. These theorists tend to support the position that attrition, matriculation, and degree attainment are not the sole responsibility of the institution, departments, individuals, or the educational system, but rather a collaborative effort among all concerned parties. When institutions mislabel students as dropouts and nondegree completers, it is detrimental to the sustainability of the program. It is part of the institution's responsibility to understand why students

experience stop outs, transfer to other institutions, or exit the education system. When students exit the system, the effects are felt at the individual, departmental, and institutional levels. Attrition reflects not only on the individual, but the program and university as a whole. Green and Kluever (1997) claim, "Failure at this point is expensive and painful for the student, discouraging for the faculty involved, and injurious to the reputation of the institution" (p. 4).

Limitations of the Study

The researcher sampled only 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students in EDOL. First-year doctoral students along with doctoral students in Educational Leadership Administration and Policy, Organizational Change, Ed. Technology and Learning, and Psy. D students were excluded from the study. This study focused only on 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students. Future studies might consider looking at students who have been in the dissertation process longer such as 3rd-, 4th-, 5th-, and 6th-year students.

The researcher focused primarily on two out of the five campuses and did not include 2nd-year doctoral students or dissertation students at the Encino, Westlake, or Malibu campuses. Future studies might consider incorporating a broader sample population to include all students in doctoral programs at the respective campuses to capture a broader array of respondents and feedback. To expand the scope and the response rate, survey all doctoral students at each campus.

Other suggestions includes:

- Offer different types of support for different types of dissertation students
- Have respondents go to 10 Web sites and critique what they like or don't like

on the dissertation support Web site

- Use a focus group
- Conduct only qualitative interviews

Future Research Questions

Given what was found and what the literature said, here's what is known. There are at least four areas that doctoral students need the most structure in order to assist them in completing the dissertation: (a) Writing Support, (b) Dissertation Retreat/Bootcamp, (c) Student Support Groups, and (d) Mentoring. However, there are still things that are not known. Therefore, future research should address the following questions:

- 1. What are 1st-year doctoral students' perspectives of the dissertation process?
- 2. How might incorporating a mentoring component at the beginning of the doctoral program lessen the number of ABDs?
- 3. Which colleges or universities effectively incorporate the use of the dissertation retreat or dissertation bootcamp successfully in the doctoral program?

Recommendations for Further Study

As a result of the findings supported in this study, the following key recommendations for further research are proposed:

- Conduct a replication of this study.
- Implementation of a similar study focusing on the need for mentoring coupled with dissertation support services.
- Examine advisors' perspective, administrative perspectives, university perspective, and multiple kinds of dissertation students.

- This study examined doctoral students in leadership. Future studies might look at the hard sciences, for instance engineering students might need more writing support both face-to-face and support provided online.
- Look at the types of support doctoral students may need who attend a fully online program such as Walden University.

Additional recommendations for graduate students, university administrators, advisors, and doctoral students are found in Table 20.

Table 20

Recommendations for Graduate Students, University Administrators/Advisors, and Doctoral Students

Recommendations for	Recommendations for	Recommendations for	Recommendations for
Graduate Students	University Administrators	Doctoral	Doctoral Students
		Advisors/Chairpersons	
If pursuing the doctorate,	Utilize student suggestions	Be knowledgeable of the	Begin with the end in mind
begin researching the types	and add to what is "Best"	dissertation support Web	and get to know the
of supports offered at	to the current site	site and point students	dissertation support Web
school of choice;	Add purposeful	there early in the process	site and all of the resources
Prepare by reading texts	testimonials, webinars, and	during course work; Share	and tools that are provided
such as Journey to the	a dissertation bootcamp	expectations of doctoral	by your university at your
Ph.D.		candidates.	disposal
Apply to the Ph.D. Project	Reward intentional	Establish clear working	Develop a mentoring
to receive coaching and	mentoring and incorporate	expectations early on;	constellation
mentoring;	into the reward system and	Offer e-mentoring	
Develop a community of	tenure system; Support	Help students map out	
support prior to applying	peer groups	educational path from	
to a doctoral program		course work through	
		development of the topic	
		through dissertation	
Join professional	Provide formal/informal	Explicitly discuss the	Build relationships with
organizations, network,	events for social	roles/functions of a	your professors during
and collaborate	integration of students	chairperson, availability,	course work
		and expectations	

Recommendations Based on Tinto's (1993) Model of Institutional Departure

Extending fall orientation. Future recommendations include program directors incorporating an extended version of fall orientation at the end of semester 1 to touch bases with doctoral students, covering Knowles's et al. (2005) salient points and emphasizing the importance of both academic and social integration into the school's

culture. Yet another possibility includes offering Part II Social Orientation as a 1-day offcampus activity in Malibu at Dresher Campus to clarify the informal expectations, demands, and obligations of doctoral students. This activity will also offer cohorts an opportunity to connect better and those having difficulty within cohorts to network and form interdisciplinary support groups.

Tinto (1993) claims orientation program stresses the sharing of formal information. Orientation should be a time when both the formal and informal demands of new students are addressed. It is here where students need the full glimpse of the informal character of the social and intellectual communities that exist on campus.

Orientation fails to provide informal information in a forum that leads new students to establish personal connections and contacts. Tinto (1993) claims these personal connections "become responsible for providing advising and counseling services which can provide the types of informal information new students require" (p. 159). Program directors underestimate and understate equally important informal demands institutions make upon new students.

Program directors should recognize that during the course of students' academic careers, these much needed nonthreatening relationships and contacts are often sought after and called upon to provide insider information. Still other techniques can be used to bridge the gap. Orientation can be extended throughout the academic year to include peer and faculty mentoring programs or online e-mentoring. Mentors can serve as advisers, role models, and campus connections to help doctoral students manage both the intellectual and social process and lessen isolation. Last, host a mandatory or optional dissertation retreat or dissertation bootcamp for intensely focused time on ideation, topic

formation, drafting, and preliminary writing of Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

At the departmental level, these things can occur:

- Utilize e-mentoring, webinar, GoToMeeting, and Skype to stay in contact and communication with students throughout the dissertation phase.
- Provide not only technical APA writing support but also creation, formation,
 and brainstorming of ideas to turn into researchable topics.
- Host dissertation seminars, monthly Skype meetings or check-ins, or face-toface meetings during lunch or another convenient times.
- Establish new rituals and traditions such as the end of 1st-year celebration,
 completion of 2nd-year course work luncheon, dissertation retreat off campus,
 dissertation bootamp.
- Celebrate milestones such as passing comprehensive exam; selecting a
 chairperson; formation of committee; submitting Chapters 1, 2, and 3;
 scheduling of preliminary oral defense; passing of oral defense; and IRB
 Approval—the go ahead to conduct the study, high return response rate.
- Provide students with a list of viable, willing, and available mentors.

At the individual level these things can occur:

- Establish a mentoring constellation.
- Maintain structure after the completion of course work; Continue meeting weekly at the same place during the same hour.
- Attend national, regional, and international professional conferences.
- Register for out-of-state dissertation symposiums such as Eastern Kentucky University.

At the relational level these things can occur:

- Build a writing support team, and establish relationships with professors outside of your program and at other campuses.
- At the institutional level: Reward mentoring and spending time with students, several schools such as Berkeley, Smith, and Fresno State have made mentoring apart of the school culture as well as the center for Learning and Teaching in San Jose, CA

At the institutional level these things can occur:

- Highlight professors who usher students through the process, expose them to insider culture, write/publish with protégés.
- Create a tradition and award professors for excellence in intentional mentoring dissertation students through the process.
- Make mentoring apart of the evaluation process, and formalize it with a
 mentor protégé orientation, outline clear goals expectations of mentors and
 protégés, and mentor protégés.
- Provide a stipend for professors who are willing to mentor other students,

Recommendations for dissertation support manager.

- Create an FAQ's list and post on current dissertation support Web site.
- Upload current samples of dissertations and IRB approvals.
- Develop a visual of the process such as a flowchart or model from start to finish.

Host dissertation symposium. Dean Sherwood Thompson, at Eastern Kentucky University, is a leading authority in diversity and support of minority students.

Thompson's passion lies in supporting minority students. Eastern Kentucky University hosts an annual dissertation symposium. This 2-day event is geared toward encouraging, mentoring, and supporting current and prospective African American doctoral students. The 2-day symposium is filled with guest speakers, lectures, breakout sessions, poster board sessions, and ample time to network and establish new contacts. The symposium takes place the 2nd weekend in November at Eastern Kentucky University.

Join professional organizations. Doctoral students can also become members of professional organizations, thereby broadening their experiences and outlook on the doctoral journey. There are organizations nationwide doctoral students can solicit for support to help them along the process and lessen isolation. For example, the Ph.D. Project prepares prospective African American, Hispanics, and Native American doctoral students to enter doctoral programs across the country. The Ph.D. Project has corporate sponsors and has supported doctoral students since 1994. KMPG, a large consulting firm, sponsors students, programs, and organizations. This nonprofit organization gives scholarships to help increase more doctors in the area of business, marketing, and finance. The Ph.D. Project is one large organization that supports doctoral students and helps them to get hired in academic areas. The Ph.D. Project has a 92% completion rate compared with the national average of 50%. Highlights of the Ph.D. Project include scholarships, intentional mentoring, and an annual conference.

Furthermore, doctoral students can reach outside their respective programs and develop and expand their base of contacts outside of their cohort by joining professional networking associations. For example, MyPhDNetwork is a networking association limited to current doctoral students and faculty. The Doctoral Student Association is the

official networking place for the Ph.D. Project. Doctoral students and faculty can network with others across the nation.

In addition, Black Web 2.0 is yet another social networking site with articles, webinars, and stimulating topics for doctoral students. Here students can post comments, write articles, and connect with others.

Association of Pan African Doctoral Scholars. Association of Pan African Doctoral Scholars was founded in 1981 at Claremont Graduate University. A group of doctoral scholars was concerned with the high drop out rate of Pan African doctoral students. They formed a support group to address the issues and concerns of Pan African students as they pursued their terminal degree. Association of Pan African Doctoral Scholars hosts monthly meetings, encourages mentoring, and hosts social events. One of the expectations upon joining the nonprofit organization is that members return to mentor others. In addition, the University of Hawaii offers a student association that supports other doctoral students through the process.

Attend professional conferences. Attend professional conferences such as the Hawaii International Conference, Paris International Conference, or Pepperdine University Society of Educators. Build a supportive and diverse support group and mentors.

Utilize books, DVD's, programs, and tools. Last, doctoral students can reach outside their respective programs and obtain personalized support and structure in the form of electronic tools, one-on-one dissertation coaching, and informational DVD's. Thesis and Dissertation Accomplished, by Dr. Wendy Carter, is a program that assists masters and doctoral students from start to finish. This program and electronic tools help

students select topics, draft, edit, and write their dissertation. Thesis and Dissertation Accomplished provides advice on selecting a dissertation committee, creating and sticking to a timeline, and the oral defense.

A Thin Book for 1st Year Doctoral Students by Nicole Simmons-Johnson is a compilation of short stories written by doctoral students and recent graduates of doctoral programs to encourage, inspire, and support other doctoral students. A Thin Book for 1st Year Doctoral Students focuses on beginning with the end in mind, being best at something, branding, and balancing while immersed in the doctoral journey. The book is accompanied with a 30-minute inspirational and motivational DVD with short stories, tools, and dialogue focusing on managing the doctoral process. The DVD uses stories and tools on how to handle life's joys, successes, and upsets while in the program. One tool used in the DVD ask the viewer(s) to pause and list 10 things they will START, STOP, or CONTINUE doing while in the program. Another tool utilized in the A Thin Book for 1st Year Doctoral Students DVD is beginning with the end in mind and writing a 3, 5, and 7-year résumé.

