

University of La Verne

Doctor of Public Administration

Dissertation Guidelines 2023-2024



Department of Public Administration

College of Law and Public Service

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Introduction

The quality of a dissertation reflects the individual candidate, the Doctor of Public Administration Program (DPA), the College of Law and Public Service, and the University of La Verne. For this reason, the faculty shares your commitment to make the dissertation process a successful experience. The following guidelines aim to reflect accurately the dissertation process, with the understanding that certain situations might require information not contained in these guidelines. If you find that your questions are not answered in here, please contact the Department of Public Administration.

The guidelines will assist you in the design and development of the study and facilitate the content aspects of manuscript preparation. Questions dealing with style, format, copyrights, and other technical requirements of manuscript preparation are answered in the approved style manual, the [Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition \(2020\)](#).

The dissertation guidelines will provide answers to common questions such as:

- How do I select a dissertation committee chair?
- How to select other committee members?
- What is the process for completing the dissertation?
- When is the oral defense of the dissertation scheduled?
- What other steps are required after a successful dissertation defense?

Please [email](#) Dr. Adrian M. Velazquez Vazquez, DPA Director, CLPS 108 or call 909.448.4107. Students can also [email](#) Sarah Prosenko, Assistant Director of Academic Services, CLPS 102 or call 909.460.2016, if you have additional questions.

Why the dissertation?

Almost every doctoral candidate raises this question. The answer is that the dissertation process is a unique method of demonstrating personal and professional growth, both generally and in a specific area of study. The developmental and growth benefits, which the dissertation process offers, are presented here in the form of competencies that doctoral candidates are expected to be able to demonstrate:

- The ability to research complex ideas objectively and communicate results knowledgeably and clearly.
- An understanding of alternative research methods and designs and a perceptive judgment of their relative appropriateness to a given research problem.
- Proficiency in the use of at least one recognized research method and the ability to defend its pertinence of application to a research problem.

- Independence of thought and action in the selection of a significant research topic.
- A mastery of the literature, theory, concepts, and research in a specifically selected area of study.
- The ability to contribute significantly to the knowledge and/or practice of public administration.

The dissertation requirement is viewed differently in programs leading to applied degrees, such as the DPA, than it is in those which award a Ph.D. The distinction in focus between the two is discussed in the “Handbook of Accreditation of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges,” as follows:

“Faculty and students in Ph.D. programs are actively involved in original research contributing to generalizable knowledge. Such involvement is also present to a significant extent in disciplinary Master’s degree programs. Student in professional Doctorate programs are educated in the research process and involved in research. While this may be original research similar to that expected of Ph.D. programs, it may alternatively include applied research that supports the advancement of the profession” (p. 30).

The statement implies that the candidate in an applied doctoral program such as the DPA has a broader range of options in meeting the dissertation requirements than does the candidate in more traditional programs leading to the Ph.D. It is not uncommon for graduate programs in the social sciences to have preferences (stated or unstated) for specific types of methodological studies. Some fields, by their very nature, lean heavily toward a specific scientific method. However, the very word “applied” in the applied type of doctoral program suggests the need to be flexible in one’s ability to meet a situation. Therefore, there is no specific methodological bias inherent in the study of administration and management.

Administrators often encounter problems that require competence in a variety of research methods; managers sometimes must judge the applicability of reported research studies, as well as prepare statistical reports regarding them. They often must critique testing strategies or evaluate the soundness of proposed staff research projects and they must even be able to develop and pilot new programs to meet broadening needs.

Therefore, in selecting the direction and focus of a dissertation, you should commence by identifying the problem you wish to resolve or the contribution you wish to make. Then you must select the proper research methodology to fit the subject, rather than attempting to make your subject fit a predetermined research method.

There is also a significant advantage in identifying a research problem early in the program. Even though you may not begin formal steps in the dissertation process until the second half of the second year, an early awareness of your research interests will allow you to direct much of your study and preparation in other program components, specifically toward the dissertation. This will save time and add a sense of continuity to the overall process.

