

TITLE OF THE STUDY

A Dissertation

Presented to the

The Faculty of the School of Education

The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

By

Your Name

Month YEAR

ADD TITLE HERE

By

Your Name

Approved ADD DATE by

ADD NAME

Committee Member

ADD NAME

Committee Member

ADD NAME

Chairperson of Doctoral Committee

NOTE: Only names and degrees of committee members are provided. Signatures are not included on the document you prepare for upload.

NOTE: TO BE DELETED PRIOR TO SUBMISSION OF PAPER

The text begins here. Notice that the page numbers are centered in the footer at the bottom of each page (except for the half-title page—no page number is displayed on the half-title page). Pages prior to the half-title page use lowercase Roman numerals (i.e., i, ii, iii). Starting with the first page of Chapter 1, use Arabic numerals (i.e., 2, 3, 4); the first page of Chapter 1 displays the page number 2 and the pages following are numbered in sequence through the reference material to the end of the document. Proceed with each additional page of text with continuous page numbering. The page number should be centered 3/4" from the bottom of the page on all pages (this is the default setting; no adjustments are needed). Page margins should be as follows:

Left – 1”

Right – 1”

Top – 1” **except the first page of each chapter, which is 2”, and the half-title page, which is 4”**

Bottom – 1”

All written material (text, tables, graphs, and illustrative materials) must fit within these margins.

Headings should not fall on the bottom of a page. To avoid headings falling at the bottom of a page, select the heading and the paragraph that follows and apply the “keep lines together” and “keep with next” paragraph settings. Whenever possible, have tables, figures, and graphs fall on a single page. When needed, apply “keep lines together” and “keep with next” settings to achieve this goal. Consider moving long tables that span multiple pages into an appendix.

Footnotes (if any) should appear at the bottom of the page in which they are used and placed in the footer of the page.

Please follow current APA edition style guidelines. This is the link for the APA manual:
<https://www.apa.org/pubs/books/publication-manual-7th-edition-paperback>.

Dedication

This is an optional page for a dedication. If you include a dedication, use regular paragraph spacing as shown here (not centered, italicized, or otherwise formatted). If you do not wish to include this page, delete the heading, the body text, and the page break below the end of the text.

Acknowledgments

This is an optional page for acknowledgments. It is a nice place to thank the faculty, family members, and friends who have helped you reach this point in your academic career. If you choose not to include the page, delete the heading and the body text; if a blank page remains, delete the page break above but leave the section break that you see below this text.

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Note that the table title is in Title Case (important words capitalized) and italicized, mirroring the format displayed in the text.

If you are comfortable using internal field codes to link your table titles to the list of tables, you may choose to apply them here. (For compatibility purposes, no field codes have been included in this template.) Note that if you are using field codes, when you update the list of tables, the table number and title will come in without a period between them; you will need to manually add that period after all table numbers, as shown for Table 1. If your document does not have tables, delete this page.

List of Figures

Figure 1. Figure Titlexx

Note that “Figure 1” is italicized and the title is not, mirroring the format used in text. Again, if you are comfortable using internal field codes to link your figure titles to the list of figures, you may choose to apply them here. (For compatibility purposes, no field codes have been included in this template.) Figure captions serve as titles and are sometimes too long to include on this list. If titles are lengthy, include abbreviated figure titles on this list (Reading Intervention Cycle instead of “A detailed depiction of the reading intervention cycle applied in Homewood Schools”). If your document does not have figures, delete this page.

Abstract

Insert abstract here; it should not exceed 250 words. Abstract text must be double-spaced with no paragraph breaks. Describe the overall research problem being addressed in the first couple of sentences and indicate why it is important (e.g., who would care if the problem is solved). You can include a general introduction of the issue in the first sentence, but you need to move to a clear statement of the research problem being addressed. Identify the purpose and theoretical foundations, if appropriate, summarize the key research question(s), and briefly describe the overall research design, methods and data analytic procedures. Identify the key results, one or two conclusions, and recommendations that capture the heart of the research. Conclude with a statement on the implications for positive social change. Here are some form and style tips: (a) limit the abstract to one typed page; (b) maintain the scholarly language used throughout the dissertation; (c) keep the abstract concise, accurate, and readable; (d) use correct English; (e) ensure each sentence adds value to the reader's understanding of the research; and (f) use the full name of any acronym and include the acronym in parentheses. Do not include references or citations in the abstract. Per APA style, unless at the start of a sentence, use numerals in the abstract, not written out numbers. For more guidance on writing this paragraph, consult the *Abstract Primer* (available at <http://researchcenter.waldenu.edu/>).