Obtain dissertation coaching services. Dr. Michelle Rosensitto, owner of the Dissertation Coach, provides educational and writing coaching for doctoral students. Dissertation Coach provides one-on-one small group and workshops on developing topics, selecting methods, and penning the manuscript.

Given the changing economic climate and President Obama's charge for single mothers to go back to school to retool and equip themselves for the New America, more nontraditional students are attending college and graduate school than ever. This population will require more flexibility, mentoring, and academic and social integration.

Typically, nontraditional students are adult learners older than the age of 25, work 45 to 60 hours a week in notable careers, have dependents, and attend school part-time. They enter the classroom as self-directed learners, self-motivated, and with a wealth of real-world experience. It would behoove future researchers and studies to examine different types of support for this particular group. Knowles et al. (2005) says to introduce the learner to the new environment.

Nontraditional students may need time to adjust to the demands of graduate school. They have been immersed in the workforce; the type of writing there is, at best, relegated to reports, summaries, and workplace documents. Students will need writing support from conception and germination of ideas and topics to assistance managing the process from start to finish. Furthermore, academic coaching and how to interact and relate with dissertation chairpersons is essential, as chairpersons take on many roles—academic, emotional, personal, and professional.

Doctoral students who are younger, newly minted, and fresh out of graduate school may also need a different type of support during the dissertation phase. The process and experience will be different for someone who has attended the university as an undergraduate or graduate, became a graduate assistant, receives a stipend, and lives on campus as a doctoral student. These students are more likely to work in a laboratory and interact with their advisors more often, or be graduate assistants. They would even have an easier time obtaining a chairperson, as they are on campus and able to make connections, be connected with mentors inside and outside of their program, and establish working relationships, as they are visible and already in the workplace setting. Naturally, these types of doctoral students would more have more contact with their dissertation

chairpersons and establish a different working relationship with their chairpersons or advisors. These students may not see the need for dissertation support such as monthly check-ins, dissertations seminars, or dissertation retreats, as they are getting this service. On the other hand, they may see the need for motivation, establishing rituals and traditions, and student support groups.

Dr. Madjidi (personal communication, February 26, 2011), full-time professor at Pepperdine University, says, "It takes about 1 year for our doctoral students in EDOL to complete the dissertation. On average it takes 4 semesters, give or take, to complete." The pursuit of the doctorate is self-actualization at the highest level. It is a transformative process. It is a journey not a destination. Dr. Madjidi states:

This is a gourmet meal. The course work you take is part of the gourmet meal.

Take your time; be careful of what people hear when you say you finished your dissertation in 7 months. This is not a race; it is a marathon, so take your time.

Your reward is a doctorate. This is a qualitative reflective exercise. This is an exercise in contemplation.

Dr. Laura Hyatt (personal communications, February 26, 2011), full-time professor at Pepperdine University, offered her advice on the preliminary oral defense and the dissertation phase, during a Saturday morning dissertation workshop at GSEP. Hyatt asked:

Do any of you know what prelims mean? It means you are ready to go and collect your data. Preliminary defense is a working meeting "hey put this here, add this"—it is a closed meeting. Passing prelims is a confirmation from your committee members. It means your methods are sound; you are not going to hurt

anybody, or embarrass your committee members, yourself, or other scholars.

Getting to and passing prelims means your research is also doable; the data you're collecting is reasonable.

Hyatt goes on to say, "Be kind to yourself; don't beat yourself up. We have a good track record at Pepperdine."

Summary

This chapter presented a summary of the findings of the perspectives of 2nd-year doctoral students and dissertation students in the EDOL about the current dissertation support Web site and dissertation support. The findings were corroborated with research in the literature. Conclusions were drawn based on the data collected and presented in Chapter 4. Implications for further study as well recommendations were presented. This study has added to the collective body of knowledge on dissertation support.

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APPENDIX A

Projected Dates, Timeline, and Activity Schedule

- Submit chapters 1,2, and 3 to chairperson October 2010.
- Preliminary Oral Defense November 3rd, 2010 at 1:00 p.m. at the West LA
 Campus; December 2010 build expert panel; January 2011 design instrument
- February 2011 submit Expedited IRB Application and application for waiver or alteration of informed consent;
- March 2011 complete IRB modifications, April 2011 resubmit IRB
 Modifications
- April 22, 2011 obtained full IRB approval to collect data April 2011 through
 April 2012; April 25, 2011 obtained Site Approval from Dean Weber
- April 2011 mail packet to expert panel; make necessary changes to instrument before deploying to students Begin Phase 1 data collection;
- May 2011 make corrections to instrument before deployment;
- June 3, 2011 E-mail link to Ms. Christie Dailo; Deploy electronic survey to doctoral students and dissertation students; June 10, 2011 one week after initial e-mail Assistant Program Director will resend follow-up e-mail
- June 17, 2011 Close survey; Complete Phase 1 data analysis
- Mid-June 2011 Begin Phase 2 data collection; Schedule Skype interviews;
- June 2011 conduct all interviews; Conduct data analysis for Phase two
- June 2011 continue writing chapter four results
- July 2011 write chapter five conclusions, implications, and recommendations
- July 2011 submit paper to editor; Schedule final Oral Defense July 20th, 2011

APPENDIX B

Approvals

Site Approval

Dear Dean Weber,

My name is Nicole Simmons-Johnson and I am writing to request site approval, permission to conduct *The Path to Graduation: A Model Interactive Web site Design Supporting Doctoral Students* at Pepperdine University's Graduate School of Education, and permission for Ms. Christie Dailo, Assistant Program Director, Leadership and Technology Programs, to use GSE intranet to access student's e-mail addresses to recruit participants. My dissertation chairperson is Dr. Michelle Rosensitto. My committee is comprised of Dr. June Schmieder-Ramirez and the 26th Senator for the State of California, Curren D. Price, Jr.

So far, I have shared my plans for dissertation with Dr. Schmieder-Ramirez, Dr. Linda Purrington, Dr. Kay Davis, Dr. Robin Bailey Chen, Ms. Christie Dailo, Ms. Jean Kang, Mr. John Kim, Dr. Stephen Berra, Dr. Thomas Granoff, Dean Eric Hamilton, and President Benton. Each of the above mentioned persons have offered valuable insights to improve my study.

By signing below you give your authorization and permission to conduct *The Path to Graduation: A Model Interactive Web site Design Supporting Doctoral Students* at Pepperdine University's Graduate School of Education, obtain permission to recruit participants and permission to communicate with Graduate School of Education Academic Chairperson and professors, to schedule class visits to invite students to take the online survey, during the spring and summer 2011 term. Furthermore, I, Dean Weber give Nicole Simmons-Johnson permission to obtain statistics, such as enrollment,

graduation rates, and doctoral candi	date status at Pepperdine University Graduate School
of Education.	
Dean Margaret Weber	
Date	_
Principal Investigator	_
Date	_
Thank you,	
Nicole Simmons-Johnson	
Doctoral Candidate	

Dean Weber's Approval

April 27, 2011

Nicole, thanks for having the conversation today and being able to talk through the data collection process. Given that the students who wish to participate further will give you their information, you will know that they responded to the survey, but you will not know their answers, so the responses are anonymous.

I give my permission for you to move forward with the study.

It looks like a great study and I hope to hear about the results.

Best wishes,

Margaret

----Original Message----From: Simmons, Nicole (student) Sent: Saturday, April 23, 2011 9:56 PMTo: Weber, Margaret Cc: Rosensitto, Michelle

Subject: Requesting Site Approval to Conduct Study at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education

APPENDIX C

Request Permission From EDOL Academic Chair

Dear Dr. June Schmieder-Ramirez,

As you know, I successfully passed my preliminary oral defense November 3, 2010 with modifications. My dissertation chairperson is Dr. Michelle Rosensitto and my committee consists of the 26th Senator for the State of California Curren Price Jr. and yourself. The title of my dissertation is *The Path to Graduation: A Model Interactive Web site Design Supporting Doctoral Students*.

I am writing to request your permission to sample your second year doctoral students and dissertation students in EDOL, during the Spring and Summer 2011 term. I plan to survey second year doctoral students and dissertation students only at the Graduate School of Education in EDOL.

In addition, with your permission I am also requesting permission to contact professors in order to visit classes. The purpose of the classroom visit is to personalize the study. It is my aim to personalize my study by introducing myself to the students, putting a face to the survey, sharing the importance of the study, and informed consent.

I can be reached by e-mail by phone. I look forward to your response.

Thank you for your continued support,

Nicole Simmons-Johnson

Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX D

Online Survey Instrument

Doctoral Student Support Survey

Instructions:

This study seeks to assess doctoral student's and dissertation students perception of the current Graduate School of Education dissertation support website, with implications for designing a model dissertation support website to help students (a) manage the process, (b) build connectedness, and (c) better support doctoral students through the entire doctoral process from orientation, through course work, development of their topic, and finalization of the complete practice study.

Please indicate your consent by reading and clicking "agree" on the electronic informed consent, which outlines your rights as a participant and my duties as the principal investigator. The next step is to then to complete an online survey assessing the helpfulness and usefulness of the current dissertation support services and website. The questions are rated on a 5-point Likert Scale. The survey also includes open-ended questions. In total, the survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Once the results of the survey are coded, the researcher will contact willing participants to collect additional data in the form of interviews.

Doctoral Student Support Survey

Participants' Electronic Consent:

- 1. I authorize Nicole Simmons-Johnson, a doctoral student, under the supervision of Dr. Michelle Rosensitto at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education, to include me in the research project entitled "The Path to Graduation: A Model Interactive Website Design Supporting Doctoral Students." I understand my participation in this study is strictly voluntary.
- 2. I have been asked to participate in this two-phase research project, which is designed to study the perceived need for dissertation support.
- 3. In phase one of this two-phase study, I give my consent to participate in the online survey portion, which collects both quantitative and qualitative data. I will be asked to peruse the current dissertation support website for 3-5 minutes and then take a twenty-minute online survey. I understand that I do not have to give my contact information or participate in phase two, the interview portion of the study, which entails providing my contact information for a twenty-minute follow-up audiotaped semi-structured Skype interview. Phase one of the study will require twenty-minutes to complete the electronic survey. Phase two of the study will require a twenty-minute audiotaped semi-structured Skype interview.
- 4. I understand that phase one, collects both quantitative and qualitative data in the form of openended questions. Participants' information will be kept confidential. Participants' IP address will not be linked to their response. I also understand the researcher will store all data gathered, according to IRB, in a locked filed cabinet for a period of five years after which the data files will be destroyed.
- 5. I understand that I will be audiotaped only if I decide to participate in phase two, the interview portion of the study only. A separate, Letter of Consent for Interview, which outlines confidentiality and security measures, along with the participant's rights, will be obtained prior to conducting the interview. Both the participant and the researcher will sign the Letter of Consent for Interview. The tapes will be used for research purposes only. The tapes will be stored in a locked file cabinet and will be destroyed after five years:
- 6. The principal risk to the subject is the potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentiality. I understand that it is anticipated that my participation in this study will be associated with no more than minimal risks and/or discomfort. GPS IRB manual describes minimal risk, as the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. Risks will be minimized in the following ways: (a) For the online survey, participants identities will not be known unless they provide their contact information in the survey; (b) No specific identifying information will be used or reported in any way or in any part of the study; (c) For the qualitative portion of the study participants' identity will be known only to the researcher and will not be used in the study; in addition, the researcher will obtain a separate informed consent for interviewees only; (d) All Skype interviews will be transcribed by the principal investigator. The researcher will remove information related to the personal interview as the consent document is the only form linking the subject to the research; (e) if participants experience exhaustion, fatigue, or irritability while taking the survey or during the interview portion, a break will be provided.

