Doctoral Admission Research Paper Guidelines (EPPL Only)

The Educational Policy, Planning & Leadership program area requires all doctoral applicants to submit a research paper as part of the application. The purpose of this exercise is to give you an opportunity to demonstrate to the faculty that you have the ability to write a high quality research paper. Doctoral students at William & Mary are required to write many papers in the courses that comprise the course of study and are required to develop and defend a dissertation. Past experience indicates that students who complete the program are competent writers.

The Assignment Topic
Choose an issue related to the field of education that is being debated in a public forum. This means that the debate is taking place not only within the profession, but is taking place in public bodies, newspapers, magazines, television, talk shows, etc. While you may choose any topic, you should be sure that your topic has adequate sources for you to reference. You **may use a previous paper written for some other purpose as the basis for this paper.**

Format - Adhere to the following outline:

The Issue**:** An issue is defined as a situation where there are "either...or" positions on a topic. Define the issue, describe the sides of the issue and major participants and venues.

The Arguments**:** Present the major positions on the issue by citing the writing and works of informed participants. This may include research, papers, speeches, quotes, legislation, court opinions, electronic communication, etc. You should select sources that are authoritative.

Conclusion**:** Take a stand on the issue. Frame a position that includes your reasons for your stand, persuasive arguments, research, and other evidence. You should bring forward evidence cited in "The Arguments."

Grading - Two professors will read each paper and determine if a paper was a "no pass", "pass", or "high pass." In cases where the readers do not agree, a third reader will break the tie. All papers will be anonymous.

Issue Relevance: The issue is current, substantive and important.

Quality of sources: Sources are authoritative and of high quality, reflect current thought, and if appropriate, provide historical or background information.

Organization: The paper follows the prescribed format, and within each section provides for a coherent and logical flow of thought.

Mechanics: The paper is grammatically correct and rules of language usage are applied.

Style: The most recent *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* is applied.

Holistic: The paper is well-written and conceptually sound.

Technical Requirements
1. This paper must be submitted by the application deadline date of either January 15 or October 1.
2. You must submit two copies. The paper may be no longer than 2000 words (typically 8 pages of 12-point type). The bibliography is not counted against the length.
3. You must follow the *APA Publication Manual*. Send the paper along with your completed application.
4. Your title page should include the title of your paper and your date of birth, ***not your name***.
5. Pledge - Include a separate page that gives your name and date of birth, and the sentence, "I pledge that I have not received any help from other individuals on this paper, including editing or proofreading" followed by your signature.

You are allowed to have someone type the paper for you.