HALF-TITLE PAGE

Only the title is printed on this page. Arabic numerals are used in numbering the pages of the text. Although the half-title is page 1 of the text, no number should appear on this page. The title should be centered four inches from the top of the page and displayed in all-caps.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Use a 2” top margin on the first page of a new chapter. Chapter 1 should introduce readers to the problem your study will investigate and provide a preview of the remaining chapters. It can be helpful to write Chapter 1 after writing Chapters 2 and 3 and to update Chapter 1 after writing Chapters 4 and 5. Provide readers with an advance organizer of the content in your study and a compelling reason to keep reading.

Statement of the Problem (APA Level 2)

Provide a brief introduction to the problem your study will investigate. You want to persuade the reader that this is a topic they should care about and that it is both interesting and important. It is interesting because it is not a settled issue – there is some debate or disagreement that is unresolved. It is important because the implications of your finding may contribute to better outcomes for students or other vulnerable populations. Start this section with a strong opening claim to grab your reader’s attention and establish common ground.

Theoretical or Conceptual Framework

Provide a review of the theoretical or conceptual framework that will underpin your study. Include details regarding how your study relates to the theory or concept. This section typically includes a graphical display of the hypothesized relationship between the constructs you will study. This section provides an overview and an introduction to the major arguments your study will explore. Save the more detailed literature review for chapter 2.

Subheading 1 (APA Level 3)

You may include subsections to explain to discuss each of the constructs that make up your theoretical framework. You might include a subsection the hypothesized relationship between the constructs in your theoretical framework.

Subheading 2 (APA Level 3)

When you use a level three heading, begin the text in a new paragraph.

Research Questions

Provide a brief introductory narrative to the research questions. You may state the hypotheses that you will be testing through your study. Then, list the research questions and number them.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Significance of the Study

This section of Chapter 1 is intended to justify the value of conducting your study. Will the study add to the field's understanding of a given theory, research question, or phenomenon? Will it help answer a particular question related to policy or practice? In essence, why should the study be conducted?

Definitions of Terms

Provide definitions for all important terms or variables that will be used in the dissertation. You might use hanging indents to set off the terms being defined.

Include citations for definitions that are taken from the research literature.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Use a 2” top margin on the first page of a new chapter.

The best literature reviews **develop an argument** to justify the need for your current research and **present a focused synthesis of literature** related to that research topic. You might not include every article, book, or blog post ever published on your topic, but readers should expect to find discussion of the well-known or foundational works related to the topic as well as an in-depth discussion of current (i.e., within the last 5-10 years) publications that are directly connected to your study or establish an understanding of the key concepts related to your study. Provide context for each study you cite (Where did this study happen? Who/What was the sample/focus? What did the authors conclude?). Connect each study you cite to your central argument. In other words, be sure readers clearly understand why the studies you’re citing matter to your current research problem.

Finally, don’t forget to synthesize. Build connections among and between the studies you cite, rather than listing research summaries. Point out similarities and discrepancies in previous researchers’ findings. Guide readers to the inevitable conclusion that your research will clarify or illuminate some aspect related to this topic that previous researchers have not yet clarified or illuminated.

Provide an introductory paragraph to introduce the major sections to be included in the literature review. Use this paragraph as an advance organizer for the chapter. A heading typically is not needed for this paragraph. The following heading samples follow the APA 7th Edition format.

Level Two Example

This level provides the first subsection and is flush left, boldface, and title case. Here, we've also included a sample of a block quote. If you use a block quote, be sure to introduce it with a signal phrase to give the reader context.

Block quotations look like this. Any quotation that is longer than 40 words should be presented as a block quote. They are indented .5" from the left margin (the same distance as a new paragraph). Don't use opening and closing quotation marks with a block quotation—the block formatting lets readers know it's a quotation. When you get to the end of the quoted material, use closing punctuation. If your quotation came from a source on your Reference list, the in-text citation goes outside of the closing punctuation, like this. (Example, YEAR, p. XX)

Level Three Example

This is a demonstration of the level three heading. It is flush to the left margin, italicized, and boldface, with title case capitalization. The text begins a new paragraph.

Level Four Example. The level four heading is indented and boldfaced, with title case capitalization. It ends with a period and the text follows directly after the period.

Level Four Example. If you do not have at least two subheadings at any particular level to subdivide as separate sections, you should not use that level of heading.

Level Five Example. The level five heading is indented italicized, and boldface, with title case capitalization. It ends with a period and the text follows directly after the period.

Level Five Example. The level five heading is uncommon in a dissertation, and should be used sparingly. It may be useful for a very detailed argument.

Level Three Example

This is just here to justify having the first level three heading. If you do not subdivide a section with at least two subheadings, don't subdivide it at all.