The Dissertation Process

The dissertation process moves according to the following sequence:

1. Appointment of a Dissertation Committee Chair
2. Dissertation Committee (Dissertation Form 1)
3. Approval of Study Proposal (Dissertation Form 2)
 - 3.1 Institutional Review Board Application Using IRBManager
4. Approval of Oral Defense (Dissertation Form 3)
5. Oral Defense Status (Dissertation Form 4)
6. Steps to be Taken by the Candidate after the Oral Defense
7. Final Dissertation Approval

These sequential steps must be followed in order. Appropriate forms to mark each step are available in these guidelines and online in the DPA Community on Blackboard. The candidate, not the Committee Chair, is responsible for transmitting all forms and appropriate documentation to Sarah Prosenko, Assistant Director of Academic Services, which in turn will submit to Graduate Academic Services, as the candidate proceeds through the various steps of the dissertation process. Keep in mind that out of sequence forms will not be accepted by Graduate Academic Services. Form 3, for example, will not be processed unless an appropriately signed Form 2 is found in the candidate's file. The candidate must follow this process carefully, as failure to do so could result in unnecessary delays and frustrations.

1. Appointment of a Dissertation Committee Chair

A Dissertation Committee Chair is appointed by the start of the third year of coursework. Students fill out the Committee Chair Request Form describing their intended dissertation topic and listing both a first and second choice from the list of eligible faculty and must provide a short description as to why they are interested in working with the selected faculty member. The form is then reviewed by the DPA Program Director, who will approve or deny the request based on the following factors: faculty availability, appropriateness of fit, time concerns, and faculty acceptance of the request. The dissertation committee chair must be selected from the following approved faculty list*:

Suzanne Beaumaster, Ph.D.
Marcia Godwin, Ph.D.
Soomi Lee, Ph.D.
Adrian M. Velazquez Vazquez, Ph.D.

* This list is subject to change without notice.

A student who wishes to select a committee member who is not on the approved list must submit a written request to the Program Director for review and approval. The Associate Dean of Public Administration must also approve exceptions to this requirement.

2. Dissertation Committee (Dissertation Form 1)

A dissertation committee consists of three members: the dissertation committee chair and two additional committee members. By the end of the third year of coursework, and only after a student has been assigned a Committee Chair, the student must consult with the Committee Chair to select other dissertation committee members. In order to form a committee, a student must have drafted a well-developed proposal, approved by the Dissertation Chair, to submit to potential committee members. Any ULV faculty with a doctorate is eligible to serve as a member in a dissertation committee. On occasion, one of the committee members can be a faculty member from a different institution of higher education or an active practitioner who has an earned doctorate from a regionally accredited institution. Each committee member will note their willingness to serve on the dissertation committee by signing Dissertation Form 1, which is then sent to the Assistant Director of Academic Services for DPA Director and the Associate Dean of Public Administration's approval. Form 1 is then sent to Graduate Academic Services, who will send the student a letter designating the approved committee. Students must coordinate with the Committee Chair to obtain approval and signatures for Form 1 and for all subsequent forms, as needed.

Approved committee members who are not members of the University's standing faculty (including adjunct faculty) will receive the normal stipend paid by the University for serving on a dissertation committee. However, any and all arrangements and fees related to their participation in the oral defense, such as travel and accommodation fees, will be the responsibility of the student, not the Program, the College or the University. Please consult additional policies governing the [Dissertation Member Expectations and Recommendations](#).

The Associate Dean of Public Administration and Program Director reserve the right to realign committee assignments based upon faculty load and availability. Consequently, you should not assume that the committee you selected will automatically be approved. Students who need help or suggestions about forming a committee and/or finding committee members should first consult with their Dissertation Committee Chair to identify potential members from ULV or other external candidates.

3. Approval of Study Proposal (Dissertation Form 2)

After the committee has been designated, the student writes a study proposal (usually involves a fully formed draft of chapters 1, 2 and 3 of the dissertation). The study proposal must first be approved by the dissertation committee in order to be submitted, along with the appropriate application and materials, for Institutional Review Board (IRB) assessment and approval.