Doctoral Student Support Survey

- 7. I understand during the class visit, the principal investigator will describe the electronic informed consent. Given the intentional recruitment of participants, names are not required on the survey and each participant will be given a unique identification number. If a student agrees to further participate in the interview portion of the study their name, email addresses and/or, phone numbers will be collected.Participant's information will be kept confidential. All electronic, statistical, and qualitative data will be stored on a flash drive and researcher's personal computer, which is password and screen saver protected. All information collected will be backed up on an external hard drive which is also password protected, at the principal investigator's residence. Only the principal investigator will have access to the data. Sensitive material will be stored according to IRB transcriptions coding sheets and files will be kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher's residence for five years. Principal investigator will crosscut shred information collected in the study and destroy all electronic, audio, and digital recordings using a magnet, after a period of five years.
- 8. I understand that there are no direct benefits for participating in this study. Possible benefits from participation in this study include: (a) Contributing to the literature and body of knowledge of dissertation support and (b) Being an agent of change, using the appreciative eye and the 4-D cycle to contribute personal insight to add to what is "BEST" at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education. Key stakeholders and decision makers such as the academic chairperson of each program, EDOL and EDEL, the Dissertation Support Manager Jean Kang; the Director of Technology, John Kim; and the Dean, Margaret Weber will review and have access to the results of the study. Other benefits include possible enhancements and improvement of dissertation support services and the dissertation support website.
- I understand that no form of compensation, financial or otherwise, is being offered for participating in the study.
- 10. I understand that participants have the right to refuse to participate in, or to withdraw from, the study at any time without prejudice.
- 11. I understand that I also have the right to refuse to answer any question I choose not to answer.
- 12. I understand that there might be times the investigator may find it necessary to end my study participation.
- 13. I understand that no information gathered from my study participation will be released to others without my permission, or as required by law. Under California law, an exception to the privilege of confidentiality includes but is not limited to the alleged or probable abuse of a child, physical abuse of an elder or a dependent adult, or if a person indicates she or he wishes to do serious harm to self, others, or property.
- 14. I understand that if the findings of the study are published or presented to a professional audience, no personally identifying information will be released. The data gathered will be stored in locked file cabinets to which only the investigator will have access. The data will be maintained in a secure manner for five years for research purposes. After the completion of the study, the data will be destroyed.
- 15. I understand that if participants have any questions regarding the study procedures, they can contact Nicole Simmons-Johnson at 536 S. Flower Street #4, Inglewood, CA 90301 or at 323.947.4838 to get my questions answered.
- 16. I understand that if participants have questions, they may contact Dr. Michelle Rosensitto at 949.223.2565 or contact the IRB Interim Chairperson Dr. Yuying Tsong, Chairperson of the GPS Institutional Review Board, Pepperdine University at 310.568.5768 or Yuying.Tsong@pepperdine.edu.

Doctoral Student Support Survey
17. I understand to my satisfaction the information in the consent form regarding my participation in the research project. All of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I hereby consent to participate in the research described above.
* 1. ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice
below.
Clicking on the "Agree" button below indicates that:
- I have read the above information
- I voluntarily agree to participate
- I am at least 18 years of age.
If you do not wish to participate in the research study, please decline participation by clicking on the "Disagree" button.
Agree
Disagree
* 2. What is your current status in the EDOL Program?
2nd Year Doctoral Student
Dissertation Student
* 3. Please indicate your gender.
Male
Female
* 4. Please identify your ethnic group.
African-American or Black
Native American
Catino/Hispanic
Caucasian
Asian
Pacific Islander
Other (please specify)

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,	Very Helpful	Helpful	Helpful	Not Very Helpful	Not at all rielpiul
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Dissertation Development Guidelines	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		\sim
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Dissertation Writing Support	\bigcirc	O	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
RB Clearance Support	\bigcirc	\circ	Q	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
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Graduate School of Educ	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful			Not Useful at All
Finding/selecting/procuring a Dissertation chair	0	0	0		
Dissertation Development Guidelines	\bigcirc	0	Ŏ	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
Dissertation APA Support	\bigcirc	0	Ŏ	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
Dissertation Writing Support	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\circ		\bigcirc
IRB Clearance Support	\bigcirc	O	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
Dissertation Support Usability Visual Appearance of Dissertation Website Dissertation Support Website Forms and Resources Dissertation Support Website Policies and Procedures Dissertation Support Website Links Dissertation Support Website Manuals Selecting a dissertation topic	00000000	00000000		000000000	000000000

What services/information	n are needed on the dissertation support website that are n
already available?	
	A
	¥
B. What do you find most use	eful about the current dissertation support website?
	<u>A</u>
	*
9. What do you find least use	eful about the current dissertation support website?
	<u> </u>
₹*	
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e de la companya de l	
e Z	
e de la companya de l	
10. If you could redesign the	e dissertation support website, what would be your top thre
10. If you could redesign the	e dissertation support website, what would be your top three
-	e dissertation support website, what would be your top thre
-	e dissertation support website, what would be your top thre
-	e dissertation support website, what would be your top thre
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changes?	
changes? 11. On average, how often d	lo you visit the current
changes?	lo you visit the current
changes? 11. On average, how often d	lo you visit the current te per month?
changes? 11. On average, how often d dissertation support websit	lo you visit the current te per month?
11. On average, how often d dissertation support websit Four or more times (at least once/week	lo you visit the current te per month?

12. What would make you vis	sit the dissertation support website more often?
	A
13. Overall, how satisfied are	e you with the current dissertation support website?
Very Satisfied	
Satisfied	
Neutral	
Dissatisfied	
Very Dissatisfied	
14 Visually what might an i	deal dissertation support website look like?
visually, what hilly it all it	deal dissertation support website look like:
j	
	y
45. Which of the following to	schmologies would you like to
see implemented on the diss	echnologies would you like to
Please check all that apply.	sertation support website:
Webinars	Virtual Office Hours
Blogs	Skype communication with Professors
Virtual Guest Speakers	Wikis
Student Audio/Video Testimonials	Podcasts
Video Clips	Links to professional doctoral student
	organizations
e-Mentoring	
Other (please specify)	

Doctoral Student Support Survey 16. Please indicate whether you would participate in any of the following formal and/or informal social activities or events, if offered at your university or another university during your graduate experience. Check all that apply. End-of-1st Year Luncheon 2nd Year Coursework Completion Dinner Learn-at-Lunch Face-to-Face Meeting Monthly Faculty Check-In via Skype Monthly Webinar with a Professor Writing Seminars/Online Writing Support Dissertation Retreat/Boot Camp Student Support Groups In-State and/or Out-of-State Dissertation Symposium Other (please specify) 17. Would you use the dissertation support website more frequently if more web-based social tools were made available? Definitely Probably Probably Not Definitely Not * 18. Interview Consent: Would you like to further participate in this study in the form of a 20 minute Skype interview? () Yes Interview Consent: Please provide your name along with your email and/or phone number so that I may contact you.

Doctoral Stu	dent Support	Survey		
end of this of interviews. set up an in	iduals who provi online survey wil All contacts will terview time and	ll be contacted be interviewed I sign the letter	to set up if they agree to	
Name	ior to the Skype	interview.		
Phone Number Email				
Thank you very muc	ch.			
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10				

APPENDIX E

E-Mail Invitation to Participate in Study

You have been invited to participate in a study entitled *The Path to Graduation: A Model Interactive Web site Design Supporting Doctoral Students*, Spring 2011. Your participation is strictly voluntary.

Please take 3-5 minutes to peruse the current dissertation support Web site at http://services.pepperdine.edu/gsep/dissertation/. Then follow the link https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DoctoralStudentSupportSurvey to complete the electronic online survey hosted by Survey Monkey. If you agree to participate read and click "agree" on the electronic letter of consent.

Thank you in advance for your time and helping me to collect the necessary data for completion of my dissertation.

APPENDIX F

Alignment Table

	Research Questions	Survey Item #	Analytical Techniques
1.	What are second year doctoral students and dissertation students, at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education in the EDOL doctoral program, perceptions of the existing dissertation support Web site?	1,2,3,4, 5,6,7,8,9, 11,13,	Descriptive Statistics Descriptive Statistics Mean, Medium Mode; Present information in tables, charts and figures.
2.	What do second year doctoral students and dissertation students at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education in the EDOL doctoral program, recommend as future enhancements to a dissertation support Web site?	10, 12,14,15, 16 18, 19	Descriptive statistics; Present information in tables, charts and figures. Resend follow-up e-mail with link to electronic survey two week after initial e-mail and class visit; contact participants using the follow-up script within two weeks.
		7,8,9,10, 12, 14	Semistructured interview protocol; audiotape the interview and transcribe the interview; Begin coding system; organize material into chunks, label categories; generate themes; themes will be represented in a narrative passage to convey the findings of the analysis; Visuals such as tables, figures and chart will also be used in the discussion;
3.	What do second year doctoral students and dissertation students at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education in the EDOL doctoral program, recommend as a future model for a state-of-the-art dissertation support Web site?	10, 14,15,16, 17,	Descriptive Statistics; Present information using tables, charts, and figures in addition to narrative description.

APPENDIX G

Criteria for Selecting Panel of Experts

The following is Dr. Michelle Rosensitto's (1999) criteria for selecting a panel of experts, to ensure the validity of the instrument.

- All validating judges who were employed by universities possessed an earned academic doctoral degree, and those who were employed by community or junior colleges possessed an earned academic Master's degree.
- At least one of the judges held a degree in each of the four academic discipline groups: Education, Psychology and Social Sciences Humanities, and the Arts and Sciences.
- 3. At least half of the validating judges on this panel were not known personally by the researcher. (Rosensitto, 1999, p. 104)

APPENDIX H

Validity Questionnaire Cover Letter

Thank you for agreeing to exercise your expertise and provide feedback for my survey

instrument. The task is outlined below.

Here is the Task:

Please review the survey at https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ExpertPanelReview.

Answer one question at a time using the validity-rating questionnaire. As you read each

survey question, please indicate that Yes, this survey question will help answer the

research questions or No this survey question will not help answer the research questions.

In addition, indicate whether the item is well written and understandable. If you mark No,

please make a suggestion that (a) I omit the survey question or (b) how I might modify

the question.

Your input is invaluable, please return the validity questionnaire via e-mail within one

week of receipt, as it is time sensitive. This time frame will afford me the opportunity to

make necessary changes to the instrument and implement your recommendations and

suggestions prior to launching the survey, in a timely fashion. Please attach a copy of

your resume along with the document.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Nicole Simmons-Johnson

Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX I

Expert Panel Résumé



Objective:

To become a distance learning professor

Educational Background:

- Ed.D. Degree in Organizational Leadership (*December 2009*) Pepperdine University, Malibu –Comprehensive GPA: 3.8
- M.S. Degree in Administration & Preliminary Administrative Services Credential (*July 2005*) Pepperdine University, Malibu Comprehensive GPA: 4.0
- M.A. Degree in Speech Communication & Clinical Rehabilitative Services Credential (*June 1995*) California State University Fullerton - Comprehensive GPA: 3.8

Professional Experience:

Duties: Founder/Chief Executive Officer of this community-based organization that provides mentoring services to high school students who are at risk of dropping out of high school. I have designed and developed the personal leadership curriculum for the Leaders Today, Expecting more, Achieving goals and Dreaming big (L.E.A.D.) program for my comprehensive examination/oral defense (Dec. 2008) which is currently being implemented at Torrance High School with students who have been assigned several Saturday School Detentions. I work collaboratively with business leaders who are members of the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce and the Crenshaw Chamber of Commerce to provide community-based personal leadership development workshops that serve to inspire students to overcome obstacles and to promote higher education. I have negotiated a contract for our company to become a Service Learning Organization helping students obtain the 40 service learning hours that they need to meet this graduation requirement set by the Long Beach Unified School District. In addition

to various other duties, I am a mentor for numerous high school students who have been referred to us through our listing with the National Mentoring Database-Mentor at

- Torrance Unified School District September 2005 to Present Duties: District Consultant for all District Speech Language Pathologists regarding the best strategies to use that would increase the communicative effectiveness of students who are nonverbal or who have very limited intelligible speech. Providing Assistive Technology/Augmentative & Alternative Communication assessments for preschool through high school aged students within the district. Coordinating all of the Assistive Technology referrals in the areas of reading, writing, math, communication and motor access. Providing speech and language therapy to students ages K-5 (2005-2007).
- Long Beach Unified School District December 2003 to July 2005; September 1996 to March 1998-

Duties: Supervising and mentoring two student teachers. Teaching classroom lessons in Language Arts and Literacy. Assessment and treatment of preschool through middle school aged students. Scheduling Individualized Educational Plan (I.E.P.) meetings, parent conferences, processing paperwork for new assessments and 3 year assessments, typing progress reports/assessment reports, attending staff meetings, and collaborating with the teachers and staff to appropriately differentiate my instruction based on the Language Arts Curriculum.