Summary

The summary for the review of related literature typically ranges from a paragraph to a page.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Use a 2” top margin on the first page of a new chapter.

The best methods chapters provide a detailed and methodical explanation of research methods used and include discussion of ethical considerations. Provide enough detail, in a logically organized manner, so that readers could retrace your steps or replicate your study in the future. Be sure to update Chapter 3 after the proposal stage to reflect how your study actually unfolded—often there are changes from how you initially conceived of your research process. Change the verb tense to the past tense in the dissertation defense stage to reflect that the study has already taken place. Describe the demographics of your participants and how the data collection and data analysis took place. Include the ways you will protect participants’ anonymity, preserve the security of data during the collection and analysis stages, and any measures you will take to increase the reliability and validity of your findings.

Provide a brief opening paragraph in which the study methods are introduced. Include any pertinent details needed to understand the connection between the research questions and the study design.

Participants

Describe the participants in the study and how they will be selected. Be specific in explaining as much demographic information as necessary for your study.

Data Sources

Describe the nature of the data sources and instruments you will use to answer your research questions.

Data Source 1

As an example, describe a survey or other data source in detail, including the number of items in each section, the response scale, any available validity and reliability information, as well one or two sample items (for longer instruments, it might be appropriate to include the full instrument in an appendix). Be sure to include a reference to the developer of the measure, or report that it was researcher-developed if it is a measure you created for the study. If you are the developer, discuss how you field tested and pilot tested the measure. Rename this section appropriately.

Data Source 2

Provide appropriate details for each data source you use in your study. Continue until you describe all applicable data sources (e.g., survey, interview protocol, focus group protocol, document or other artifact analysis, student achievement data from SOLs, demographics, and any other data sources that are part of your study, including extant data). Include any available information about the validity and reliability of each instrument.

Data Collection

Describe in detail how you will collect all information for your study. For example, if you will observe a teacher planning team, explain how this data collection process will work. Include all major steps and needed details for the data collection phase of the study. The intent is for you to provide sufficient details that another researcher could understand what you have done and replicate the study.

Data Analysis

You might include a brief overview of your data analysis strategy before describing specifically how you will analyze your data to answer each of your research questions.

Research Question 1

Describe how you will analyze (proposal)/analyzed (defense) your data to answer your first research question. If your study is quantitative in nature, be clear regarding any descriptive and inferential statistics you will use. For example, in the case of a survey you might plan to analyze your data using descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation as well as correlational analysis or multiple regression. If your study is qualitative in nature, describe your data coding and analysis process.

Research Question 2

Provide the same information for how you will analyze your data in answer to each of your research questions.

Research Question 3

It is helpful to include a table in this section of your proposal, listing your research questions in the first column, the data sources you will use to answer each question in the second column, and a brief description of how you will analyze the data in the third column. If you include a table, be sure to introduce it briefly in the text first (See Table 1).

Table 1

Table Title

Evaluation Question	Data Sources	Data Analysis
RQ 1		
RQ 2		
RQ 3		

Note. APA tables do not include vertical borders. Each column has a heading describing the category of content in that column. Text may be as small as 10 point. Use “keep lines together” and “keep with next” paragraph settings to ensure that tables do not break across multiple pages of the document.

Delimitations, Limitations, Assumptions

Delimitations

Describe the delimitations of your study. These are decisions you made concerning the parameters of your study.

Limitations

Describe the limitations of your study. These are elements that are beyond your control that should be acknowledged as potential influences on our findings.

Assumptions

Describe the assumptions of your study.

Researcher as Instrument Statement

If you are conducting a qualitative or mixed-methods study, you should include a statement describing your background in relation to the study topic and what measures you will take to guard against researcher bias.

Ethical Considerations

Describe the process for gaining approval to conduct the study from the William & Mary Education Institutional Review Committee (EDIRC). Describe the steps you will take to gain informed consent, and to protect the participants in your study from potential harm or embarrassment. This will include how you will keep the data and when and how you will dispose of it.

Describe the process you will use to gain any necessary permissions to gather data from the participants in your study.

Timeline

For the proposal, include a timeline for each phase of the study. This section will be removed for the final dissertation defense.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Use a 2” top margin on the first page of a new chapter.

In this chapter, focus on results of data analysis; avoid interpreting or discussing implications at this point in the document. It is helpful to organize your findings by research question. For each finding, provide specific quantitative data or participant quotations to support your conclusion.

Provide an introductory paragraph detailing the focus of this section on your findings and how this section is structured. Structure the section by research question.