The approved study proposal, in conjunction with IRB approval, must be submitted as an attachment with the Dissertation Form 2 signed by the Committee to the Assistant Director of Academic Services for review. The candidate is responsible for completing the IRB application and obtaining the necessary signatures for Form 2. Once the Program Director has signed Form 2, it is placed in the student's file and forwarded to Graduate Academic Services.

Candidates can begin data collection after receiving the IRB approval letter, signed by the IRB Chair, and only when Dissertation Form 2 is fully approved and has been submitted to Graduate Academic Services. Form 2 requires the DPA Program Director's approval before the student may proceed to the next step and may not be submitted concurrently with Form 3.

3.1 Institutional Review Board Application Using IRBManager

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is an institutional committee created to protect the rights and welfare of human research subjects. The committee is responsible for reviewing research designs (protocols) involving human subjects. However, even if your research does not involve human subjects, the institution requires the IRB to review your proposed research and make that determination. The IRB is also responsible for providing training on the protection of human subjects in research. Additional information about the IRB can be accessed [here](#).

IRB Applications and IRBManager

IRB applications are submitted with the committee chair's approval to the IRB at the time of the study proposal review (Dissertation Form 2). As of September 1, 2016, the La Verne IRB implemented the IRBManager for all study submissions. All applications must be submitted through IRBManager. Please review the following information to assist you with:

- [Preparing your IRB Application](#)
- [Logging into IRB Manager](#)

Training

A [human subjects training certificate](#) must be on file for all individuals conducting human subjects research. Human subjects training applies only to human subjects research. Training needed for other types of research can be identified by [emailing](#) the Institutional Review Board or calling 909.448.4564.

The IRB Review Process

Most likely your application will require more than one set of revisions at all stages of IRB review in order to clarify content and address reviewer comments. Any applications not approved within 6 months of initial submission will need to be resubmitted and re-reviewed by the appropriate area of the IRB as a new application. Please plan accordingly. You must receive the approval letter signed by the IRB Chair before data collection can begin.

You can access the Flowcharts of the IRB Review Process [here](#).

Expectations of La Verne IRB Review Timeline

Please consult the [Meeting and Operation Schedule](#) and the [Turnaround Time policy](#) for more details.

Checking the Status of your IRB Application

[Check the status of your application](#) in IRBManager.

IRB Members and Staff

Here is the complete [list](#) of IRB members. Staff members are usually quicker at responding to [email](#) than voice mail. Additional information about IRB staff can be found [here](#).

4. Approval for Oral Defense (Dissertation Form 3)

The candidates work with their Committee Chair on writing and revising drafts until all three members of the committee agree that the dissertation has reached final draft stage and is ready for oral defense. At that point, the committee signs the Approval for Oral Defense (Form 3). Please remember that the Committee Chair should explicitly authorize the student to collect signatures for Form 3.

Then, in conjunction with the Committee Chair, the student will arrange for the date, time, and place of the defense. Form 3 should then be submitted to the Assistant Director of Academic Services for review and to the DPA Program Director for approval. The Program Director then signs Form 3. Please remember that all logistical arrangements for the defense are the responsibility of the candidate. When all arrangements have been made, the candidate must submit Form 3 to Graduate Academic Services along with:

- a) Application for Graduation and fee.
- b) Cap and Gown Order Form and fee (contact 909.448.4506 to determine the amount of graduation fee and cap and gown rental fee). If you are interested in purchasing your custom graduation regalia and would like additional information, please contact Graduate Academic Services at 909.448.4506 by April 1st of the year you plan to graduate.

The oral defense announcement and abstract must be e-mailed to [Mary Soto](#) at Graduate Academic Services and to [Sarah Prosenko](#), Assistant Director of Academic Services (see samples on pages 18-19). The selected defense date must allow sufficient time (three weeks minimum) for approval by the DPA Program Director. No exceptions.