- Los Angeles Unified School District March 1999 to June 2003-Duties: Providing In-Services for 300+ Speech and Language teachers regarding techniques for students with severe expressive language disorders. Assessment and treatment of preschool through high school aged students. Teaching classroom lessons in Language Arts and Literacy. Typing detailed reports describing the results of Assistive Technology assessments as well as Speech and Language assessments. Collaborating with teachers and staff to appropriately differentiate my instruction based on the Language Arts curriculum.
- Nonverbal Communication Clinic, Incorporated June 2001-December 2003-Duties: Founder/Director of this non-profit organization that purchased low to high technology communication devices for disadvantaged students with severe expressive language disorders. This organization also funded Speech and Language assessments and therapy for disadvantaged students. I submitted grant proposals to different foundations and local companies to obtain funding for the services we provided for the students. I organized several community fundraisers including Basketball Tournaments, Luncheons, and Fashions Shows to raise funds for our mission. I also collaborated with other board members, parents, and community leaders regarding our mission.
- Progressive Speech Services August 1996 to December 2003-Duties: Owner/Director of this private practice that provided articulation,

language, voice, fluency, and swallowing assessments and therapy to clients from 18 months to adult. I supervised 8 employees (3 Therapists, 3 Office Assistants, and 2 Custodial Workers).

• Various Skilled Nursing Facilities - August 1996 to Present (Per Diem)-Duties: Assessment of Dysphasia including Blue-Dye tests. Therapeutic intervention provided for patients with symptoms of Dysphasia. Assessment and treatment of Language Disorders and Disorders of Cognition.

Professional Affiliations:

- Torrance Teachers Association
- National Education Association
- Torrance Chamber of Commerce

APPENDIX J

Validity Rating Questionnaire

Survey Item	Is This Que	estion Clear?	Recommendations and/or Suggestions to Improve the Question
	Yes	No	•
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
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10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			
16.			
17.			
18.			
19.			

APPENDIX K

Electronic Letter of Consent

- I authorize Nicole Simmons-Johnson, a doctoral student, under the supervision of Dr.
 Michelle Rosensitto at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education, to
 include me in the research project entitled "The Path to Graduation: A Model
 Interactive Web site Design Supporting Doctoral Students." I understand my
 participation in this study is strictly voluntary.
- 2. I have been asked to participate in this two-phase research project, which is designed to study the perceived need for dissertation support.
- 3. In phase one of this two-phase study, I give my consent to participate in the online survey portion, which collects both quantitative and qualitative data. I will be asked to peruse the current dissertation support Web site for 3-5 minutes and then take a twenty-minute online survey. I understand that I do not have to give my contact information or participate in phase two, the interview portion of the study, which entails providing my contact information for a twenty-minute follow-up audiotaped semistructured Skype interview. Phase one of the study will require twenty-minutes to complete the electronic survey. Phase two will require a twenty-minute audiotaped semistructured Skype interview.
- 4. I understand that phase one, collects both quantitative and qualitative data in the form of open-ended questions. Participants' information will be kept confidential.
 Participants' IP address will not be linked to their response. I also understand the researcher will store all data gathered, according to IRB, in a locked filed cabinet for a period of five years after which the data files will be destroyed.

- 5. I understand that I will be audiotaped only if I decide to participate in phase two, the interview portion of the study only. A separate, Letter of Consent for Interview, which outlines confidentiality and security measures, along with the participant's rights, will be obtained prior to conducting the interview. Both the participant and the researcher will sign the Letter of Consent for Interview. The tapes will be used for research purposes only. The tapes will be stored in a locked file cabinet and will be destroyed after five years.
- The principal risk to the subject is the potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentality. I understand that it is anticipated that my participation in this study will be associated with no more than minimal risks and/or discomfort. GPS IRB manual describes minimal risk, as the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. Risks will be minimized in the following ways: (a) For the online survey, participants identities will not be known unless they provide their contact information in the survey; (b) No specific identifying information will be used or reported in any way or in any part of the study; (c) For the qualitative portion of the study participants' identity will be known only to the researcher and will not be used in the study; in addition, the researcher will obtain a separate informed consent for interviewees only; (d) All Skype interviews will be transcribed by the principal investigator. The researcher will remove information related to the personal interview as the consent document is the only form linking the subject to the research; (e) If participants experience exhaustion, fatigue, or irritability while taking the survey or

- during the interview portion, a break will be provided.
- 7. I understand during the class visit, the principal investigator will describe the electronic informed consent. Given the intentional recruitment of participants, names are not required on the survey and each participant will be given a unique identification number. If a student agrees to further participate in the interview portion of the study their name, e-mail addresses and/or, phone numbers will be collected. Participants' information will be kept confidential. All electronic, statistical, and qualitative data will be stored on a flash drive and researcher's personal computer, which is password and screen saver protected. All information collected will be backed up on an external hard drive which is also password protected, at the principal investigator's residence. Only the principal investigator will have access to the data. Sensitive material will be stored according to IRB transcriptions coding sheets and files will be kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher's residence for five years. Principal investigator will crosscut shred information collected in the study and destroy all electronic, audio, and digital recordings using a magnet, after a period of five years.
- 8. I understand that there are no direct benefits for participating in this study. Possible benefits from participation in this study include: (a) Contributing to the literature and body of knowledge of dissertation support and (b) Being an agent of change, using the appreciative eye and the 4-D cycle to contribute personal insight to add to what is "BEST" at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education. Key stakeholders and decision makers such as the academic chairperson of each program, EDOL and EDEL, the Dissertation Support Manager Jean Kang; the Director of Technology,

- John Kim; and the Dean, Margaret Weber will review and have access to the results of the study. Other benefits include possible enhancements and improvement of dissertation support services and the dissertation support Web site.
- 9. I understand that no form of compensation, financial or otherwise, is being offered for participating in the study.
- 10. I understand that participants have the right to refuse to participate in, or to withdraw from, the study at any time without prejudice.
- 11. I understand that I also have the right to refuse to answer any question I choose not to answer.
- 12. I understand that there might be times the investigator may find it necessary to end my study participation.
- 13. I understand that no information gathered from my study participation will be released to others without my permission, or as required by law. Under California law, an exception to the privilege of confidentiality includes but is not limited to the alleged or probable abuse of a child, physical abuse of an elder or a dependent adult, or if a person indicates she or he wishes to do serious harm to self, others, or property.
- 14. I understand that if the findings of the study are published or presented to a professional audience, no personally identifying information will be released. The data gathered will be stored in locked file cabinets to which only the investigator will have access. The data will be maintained in a secure manner for five years for research purposes. After the completion of the study, the data will be destroyed.
- 15. I understand that if participants have any questions regarding the study procedures, they can contact Nicole Simmons-Johnson at

to get my questions answered.
16. I understand that if participants have questions, they may contact Dr. Michelle
Rosensitto at or contact the IRB Interim Chairperson Dr. Yuying
Tsong, Chairperson of the GPS Institutional Review Board, Pepperdine University at
17. I understand to my satisfaction the information in the consent form regarding my
participation in the research project. All of my questions have been answered to my
satisfaction. I hereby consent to participate in the research described above.
Electronic Consent: Please select your choice below.
Clicking on the "agree" button below indicates that:
• I have read the above information
• I voluntarily agree to participate
• I am at least 18 years of age
If you do not wish to participate in the research study, please decline participation by
clicking on the "disagree" button.
Agree
Disagree
Interview Consent:
Would you like to further participate in this study in the form of a 20 minute Skype interview? \square Yes \square No
Interview Consent: Please provide your name along with your e-mail, and/or phone number so that I may contact you.
All individuals who provide contact information at the end of this online survey will be

interview time and sign the letter of consent for interview prior to Skype interview.
Name
Phone number
E-mail

contacted to set up interviews. All contacts will be interviewed if they agree to set up an

APPENDIX L

Follow-up Recruitment E-Mail

I need your help! You have been invited to participate in a study entitled *The Path to Graduation: A Model Interactive Web site Design Supporting Doctoral Students*,

Spring/Summer 2011. Your participation is strictly voluntary.

There is still time to complete the electronic survey to share your views about the current dissertation support services and dissertation support Web site as well as any novel enhancements, recommendations, or suggestions to improve the quality of support for doctoral students on SurveyMonkey.com!

Please take 3-5 minutes to peruse the current dissertation support Web site at http://services.pepperdine.edu/gsep/dissertation/. Then follow the link https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DoctoralStudentSupportSurvey to complete the electronic survey online hosted by Survey Monkey. If you agree to participate read and click "agree" on the electronic informed consent.

If you have already taken the survey, please disregard this e-mail. Thank you,

APPENDIX M

Follow-up Script

My name is Nicole Simmons-Johnson and I am a doctoral candidate at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education.				
Interac item, w audiota	tive Web site Design Supporting De which asked if you will be willing to	ntitled "The Path to Graduation: A Model octoral Students and answered yes to the last further participate in the study in the form of a w. I would like to follow-up with you and		
Please	Telephonic Script: provide me with two dates and time inute Skype interview.	es within the next week when we can schedule		
	Date	Time		
coopera	confirm the date and time (repeat sation. I look forward to speaking wation)			
	-mail the semistructured interview eletter of consent for interview with	questions, confirmation of the Skype interview, ain 24 hours.		
Confirm	mation E-mail Script:			
Hi I have a questio		erview and the semistructured interview		
Please read, sign, and return the informed consent to me via e-mail or fax at 310.671.6590, at least 24 hours before our Skype interview on				
My Sky	ype login is nicolesjohnson.			
I look f	forward to speaking with you on			
Thank	you,			

APPENDIX N

Semistructured Interview Questions

- 1. What message would the dissertation support Web site convey upon clicking on it?
- 2. Is there anything else you would like to see more of on the dissertation support Web site? (i.e.) graphics and pictures, text, audio, or testimonials
- 3. How might Graduate School of Education EDOL dissertation Web site become an exceptional highlight of your program?

APPENDIX O

Permission to Adapt, Copy, or Distribute Material

Permission to Use Copyrighted Material

Letter 1

April 16, 2010

Dear Dr. Posner,

My name is Nicole Simmons-Johnson and I am a fourth year doctoral student at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education. *The Leadership Challenge* was a core text used in my Personal Leadership course and referenced throughout the program in other educational courses.

I am presently writing my dissertation, which is a mixed methods study, in which I survey doctoral students across three programs at Pepperdine University to obtain their views on the overall delivery and structure of the program. The aim of the study is to develop a doctoral essential Web site to assist doctoral students (a) manage the process, (b) build connectedness, and (c) better support doctoral students through the entire doctoral process from orientation, through coursework, development of their topic, and finalization of the complete practice study. In particular, I want second year doctoral students to share their stories of success, recommendations, and suggestions for future enhancements to various aspects of the doctoral program and the dissertation support services Web site. The development of the Web site will be my "Next Personal Best Leadership Experience."