Research Question 1 (APA 2)

Provide your findings, including relevant tables and figures. If you include a participant quotation that is 40+ words long, use the block quotation format:

Block quotations look like this. They are indented .5” from the left margin (just like a new paragraph). Don’t use opening and closing quotation marks with a block quotation—the block formatting lets readers know it’s a quotation. When you get to the end of the quoted material, use closing punctuation. As long as you’ve made it clear in the stem or the preceding paragraph that this is a participant quotation, no citation is needed after the closing punctuation.

Regular paragraphs of text follow the quotation like this.

Subheading—APA 3

Subheading—APA 4.

Subheading—APA 5. It would be unusual to use this level of heading in your results.

Research Question 2 (APA 2)

Subheading—APA 3

Provide your findings including relevant tables and figures.

Research Question 3 (APA 2)

Subheading—APA 3

Provide your findings including relevant tables and figures.

Summary of Findings (APA 2)

Provide a summary paragraph of findings.

CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDATIONS

Use a 2” top margin on the first page of a new chapter.

Summarize your major findings from Chapter 4 and link each finding to relevant discussion, literature presented in Chapter 2, or newly introduced literature related to unexpected findings that emerged during analysis. Use tables and figures to clarify relationships between and among findings, implications, and extant literature. Provide recommendations for policy, practice grounded in your findings, as well as recommendations for future research. Wrap it up with a final paragraph or two that brings Chapters 1-5 together, summarizing your path from research problem and literature review to research approach and findings/conclusions.

Provide an introductory paragraph detailing the focus of this section on the evaluation findings and how this section is structured.

Summary of Major Findings

Research Question #1 (APA 3)

Research Question #2 (APA 3)

Research Question #3 (APA 3)

Discussion of Findings

Discuss the results of your study and what you make of these results in light of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Provide an introductory paragraph detailing the focus of this section on the recommendations based on the findings of this study. Include a table that links the findings to the

recommendations (see Table 2). Each subheading should be a recommendation.

Recommendations should be based on findings. Where appropriate link recommendations back to other studies or literature discussed in the literature review. The number of recommendations will vary.

Table 2

Table Title

Findings	Related Recommendations	Supporting Literature
Succinct statement of findings		
Succinct statement of findings		
Succinct statement of findings		
Succinct statement of findings		

Note. Tables should complement, rather than replicate, explanations from the text of your document. Think of a table as a succinct way to organize and share complex data that would otherwise be difficult to explain to readers. Use the text of your document to refer readers to the relevant table.

Policy or Practice Recommendation 1 (APA 3)

Describe recommendation #1 and link the recommendation to your findings and to your literature review if appropriate.

Policy or Practice Recommendation 2 (APA 3)

Describe recommendation #2 and link the recommendation to your findings and to your literature review if appropriate.

Policy or Practice Recommendation 3 (APA 3).

Describe recommendation #3 and link the recommendation to your findings and to your literature review if appropriate. If you use any figures to synthesize your findings and recommendations, introduce the figure in the text just prior to figure placement (Figure 1).

Recommendations for Future Research

Having explored your topic deeply over a period of time, you are now in a position to offer new research questions and suggest additional research methods for future researchers who might want to investigate this topic. This is an important way for you to serve the field, so don't rush through this section. Think carefully about what's next for this line of research.

Summary

Provide a summary for the study or any concluding comments.

REFERENCES

1. Follow APA guidelines precisely for all references. Consult the APA manual or APA style blog (<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog>) for guidance. Here is a general format for journal articles:

Lastname, F. I. (2019). Title of article is in sentence case. *Journal Name is in Title Case and Italics*, 7(1), 23-27. <https://doi.org/xxxx>

2. Carefully check for an exact match between the references cited in the text and the reference list. There must be an exact match. If your references are extensive, it is helpful to use the search feature in Word to ensure that each citation in your reference list is cited in text and vice versa. It may also be helpful to print your reference list and read through in-text citations throughout the document, checking off each entry on the printed list. This will allow you to catch any omitted entries and remove any extraneous ones.
3. Format your references using the hanging indent feature in Word. This can be found under the paragraph tab, in the section titled Indentation. On the dropdown menu, choose “hanging.”

APPENDIX A

NAME THE APPENDIX

Insert Appendix A material here. If you have only one appendix, label it “Appendix” and do not include a letter.

Add a page break and start a new page for each additional appendix. The appendices should be lettered alphabetically according to the order in which they are mentioned in the text.

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX C

Continue with all appendices.

VITA

The Vita is a one-page autobiographical sketch of the author, containing full name, contact information, educational background, degrees and dates, and other pertinent training or experience.

Add a one-page biographical summary that includes the following information:

- Author's full name
- Educational background
- Degrees held, including issuing universities and dates conferred
- Related training and experience