I am writing to request permission to copy, distribute and use applications from the *Leadership Challenge Workbook* to collect data for my dissertation. I also want

permission to use as is or adapt the reflection questions to initiate discussion and prompt dialogue during the interview process.

I used *The Leadership Challenge Workbook* to write and defend my comprehensive examination December 1, 2009. I shared my Personal Best Leadership Experiences with the committee! I used the five practices: Model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act and encourage the heart to frame the entire paper. The tools, applications, reflections, and implications helped me to think through exactly what I wanted to accomplish and how to get others involved in the Personal Best Leadership experience. Several tools were very useful: Kudos for a Colleagues, Project Milestones, Develop Competence and Confidence, Power Profile, Stakeholder or Stakeholders Criteria for Success, and Clarify Your Values.

Since, "Leadership is everyone's business" I have made it my business to redesign the dissertation support services Web site and add to what is best at Pepperdine University. Instead of thinking, "Why don't do they do something about that?" I looked in the mirror and decided to accept the challenge. I should do something about that Web site and so I am making incremental steps to develop a world-class site to serve others.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Reply from Dr. Barry Posner April 16, 2010

Nicole,

Thanks for your note and it is inspiring to hear about how you are making a difference.

As for your request, I am forwarding it along to our publisher Lisa Shannon at Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer/Wiley as these matters are really within their purview. I suspect that Lisa may want to know more about you are intending to do before making a decision. I have copied her on this e-mail.

Meanwhile, I am teaching at Sabanci University in Turkey, as part of my sabbatical leave this year as I work my way around the world learning more about the components of global leadership.

All the best,

Barry

Permission to Use Copyrighted Material (continued)

Letter 2

Dear Mr. Kouzes,

My name is Nicole Simmons-Johnson and I am a fourth year doctoral student at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education and Psychology. *The Leadership Challenge* was a core text the first year in the program used in my Personal Leadership course and referenced throughout the program in other educational courses.

I am presently writing my dissertation, which is a mixed methods study, in which I survey doctoral students across three programs at Pepperdine University to obtain their views on the overall delivery and structure of the program. The aim of the study is to develop a doctoral essential Web site to assist doctoral students (a) manage the process, (b) build connectedness, and (c) better support doctoral students through the entire doctoral process from orientation, through coursework, development of their topic, and finalization of the complete practice study. In particular, I want second year doctoral students to share their stories of success, recommendations, and suggestions for future enhancements to various aspects of the doctoral program and the dissertation support services Web site. The development of the Web site will be my "Next Personal Best Leadership Experience."

I am writing to request permission to copy, distribute and use applications from the *Leadership Challenge Workbook* to collect data for my dissertation. I also want permission to use as is or adapt the reflection questions to initiate discussion and prompt dialogue during the interview process.

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I used *The Leadership Challenge Workbook* to write and defend my

comprehensive examination December 1, 2009. I shared my Personal Best Leadership

Experiences with the committee! I used the five practices: Model the way, inspire a

shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act and encourage the heart to frame

the entire paper. The tools, applications, reflections, and implications helped me to think

through exactly what I wanted to accomplish and how to get others involved in the

Personal Best Leadership experience. Several tools were very useful: Kudos for a

Colleagues, Project Milestones, Develop Competence and Confidence, Power Profile,

Stakeholder or Stakeholders Criteria for Success, and Clarify Your Values.

Since, "Leadership is everyone's business" I have made it my business to

redesign the dissertation support services Web site and add to what is best at Pepperdine

University. Instead of thinking, "Why don't do they do something about that?" I looked

in the mirror and decided to accept the challenge. I should do something about that Web

site and so I am making incremental steps to develop a world-class site to serve others.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best,

Nicole Simmons-Johnson

Reply from Jim Kouzes

Nicole,

Thank you for your e-mail. You story is exciting and uplifting, and we are really thrilled that The Leadership Challenge Workbook has been so useful to you. Your experience is definitely an example of how leadership is everyone's business. We're delighted we could play a part in your success.

Permission to use material from our books and other materials can only be granted by our publisher. I am including Lisa Shannon (mailto:) on this e-mail so that she is aware of your request. You will need to complete a permission request form that you can find out our Web site. That form is for using our Leadership Practices Inventory in research, but please ignore that part and just complete the other information. Here is the link: http://www.leadershipchallenge.com/WileyCDA/Section/id-131371.html . I also recommend that you write Lisa directly and explain what you want to do. You will need to be specific about what portions of the materials you are seeking to use and other relevant details, and you may have to do that in a separate document since your request is unique.

I wish you all the best with your dissertation, and thank you again for your gracious note about our work.

- I'm delighted to be of support. I wish you all the best with your dissertation and the Web site.

Love 'em and lead 'em, Jim

Jim Kouzes Author & Lecturer The Leadership Challenge® Dear Ms. Simmons:

This e-mail represents official permission for you to use portions of the Leadership Challenge Workbook to collect data for your research. You must purchase one copy of the Workbook (available at www.leadershipchallenge.com). Once you have purchased a copy, you may photocopy the reflection questions for your research subjects--however, you may not distribute any copies of them in any other way. All photocopies must keep the copyright notices that are on our publication. Our only other request is that you supply us with an electronic copy of your final research paper when it is completed.

Thank you for your interest in the Leadership Challenge Workbook. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Debbie Notkin

Contracts Manager

--

Nicole,

Thanks for your note. I'm delighted to hear that you and our publisher have connected and that you're moving forward. The Global Literacy and Leadership Workshop sounds exciting. I'd love to see the DVD. You can mail it to me at the address below my signature line that follows.

Thanks again and I wish you all the best.

--

Love 'em and lead 'em, *Jim*

Jim Kouzes Author & Lecturer The Leadership Challenge®

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October 5, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Nicole Simmons-Johnson and I am a fourth year doctoral student presently in the dissertation phase, at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education.

I am writing to request permission to copy, recreate, reproduce or use tables or charts found on page 73 in, Pedagogy *of the Oppressed* in my dissertation, for educational purposes only. If permission is granted, I will be sure to cite and give credit to the original author(s).

If any changes are made to the table(s) or charts, I will be mindful of the change(s) and cite the original source(s) inside of the document.

Thank you in advance,

Nicole Simmons- Johnson

Dear Nicole,
Thank you for your request. Please let this note serve as a grant of permission. Please do
not forget to include a credit line:
© Paolo Freire 2007. Printed with permission from the Continuum International
Publishing Company, New York
Ally Jane Grossan
Editorial Assistant
Continuum International Publishing Group

October 5, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Nicole Simmons-Johnson and I am a fourth year doctoral student presently in the dissertation phase, at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education.

I am writing to request permission to copy, recreate, and/or reproduce figures, tables, or charts found on pages: Page 211 Decision Choices for Determining a Mixed Methods Strategy of Inquiry, page 213 Sequential Explanatory Design, Sequential Exploratory Design, Sequential Transformative Design, and page 214 Concurrent Triangulation Strategy, Concurrent Nested Strategy, and Concurrent Transformative Strategy in, Creswell (2003) *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*.

These figures and tables will be used in my dissertation, for educational purposes only. If permission is granted, I will be sure to cite and give credit to the original author(s). If any changes are made to the figure(s), table(s) or charts, I will be mindful of the change(s) and cite the original source(s) inside of the document.

Thank you in advance,

Nicole Simmons- Johnson

Dear Nicole,

Thank you for your request. Please consider this written permission to use the material detailed below in your dissertation. Proper attribution to the original source should be included. The permission does not include any 3rd party material found within the work. Please contact us for any future usage or publication of your dissertation.

Best,

Adele

241

October 5, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Nicole Simmons-Johnson and I am a fourth year doctoral student presently in

the dissertation phase, at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education.

I am writing to request permission to copy, recreate, reproduce or use tables or

charts found on page 116 the Andragogical Process Model for Learning in, *The Adult*

Learner; The Definitive Classic in Adult Education and Human Resource Development in

my dissertation, for educational purposes only. If permission is granted, I will be sure to

cite and give credit to the original author(s).

If any changes are made to the table(s) or charts, I will be mindful of the

change(s) and cite the original source(s) inside of the document.

Thank you in advance,

Nicole Simmons- Johnson

Dear Nicole Simmons Johnson

We hereby grant you permission to reprint the material detailed below at no charge in your thesis subject to the following conditions:

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- 2. Suitable acknowledgment to the source must be made, either as a footnote or in a reference list at the end of your publication, as follows:
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- 6. This includes permission for UMI to supply single copies, on demand, of the complete thesis. Should your thesis be published commercially, please reapply for permission.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Jones Rights Assistant

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October 5, 2010

Dear Professor John Tagg:

My name is Nicole Simmons-Johnson and I am a fourth year doctoral student presently in the dissertation phase, at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education.

I am writing to request permission to copy, recreate, or reproduce the chart Comparing Educational Paradigms found on page 16 *From Teaching to Learning; A New Paradigm for Undergraduate Education* in the November/December 1995, CHANGE magazine. The information provided in the chart will be used in my dissertation, for educational purposes only. If permission is granted, I will be sure to cite and give credit to the original author(s).

If any changes are made to the chart, I will be mindful of the change(s) and cite the original source(s) inside of the document.

Thank you in advance,

Nicole Simmons- Johnson

Hi Nicole,

Thank you for your interest in our work. First let me say that as far as I am concerned I would love to have you use anything you like from our article in your dissertation. However, Bob Barr and I don't hold the copyright for the article. It was originally held by Heldref Publications, but Heldref sold all of their periodicals about a year ago to The Taylor and Francis Group. Their Web site is http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/home~db=all. They have what appears to be a fairly convenient method of seeking permissions online, but this requires finding the issue in question in their archive, and upon examination I find that volume 27, number 6 doesn't show up in the archive. Hmm. So this is confusing. I have sent an e-mail to their permissions people to clarify just how you would go about getting permissions for an article that isn't in the archive, and as soon as I find out I'll let you know. You are certainly welcome to write to them yourself as well, but I promise to forward whatever I find out to you as soon as I receive a response.

Thanks again for your interest. Sorry this is so confusing.

--

John Tagg

Hi Nicole,

I am forwarding to you the rather strange response I received from Casey Marie Jackson at Taylor & Francis. Given that the article in question is fifteen years old, I'm a little unclear on just what the production department could be finding to do. I'm also confused about the distinction she is making between permissions and copyright. At any rate, you know the person you need to contact. If you send her an e-mail and explain your situation, I would think that you would get some clarification.

Thanks for passing on the article to your department chair. If you are interested in pursuing these issues further, you might want to look into some of my other publications. They are listed on my Web page at http://daphne.palomar.edu/jtagg/the_learning _paradigm.htm. And the fullest expansion of the article is my 2003 book *The Learning Paradigm College*: http://www.amazon.com/Learning-Paradigm-College-JB-Anker/dp/1882982584/ref=sr 1 1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1286462090&sr=1-1.

By the way, I don't know if you can use this to help you with the IRB, but the 1995 article is available online. It has been up in several configurations over the years, but today it can be found at http://ilte.ius.edu/pdf/BarrTagg.pdf and http://www.athens.edu/visitors/QEP/Barr_and_Tagg_article.pdf (this is a scanned copy of the original article). Whether those who posted these copies had proper permissions or not I don't know, but it's right there for anyone to read who might care to. In any case, good luck with your efforts. Let me know if I can be of any further help.

--

John

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November 27, 2011

Dear Permissions Coordinator:

My name is Nicole Simmons-Johnson and I am a fourth year doctoral student presently in the dissertation phase, at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education.

I am writing to request permission to copy, recreate, reproduce or use Figure 4 Appreciative Inquiry 4-D Cycle found on page 16 in, *Appreciative Inquiry: A positive revolution in change* in my dissertation, for educational purposes only. If permission is granted, I will be sure to cite and give credit to the original author(s).

If any changes are made to the table(s) or charts, I will be mindful of the change(s) and cite the original source(s) inside of the document.

Thank you in advance,

Nicole Simmons-Johnson Doctoral Candidate



kate piersanti copyright editor 2868 flannery road san Pablo ca 94806 fax 510.724.2081 renaissancegal@headlandpro.com

29 November 2011

Nicole Simmons-Johnson

Dear Nicole,

You have permission to use the information you requested from the book Appreciative Inquiry by Cooperrider & Whitney for your project. Please identify the source of material as follows:

Reprinted with permission of the publisher. From (title of book), copyright© (year) by (author), Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., San Francisco, CA. All rights reserved. www.bkconnection.com

Thank you for selecting one of our books and best to you with your work.

Go well,

kate piersanti copyright editor berrett-koehler publishers inc 2868 flannery road san pablo ca 94806 www.bkconnection.com

"the greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated." mahatma gandhi

"until one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened." anatole france, french author, nobel laureate

APPENDIX P

Letter of Consent for Interview

- I authorize Nicole Simmons-Johnson, a doctoral student, under the supervision of Dr.
 Michelle Rosensitto at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education, to
 include me in the research project entitled "The Path to Graduation: A Model
 Interactive Web site Design Supporting Doctoral Students." I understand my
 participation in this study is strictly voluntary.
- 2. I have been asked to participate in this two-phase research project, which is designed to study the perceived need for dissertation support.
- I give my consent to participate in phase two, the interview portion of the study.
 Phase two of the study will require a twenty-minute audiotaped semistructured Skype interview.
- 4. I understand that I will be audiotaped only if I decide to participate in phase two, the interview portion of the study only. A separate, Letter of Consent for Interview, which outlines confidentiality and security measures, along with the participant's rights, will be obtained prior to conducting the interview. Both the participant and the researcher will sign the Letter of Consent for Interview. The tapes will be used for research purposes only. The tapes will be stored in a locked file cabinet and will be destroyed after five years.
- 5. The principal risk to the subject is the potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentality. I understand that it is anticipated that my participation in this study will be associated with no more than minimal risks and/or discomfort. GPS IRB manual describes minimal risk, as the probability and magnitude of harm or

discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. Risks will be minimized in the following ways:

(a) No specific identifying information will be used or reported in any way or in any part of the study; (b) For the qualitative portion of the study participants' identity will be known only to the researcher and will not be used in the study; in addition, the researcher will obtain a separate informed consent for interviewees only; (c) The researcher will remove information related to the personal interview as the consent document is the only form linking the subject to the research; and (d) If participants experience exhaustion, fatigue, or irritability while taking the survey or during the interview portion, a break will be provided.

- 6. I understand only the principal investigator will have access to the data. All Skype interviews will be transcribed by the principal investigator. Sensitive material will be stored according to IRB transcriptions coding sheets and files will be kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher's residence for five years. Principal investigator will crosscut shred information collected in the study and destroy all electronic, audio, and digital recordings using a magnet, after a period of five years.
- 7. I understand that there are no direct benefits for participating in this study. Possible benefits from participation in this study include: (a) Contributing to the literature and body of knowledge of dissertation support and (b) Being an agent of change, using the appreciative eye and the 4-D cycle to contribute personal insight to add to what is "BEST" at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education. Key stakeholders and decision makers such as the academic chairperson of each program, EDOL and

- EDEL, the Dissertation Support Manager Jean Kang; the Director of Technology, John Kim; and the Dean, Margaret Weber will review and have access to the results of the study. Other benefits include possible enhancements and improvement of dissertation support services and the dissertation support Web site.
- 8. I understand that no form of compensation, financial or otherwise, is being offered for participating in the study.
- 9. I understand that participants have the right to refuse to participate in, or to withdraw from, the study at any time without prejudice.
- 10. I understand that I also have the right to refuse to answer any question I choose not to answer.
- 11. I understand that there might be times the investigator may find it necessary to end my study participation.
- 12. I understand that no information gathered from my study participation will be released to others without my permission, or as required by law. Under California law, an exception to the privilege of confidentiality includes but is not limited to the alleged or probable abuse of a child, physical abuse of an elder or a dependent adult, or if a person indicates she or he wishes to do serious harm to self, others, or property.
- 13. I understand that if the findings of the study are published or presented to a professional audience, no personally identifying information will be released. The data gathered will be stored in locked file cabinets to which only the investigator will have access. The data will be maintained in a secure manner for five years for research purposes. After the completion of the study, the data will be destroyed.
- 14. I understand that if participants have any questions regarding the study procedures,

they can contact Nicole Simmons	s-Johnson at
to get n	ny questions answered.
15. I understand that if participants ha	ave questions, they may contact Dr. Michelle
Rosensitto at or con	ntact the IRB Interim Chairperson Dr. Yuying
Tsong, Chairperson of the GPS Ir	nstitutional Review Board, Pepperdine University at
16. I understand to my satisfaction the	e information in the consent form regarding my
participation in the research proje	ect. All of my questions have been answered to my
satisfaction. I hereby consent to p	participate in the research described above.
Ι,	, understand and agree to participate in the
research study conducted by the Prince	cipal Investigator (Nicole Simmons-Johnson) under
the guidance and direction of Dr. Mic	chelle Rosensitto. My signature below is my written
acknowledgment that I have read and	I understand this document in its entirety.
Participant's Signature	Date
Principal Investigator	Date

APPENDIX Q

Copy of Letter of Consent for Interview

Letter of Consent for Interview

- I authorize Nicole Simmons-Johnson, a doctoral student, under the supervision of Dr. Michelle Rosensitto at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education, to include me in the research project entitled "The Path to Graduation: A Model Interactive Website Design Supporting Doctoral Students:" I understand my participation in this study is strictly voluntary.
- I have been asked to participate in this two-phase research project, which is designed to study the perceived need for dissertation support.
- I give my consent to participate in phase two, the interview portion of the study.
 Phase two of the study will require a twenty-minute audiotaped semi-structured
 Skype interview.
- 4. I understand that I will be audiotaped only if I decide to participate in phase two, the interview portion of the study only. A separate, Letter of Consent for Interview, which outlines confidentiality and security measures, along with the participant's rights, will be obtained prior to conducting the interview. Both the participant and the researcher will sign the Letter of Consent for Interview. The tapes will be used for research purposes only. The tapes will be stored in a locked file cabinet and will be destroyed after five years.
- 5. The principal risk to the subject is the potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentality. I understand that it is anticipated that my participation in this study will be associated with no more than minimal risks and/or discomfort. GPS IRB manual describes minimal risk, as the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than

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APR 21 2012

VALID UNTIL DATE ABOVE those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. Risks will be minimized in the following ways: (a) No specific identifying information will be used or reported in any way or in any part of the study; (b) For the qualitative portion of the study participants' identity will be known only to the researcher and will not be used in the study; in addition, the researcher will obtain a separate informed consent for interviewees only; (c) The researcher will remove information related to the personal interview as the consent document is the only form linking the subject to the research; and (d) If participants experience exhaustion, fatigue, or irritability while taking the survey or during the interview portion, a break will be provided.

- 6. I understand only the principal investigator will have access to the data. All Skype interviews will be transcribed by the principal investigator. Sensitive material will be stored according to IRB transcriptions coding sheets and files will be kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher's residence for five years. Principal investigator will crossout shred information collected in the study and destroy all electronic, audio, and digital recordings using a magnet, after a period of five years.
- 7. I understand that there are no direct benefits for participating in this study. Possible benefits from participation in this study include: (a) Contributing to the literature and body of knowledge of dissertation support and (b) Being an agent of change, using the appreciative eye and the 4-D cycle to contribute personal insight to add to what is "BEST" at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education. Key stakeholders and decision makers such as the academic chairperson of each program, EDOL and EDEL, the Dissertation Support

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VALID UNDE EXAME AROVE Manager Jean Kang; the Director of Technology, John Kim; and the Dean,

Margaret Weber will review and have access to the results of the study. Other

benefits include possible enhancements and improvement of dissertation support
services and the dissertation support website.

- I understand that no form of compensation, financial or otherwise, is being offered for participating in the study.
- I understand that participants have the right to refuse to participate in, or to withdraw from, the study at any time without prejudice.
- I understand that I also have the right to refuse to answer any question I choose not to answer.
- I understand that there might be times the investigator may find it necessary to end my study participation.
- 12. I understand that no information gathered from my study participation will be released to others without my permission, or as required by law. Under California law, an exception to the privilege of confidentiality includes but is not limited to the alleged or probable abuse of a child, physical abuse of an elder or a dependent adult, or if a person indicates she or he wishes to do serious harm to self, others, or property.
- 13. I understand that if the findings of the study are published or presented to a professional audience, no personally identifying information will be released. The data gathered will be stored in locked file cabinets to which only the investigator will have access. The data will be maintained in a secure manner for five years for research purposes. After the completion of the study, the data will be destroyed.

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I understand that if participants had	ave any questions regarding the study
procedures, they can contact Nico	
	17.181100 get my questions answered.
	ve questions, they may contact Dr. Michelle
	tact the IRB Interim Chairperson Dr. Yuying
	stitutional Review Board, Pepperdine
University at 310.568.5768 or Yus	ing Tsong@pepperdine.edu.
I understand to my satisfaction the	information in the consent form regarding my
	t. All of my questions have been answered to
my satisfaction. I hereby consent to	participate in the research described above. understand and agree to participate in the
research study conducted by the Principal I	investigator (Nicole Simmons-Johnson) under
	Rosensitto. My signature below is my writter
acknowledgment that I have read and under	
Particia E. Meya	<u>(0/3/2011</u>
Participant's Signature	Date
Deside	6/3/2011
Principal Investigator	Date

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PEPFERONE UNIVERSITY

APR 21 2012

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DATE ABOVE

V.4/22/2091

 I understand that if participants had 	ave any questions regarding the study
procedures, they can contact Nico	le Simmons-Johnson at
bulchers, the body or at \$23,0	17.88000 to get my questions answered.
 I understand that if participants ha 	ve questions, they may contact Dr. Michelle
Rosensitto at	tact the IRB Interim Chairperson Dr. Yuying
Tsong, Chairperson of the GPS In:	stitutional Review Board, Pepperdine
University at Tuesday or Tuesday	Complete Com
16. I understand to my satisfaction the	information in the consent form regarding my
	t. All of my questions have been answered to
my satisfaction. I hereby consent to	participate in the research described above.
1, Tatricia Massecchi	understand and agree to participate in the
research study conducted by the Principal I	nvestigator (Nicole Simmons-Johnson) under
the guidance and direction of Dr. Michelle	Rosensitto. My signature below is my written
acknowledgment that I have read and under	rstand this document in its entirety.
Patricia S Marcish	6-7-11
Participant's Signature	Date
Du Co	6-7-11
Principal Investigator	Date

GPS IRB APPROVA

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I understand that if participants hav	e any questions regarding the study		
procedures, they can contact Nicole	Simmons-Johnson at 136 S. Blower Street	М,	
Inglewood, CA 9030 For at \$2 cm.	to get my questions answered.		
15. I understand that if participants have	e questions, they may contact Dr. Michelle		
Rosensitto at	ict the IRB Interim Chairperson Dr. Yuying		
Tsong, Chairperson of the GPS Inst	itutional Review Board, Pepperdine		
University in subsect of any	ng:Txong@pappardina.edu		
16. I understand to my satisfaction the i	nformation in the consent form regarding m	ıy	
participation in the research project.	All of my questions have been answered to)	
my satisfaction. I hereby consent to	participate in the research described above.		
research study conducted by the Principal I		er	
the guidance and direction of Dr. Michelle	Rosensitto. My signature below is my writte	en	
acknowledgment that I have read and under	stand this document in its entirety.		
Carol Carpa	06/10/2011 Date 6/10/2011		
Participant's Signature	Date		
Dicolor	6/10/2011		
Principal Investigator	Date		
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		APR 21 201	12

Hanne

procedures, they can contact Nicole	Simmons-Johnson af \$16 S. Flower Street	May .
andowsed, CA 9030 For at 233,94	to get my questions answered.	
15. I understand that if participants hav	e questions, they may contact Dr. Michelle	,
Resensitto at 10000000 2500 or contr	act the IRB Interim Chairperson Dr. Yuyin	B
Tsong, Chairperson of the GPS Inst	itutional Review Board, Pepperdine	
University are 10 sees 5768 or Voy	ng Tsonggapoppardma.cchi;	
16. I understand to my satisfaction the i	information in the consent form regarding r	ny
participation in the research project	. All of my questions have been answered t	ů .
my satisfaction. I hereby consent to	participate in the research described above	1.
1. Melinda Valenten	inderstand and agree to participate in the	
research study conducted by the Principal I	nvestigator (Nicole Simmons-Johnson) und	ier
the guidance and direction of Dr. Michella	Rosensitto. My signature below is my writt	len
acknowledgment that I have read and under	rstand this document in its entirety.	
Almital	6/10/11	
Participant's Signature	Date	
Que Co	6/10/11	
Principal Investigator	Date	
		EDIII DOM
		GPS IRB APPROVAL PRPERDING UNIVERSITY
		APR 21 2012
122/2011		VALID UNTIL DATE ABOVE

14. I understand that if participants have any questions regarding the study

APR 21 2012

VALID UNTIL DATE ABOVE

14. I understand that if participants have any questions regarding the study
procedures, they can contact Nicole Simmons-Johnson at the particles since the
fundamental CA 9030 for at \$22,927.48 h to get my questions answered.
15. I understand that if participants have questions, they may contact Dr. Michelle
Resensitte at 100000 and 1000 or contact the IRB Interim Chairperson Dr. Yuying
Tsong, Chairperson of the GPS Institutional Review Board, Pepperdine
University at \$10.568.570 or Vaving Isonp@pepperdifu.edu
16. I understand to my satisfaction the information in the consent form regarding my
participation in the research project. All of my questions have been answered to
my satisfaction. I hereby consent to participate in the research described above. I. Deirare Carlost , understand and agree to participate in the
esearch study conducted by the Principal Investigator (Nicole Simmons-Johnson) under
he guidance and direction of Dr. Michelle Rosenzitto. My signature below is my written
acknowledgment that I have read and understand this document in its entirety.
Della 13/2011 Date 6/13/2011
articipant's Signature Date
Oug 6/13/2011
rincipal Investigator Date
EO III DA
GPS IRB APPROM

12011

14. I understand that if participants have an	y questions regarding the study
procedures, they can contact Nicole Sim	mons-Johnson at 136 St. Flower Street #4
Inglewood, CA 9030) or at 123 047 48;	to get my questions answered.
15. I understand that if participants have qu	estions, they may contact Dr. Michelle
Rosensitto at	e IRB Interim Chairperson Dr. Yuying
Tsong, Chairperson of the GPS Instituti-	onal Review Board, Pepperdine
University at 10.568.5700 or wiving 3	song@pepperdme.cd
16. I understand to my satisfaction the infor	mation in the consent form regarding my
participation in the research project. All	of my questions have been answered to
my satisfaction. I hereby consent to part	icipate in the research described above.
I, Toin T. BEAns , under	stand and agree to participate in the
research study conducted by the Principal Invest	tigator (Nicole Simmons-Johnson) under
the guidance and direction of Dr. Michelle Rose	snsitto. My signature below is my written
acknowledgment that I have read and understan	d this document in its entirety.
0. (
400B	6/16/2011
Participant's Signature De	
Duta	6/16/2011
Principal Investigator Da	ite

. . .

COLL DO GPS IRB APPROVA PEPPEROINE UNIVERSITY

APR 21 2012

VALID UNTIL DATE ABOVE

APPENDIX R

Certificate of Completion

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Nicole Johnson** successfully completed the NIH Webbased training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 10/11/2010

Certification Number: 547072

APPENDIX S

Certificate of HIPAA Online Anytime Basic Training Certificate

Nicole,

Congratulations on passing the CERTIFIED HIPAA PRIVACY ASSOCIATE (CHPA) Exam. Please find your attached CHPA Certificate.

Nicole Simmons completed the course CERTIFIED HIPAA PRIVACY ASSOCIATE (CHPA) on Oct 21, 2010 at 8:53 PM GMT.

CERTIFIED HIPAA PRIVACY ASSOCIATE (CHPA) is part of CERTIFIED HIPAA PRIVACY ASSOCIATE (CHPA).

APPENDIX T

IRB Expedited Application

PEPPERDINE IRB APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROJECT

Date:			IRB Applicati	on/Protocol #	1
Principal Investigator		taff	Student	Other	
School/Unit:	A STATE OF THE PERSON OF THE P	SEP	Seaver Other:	SOL	SPP
Street Address: City:		State:			Zip Code:
Telephone (work): () "		Telepho	ne (home): () -
Email Address:	@ .				
Faculty Supervisor: School/Unit:	(if applicable GSBM □ C Administration) GSEP	Seaver Other:	□sol	□ SPP
Telephone (work): (Email Address:) - @ .				
Project Title: Type of Project (Check	all that apply): Dissertation Undergraduate Classroom Proj	Research ect		Thesis Independ	lent Study Research
Is the Faculty Supervis	or Review Form atta	nched? 🔲 🤊	Yes 🗌 No [□ N/A	
Has the investigator(s) completed education on research with human subjects? Yes No Please attach certification form(s) to this application.					
Is this an application for expedited review? Yes No If so, please explain briefly, with reference to Appendix C of the Investigator's Manual.					
 Briefly summarize your proposed research project, and describe your research goals and objectives: 					
2. Estimated Dates of From:	Project:	To:			
3. Cooperating Institutions and Funded Research. Circle and explain below; provide address, telephone, supervisor as applicable.					

3.1	Yes No This project is part of a research project involving investigators from other institutions.
3.2	☐Yes ☐No Has this application been submitted to any other Institutional Review Board? If yes, provide name of committee, date, and decision. Attach a copy of the approval letter.
3.3	Yes No This project is funded by or cosponsored by an organization or institution other than Pepperdine University.
	Internal Funding (indicate source):
	External funding (indicate source):
	Funding Status: Funded Pending Explain, if needed:
4. Subjects	
4.1	Number of Subjects: Ages: Discuss rationale for subject selection.
4.2	Settings from which subjects will be recruited. Attach copies of all materials used to recruit subjects (e.g., flyers, advertisements, scripts, email messages):
4.3	Criteria for inclusion and exclusion of subjects:
4.4	Yes No Will access to subjects be gained through cooperating institutions? If so, discuss your procedures for gaining permission for cooperating individuals and/or institutions, and attach documentation of permission. You must obtain and document permission to recruit subjects from each site.
4.5	Yes No Will subjects receive compensation for participation? If so, discuss your procedures.
4.6	Describe the method by which subjects will be selected and for assuring that their participation is voluntary.
5. Interventio	ns and Procedures to Which the Subject May Be Exposed
5.1	Describe specific procedures, instruments, tests, measures, and interventions to which the subjects may be exposed through participation in the research project. Attach copies of all surveys, questionnaires, or tests being administered.

5.3 Yes No No Are the drugs, medical devices or procedures to be used approved by the FDA for the same purpose for which they will be used in this study? Explain below. 5.4 Yes No Does your study fall under HIPAA? Explain below. 6. Describe all possible risks to the subject, whether or not you consider them to be risks of ordinary life, and describe the precautions that will be taken to minimize risks. The concept of risk goes beyond physical risk and includes risks to the subject's dignity and self-respect, as well as psychological, emotional, and behavioral risk. Discuss the procedures you plan to follow in the case of adverse or unexpected events. 7. Describe the potential benefits to the subject and society. 8. Informed Consent and Confidentiality and Security of the Data 8.1 Yes No Is a waiver of or alteration to the informed consent process being sought? If yes, please attach the Application for Waiver or Alteration of Informed Consent. Explain through what procedures will informed consent be assured. 8.2 Attach a copy of the consent form. Review the Instructions for Documentation of Informed Consent in Section VII.A of the Investigator Manual. 8.3 Yes No Is the subject a child? If yes, describe the procedures and attach the form for assent to participate. 8.4 Yes No Is the subject a member of another vulnerable population? (i.e., individuals with mental or cognitive disabilities, educationally or economically disadvantaged persons, pregnant women, and prisoners). If yes, describe the procedures involved with obtaining informed consent from individuals in this population. 8.5 If HIPAA applies to your study, attach a copy of the certification that the investigator(s) has completed the HIPAA educational component. Describe your procedures for obtaining Authorization from participants. Attach a copy of the Covered Entity's HIPAA Authorization and Revocation of Authorization forms to use if the CE does not provide such forms). If you are seeking to use or disclose PHI	5.2	Yes No	Are any drugs, medical devices or procedures involved in this study? Explain below.
6. Describe all possible risks to the subject, whether or not you consider them to be risks of ordinary life, and describe the precautions that will be taken to minimize risks. The concept of risk goes beyond physical risk and includes risks to the subject's dignity and self-respect, as well as psychological, emotional, and behavioral risk. Discuss the procedures you plan to follow in the case of adverse or unexpected events. 7. Describe the potential benefits to the subject and society. 8. Informed Consent and Confidentiality and Security of the Data 8.1	5.3	□Yes □No	approved by the FDA for the same purpose for which they will
ordinary life, and describe the precautions that will be taken to minimize risks. The concept of risk goes beyond physical risk and includes risks to the subject's dignity and self-respect, as well as psychological, emotional, and behavioral risk. Discuss the procedures you plan to follow in the case of adverse or unexpected events. 7. Describe the potential benefits to the subject and society. 8. Informed Consent and Confidentiality and Security of the Data 8.1	5.4	□Yes □No	Does your study fall under HIPAA? Explain below.
8.1	ordinary life, risk goes beyo as psychologie	and describe the pond physical risk areal, emotional, and	recautions that will be taken to minimize risks. The concept of ad includes risks to the subject's dignity and self-respect, as well behavioral risk. Discuss the procedures you plan to follow in
8.1	7. Describe the	e potential benefits	to the subject and society.
being sought? If yes, please attach the Application for Waiver or Alteration of Informed Consent Procedures form. If not, describe the ability of the subject to give informed consent. Explain through what procedures will informed consent be assured. 8.2 Attach a copy of the consent form. Review the Instructions for Documentation of Informed Consent in Section VII.A of the Investigator Manual. 8.3 Yes No Is the subject a child? If yes, describe the procedures and attach the form for assent to participate. 8.4 Yes No Is the subject a member of another vulnerable population? (i.e., individuals with mental or cognitive disabilities, educationally or economically disadvantaged persons, pregnant women, and prisoners). If yes, describe the procedures involved with obtaining informed consent from individuals in this population. 8.5 If HIPAA applies to your study, attach a copy of the certification that the investigator(s) has completed the HIPAA educational component. Describe your procedures for obtaining Authorization from participants. Attach a copy of the Covered Entity's HIPAA Authorization and Revocation of Authorization forms to be used in your study (see Section XI. of the Investigator Manual for forms to use if the CE does not provide such forms). If you are seeking to use or disclose PHI	8. Informed C	onsent and Confide	ntiality and Security of the Data
Informed Consent in Section VII.A of the Investigator Manual. 8.3	8.1	being sought? If y Informed Conser give informed con	ex, please attach the Application for Waiver or Alteration of it Procedures form. If not, describe the ability of the subject to
the form for assent to participate. 8.4	8.2	Attach a copy of t Informed Consent	he consent form. Review the Instructions for Documentation of in Section VII.A of the Investigator Manual.
individuals with mental or cognitive disabilities, educationally or economically disadvantaged persons, pregnant women, and prisoners). If yes, describe the procedures involved with obtaining informed consent from individuals in this population. 8.5 If HIPAA applies to your study, attach a copy of the certification that the investigator(s) has completed the HIPAA educational component. Describe your procedures for obtaining Authorization from participants. Attach a copy of the Covered Entity's HIPAA Authorization and Revocation of Authorization forms to be used in your study (see Section XI. of the Investigator Manual for forms to use if the CE does not provide such forms). If you are seeking to use or disclose PHI	8.3	□Yes □No	
investigator(s) has completed the HIPAA educational component. Describe your procedures for obtaining Authorization from participants. Attach a copy of the Covered Entity's HIPAA Authorization and Revocation of Authorization forms to be used in your study (see Section XI. of the Investigator Manual for forms to use if the CE does not provide such forms). If you are seeking to use or disclose PHI	8.4	∐Yes ∐No	individuals with mental or cognitive disabilities, educationally or economically disadvantaged persons, pregnant women, and prisoners). If yes, describe the procedures involved with
	8.5	investigator(s) has procedures for obt Covered Entity's I be used in your stu if the CE does not	completed the HIPAA educational component. Describe your aining Authorization from participants. Attach a copy of the HIPAA Authorization and Revocation of Authorization forms to ady (see Section XI. of the Investigator Manual for forms to use provide such forms). If you are seeking to use or disclose PHI

PHI Without Authorization form (see Section XI). Review the HIPAA procedures in Section X. of the Investigator Manual.

- 8.6 Describe the procedures through which anonymity or confidentiality of the subjects will be maintained during and after the data collection and in the reporting of the findings. Confidentiality or anonymity is required unless subjects give written permission that their data may be identified.
- 8.7 Describe the procedures through which the security of the data will be maintained.

I hereby certify that I am familiar with federal and professional standards for conducting research with human subjects and that I will comply with these standards. The above information is correct to the best of my knowledge, and I shall adhere to the procedure as described. If a change in procedures becomes necessary I shall submit an amended application to the IRB and await approval prior to implementing any new procedures. If any problems involving human subjects occur, I shall immediately notify the IRB Chairperson. I understand that research protocols can be approved for no longer than 1 year. I understand that my protocol will undergo continuing review by the IRB until the study is completed, and that it is my responsibility to submit for an extension of this protocol if my study extends beyond the initial authorization period.

Principal Investigator's Signature	Date	120790000
Faculty Supervisor's Signature (if applicable)	Date	

Appendices/Supplemental Material

Use the space below (or additional pages and/or files) to attach appendices or any supplemental materials to this application.

APPENDIX U

Application for Waiver or Alteration of Informed Consent

Pepperdine IRB

Application for Waiver or Alteration of Informed Consent Procedures IRB Application/Protocol #: Principal Investigator: Faculty Staff Student Other School/Unit: GSBM GSEP SOL SPP Seaver Administration Others Street Address: Zip Code: State Telephone (work): (Telephone (home): (Email Address: 11) Faculty Supervisor: (if applicable) School/Unit: GSBM GSEP Seaver SOL SPP Administration Other: Telephone (work): (

□ No

Thesis

 \square N/A

Undergraduate Research Independent Study Faculty Research Classroom Project Other: Has the investigator completed education on research with human subjects? Yes __ No □ N/A If applicable, attach certification forms to this application.

Dissertation

Informed consent of the subject is one of the fundamental principles of ethical research for human subjects. Informed consent also is mandated by Federal regulations (45 CFR 46) and University policy for research with human subjects. An investigator should seek a waiver of written or verbal informed consent, or required elements thereof, only under compelling circumstances.

SECTION A

Date

City

Email Address:

Project Title:

Is the Faculty Supervisor Review Form Attached?

Type of Project (Check all that apply):

Check the appropriate boxes regarding your application for waiver or alteration of informed consent procedures. Requesting Waiver or Alteration of the Informed Consent Process Requesting Waiver of Documentation of Informed Consent If you are requesting a waiver or alteration of the informed consent process, complete Section B of the

application.

If you are requesting a waiver of documentation of informed consent, complete Section C of the application.

SECTION B

Request for Waiver or Alteration of the Informed Consent Process - 45 CFR 46.116(e) & 48 CFR 46.111(d)

Under certain circumstances, the IRB may approve a consent procedure which does not include, or which alters, some or all of the elements of informed consent, or the IRB may waive the requirements to obtain informed consent. The following questions are designed to guide the decision making of the investigator and the IRB. Check your answer to each question.						
□ YES □ NO B.I.	Will the proposed research or demonstration project be conducted by or subject to the approval of state or local government officials. (45 CFR 46.116(e)(I)) Comments: If you answered no to question B.1, skip to question B.3.					
□ YES □ NO B.2.	Is the proposed project designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (i) public benefit or service programs; (ii) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (iii) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (iv) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs (45 CFR 46.116(e)(1)) Comments:					
□YES □NO B.3.	If you answered yes to questions B.1 and B.2, skip to question B.6. Will the proposed research involve greater than minimal risk? (Minimal risk is defined as the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research which are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.) [45 CFR 46.116(d)(1)] Comments:					
☐ YES ☐ NO B.4	Will waiving or altering the informed consent process adversely affect the rights and welfare of the subjects? [48 CFR 46.116(d)(2)] Comments:					
☐ YES ☐ NO B.5	Will pertinent information regarding the research be provided to the subjects later, if appropriate? (45 CFR 46.116(d)(4)) Comments:					
☐ YES ☐ NO B.6	Is it practicable to conduct the research without the waiver or alteration? ("Practicable" is not an inconvenience or increase in time or expense to the investigator or investigation, rather it is for instances in which the additional cost would make the research prohibitively expensive or where the identification and contact of thousands of potential subjects, while not impossible, may not be feasible for the anticipated results of the study.) [45 CFR 46.116(d)(3)] Comments:					
Waiver or alteration of	f the informed consent process is only allowable (f)					

- The answer to questions B.1 and B.2 are yes and the answer to question B.6 is no, OR
 The answers to question B.1 is no, B.3 is no, B.4 is no, B.5 is yes, and B.6 is no.

If your application meets the conditions for waiver or alteration of the informed consent process, provide the following information for IRB review.

- A brief explanation of your experimental protocol in support of your answers to questions B.1 B.6.
- Identify which elements of consent will be altered or omitted, and provide justification for the alteration.
- The risks involved in the proposed research and why the research presents no more than minimal risk to the subject.
- Describe how the waiver or alteration of consent will not adversely affect the rights, including the
 privacy rights, and the welfare of the individual.
- Define the plan, where appropriate, to provide individuals with additional pertinent information after participation.
- Explain why the research could not practicably be conducted without the waiver or alteration.
- Other information, as required, in support of your answers to questions B.1 B.6.

SECTION C

Request for Waiver of Documentation of Informed Consent - 45 CFR 46.117(c)

gul	bjeets	The	folle	owin	requirement for the investigator to obtain a signed consent form for some or all of the g questions are designed to guide the decision making of the investigator and the IRB rele your answer to each question.
	YES		NO	C.1.	Was informed consent waived in Section B of this application? If yes, skip Section C, documentation of informed consent if not applicable.
	YES		NO	C.2.	Does the proposed research project qualify for alteration of the informed consent progess under Section B of this application? Comments:
	YES		NO	C.3.	The consent document is the only record linking the subject and the research, and the principal risk is potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentiality. [45 CFR 46,117(c)(1)] Comments:
	YES		NO	C.4.	The research presents no more than minimal risk of harm to subjects and involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside the research context. [45 CFR 46.117(c)(2)] (Minimal risk is defined as the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research which are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in-daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.) Comments:

Waiver of documentation of the informed conxent ix only allowable if:

- * The answer to question C.1 is yes, OR
- The answer to questions C.1 is no and the answer to either question C.3 or C.4 is yes.

If your application meets the conditions for waiver of documentation of informed consent, provide the following additional information, supplementing the material provided in Part C of this application, for IRB review.

- · How the consent document is the only record linking the subject to the research.
- · How the principal risk to the subject is the potential harm from a breach of confidentiality.
- Why, if performed outside the research context, written consent is not normally required for the proposed experimental procedures.

If the IRB approves a Waiver of Documentation of Informed Consent, the investigator must:

Ask each participant if he or she wants documentation linking the participant with the research (i.e., wishes to complete an informed consent form). The participant's wishes will govern whether informed consent is documented. {45 CFR 46.117(c)(1)}

AND

At the direction of the IRB, provide participants with a written statement regarding the research.
 [45 CFR 46.117(c)]

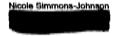
APPENDIX V

Copy of Expedited IRB Approval

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board

April 22, 2011



Protocol #: E0111D09

Project Title: The Path to Graduation: A Model interactive Website Design Supporting Doctoral

Dear Ms. Simmons-Johnson:

Thank you for submitting your revised IRB application, *The Path to Graduation: A Model Interactive Website Design Supporting Doctoral Students*, to Pepperdine's Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB). The IRB has reviewed your revised submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. As the nature of the research met the requirements for expedited review under provision Title 45 CFR 46.110 (research category 7) of the federal Protection of Human Subjects Act, the IRB conducted a formal, but expedited, review of your application materials.

I am pleased to inform you that your application for your study was granted Full Approval. The IRB approval begins today, April 22, 2011 and terminates on April 21, 2012. In addition, your application to waive documentation of informed consent for the survey portion of your survey, as indicated in your Application for Watver or Atteration of Informed Consent Procedures form has been approved.

Your final consent form for the interview portion of the study has been stamped by the IRB to indicate the expiration date of study approval. One copy of the consent form is enclosed with this letter and one copy will be retained for our records. You can only use copies of the consent that have been stamped with the GPS IRB expiration date to obtain consent from your participants.

In addition, please be sure to submit copies of site approvals (i.e. Appendix B, C, and D) when you have obtained approval. These must be submitted before participant recruitment.

Please note that your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the GPS IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit a Request for Modification Form to the GPS IRB. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for expedited review and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the GPS IRB. If contact with subjects will extend beyond April 21, 2012, a Continuation or Completion of Review Form must be submitted at least one month prior to the expiration date of study approval to avoid a lapse in approval. These forms can be found on the IRB website at http://services.peoperdine.edu/irts/irbforms/#Apps.

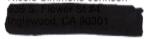
A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite our best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the GPS IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete explanation of the event and your response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the GPS IRB and the appropriate form to be used to report this information can be found in the Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual (see link to "policy material" at http://www.pepperdine.edu/irb/graduate/).

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board

June 16, 2011

Nicole Simmons-Johnson



Re: Request for Modification Protocol #: E0111D09

Project Title: The Path to Graduation: A Model Interactive Website Design Supporting Doctoral

Students

Dear Ms. Simmons-Johnson:

The GPS IRB has received your Request for Modification Form requesting permission to modify your approved protocol for your study, *The Path to Graduation: A Model Interactive Website Design Supporting Doctoral Students.* Your Request for Modification for your study has been approved and you may proceed with your study.

As noted in the IRB approval letter from April, 22, 2011, study approval for your project will expire on April 21, 2012. If any further changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit a Request for Modification Form to the GPS IRB. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for expedited review and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the GPS IRB. If contact with subjects will extend beyond April 21, 2012, a Continuation or Completion of Review Form must be submitted at least one month prior to the expiration date of study approval to avoid a lapse in approval.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite our best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the GPS IRB as soon as possible. If notified, we will ask for a complete explanation of the event and your response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event.

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all further communication or correspondence related to this approval. Should you have additional questions, please contact me. Thank you for submitting such complete and thorough application. On behalf of the GPS IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Jean Kang

Manager, GPS IRB & Dissertation Support Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education & Psychology

6100 Center Dr. 5th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90045