Arrangements must be completed at least three weeks in advance of the date of the defense. The candidate should never assume that any equipment would be available in the room scheduled for the presentation. Logistical arrangements may include:

- Scheduling the date, time, and room for the oral defense.
- Arranging for all audiovisual equipment needs through the Department of Public Administration.
- Making arrangements for approved committee members who are not members of the

University’s standing faculty related to their participation in the oral defense, such as travel and accommodation. Any fee associated with their participation will be the responsibility of the student, not the Program, the College or the University.

- Ensuring that all electronic files are accurate and ready before the presentation. Please bring your own laptop or make arrangements to borrow one from the Department.
- The oral defense is a formal event that must follow a specific protocol. Students will need to [email](#) Melinda Davenport, Associate Director of Administration and Faculty Support, or call 909.460.2035, at least a week before the scheduled defense date to obtain a loaner robe (free of charge) to be used during the oral defense. No exceptions.
- The oral defense is usually held in room COL 219 Moot Court Room in the College of Law and Public Service at the Ontario campus. It is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure that the room and/or equipment are available for dissertation defense on the requested date.

Location	Capacity	Equipment	Food Allowed?	Contact
COL 219 Moot Court Room	40	PC/Projector	Yes	Sarah Prosenko 909.460.2016 sprosenko@laverne.edu

Graduate Academic Services does not need to approve the oral defense arrangements, but they must receive Dissertation Form 3, the Application for Graduation Form, the Cap and Gown order form, graduation fees, and electronic copies of the Dissertation Abstract and Oral Defense Announcement at least three weeks prior to the date chosen for defense.

May 1st of the year you want to graduate is the last day for turning in Form 3 and all other accompanying documents, even if you plan to defend your dissertation by June 1st. There is a reason for the deadline: as it happens with students at all levels, many doctoral candidates give themselves every minute possible before turning in their dissertations and scheduling their oral defenses. As a result, Graduate Academic Services is literally flooded with paperwork that needs processing around May 1st. It is both a tremendous responsibility and a time- consuming process to perform the logistical tasks associated with the defense. The May 1st deadline, therefore, is necessary if you plan to defend before June 1st, in order to participate in Spring commencement of that year.

5. Oral Defense Status (Dissertation Form 4)

The Department of Public Administration will distribute the date and announcement of the oral defense among graduate faculty members and the rest of the College of Law and Public Service, as well as the ULV community. Students are encouraged to bring their families and friends, as this is a public event. At the defense the candidate should provide:

- A clean copy of Dissertation Form 4 (see sample on page 25)

- An original copy of the Signature Page (to be inserted at a later date in the bound copy, see sample on page 26)

A unanimous vote of all committee members is required to pass the oral defense. In addition, the Associate Dean of Public Administration may stipulate additional requirements prior to accepting the dissertation. At the conclusion of the oral defense, the candidate may be:

- Passed, with no revisions.
- Passed, with minor revisions.
- Passed, with major revisions.
- Continued to another oral defense date, due to the significance of the required changes.
- Failed, with recommended follow-up action.

Dissertation Form 4 designates the pass/fail category earned. The student must deliver Form 4 to the Assistant Director of Academic Services after it has been signed at the conclusion of the oral defense. In case of a successful defense, the student will also deliver the signed copy of the signature page (with original signatures) after the oral defense. The Dissertation Committee Chair will contact the DPA Program Director, the Assistant Director of Academic Services, and Graduate Academic Services to notify officially that all requirements have been fulfilled and the dissertation is ready for APA style review. The signature page will remain in the student's folder until the final dissertation approval has been issued by the Dissertation Committee Chair.

6. Steps to be Taken by the Candidate after the Oral Defense

After the candidate has successfully completed the oral defense, the Assistant Director of Academic Services will forward Form 4 and the signature page to Graduate Academic Services. Most likely, the dissertation manuscript will need revisions to comply with APA style. At this point, the dissertation will be forwarded to the APA style reviewer. The candidate will need to make arrangements with Graduate Academic Services to set up the APA style review. Please [email](#) Mary Soto to coordinate the APA style review.

Expect that the APA style reviewer will have your dissertation for about three to four weeks. Graduate Academic Services will communicate with the candidate if additional revisions are needed. In that case, Graduate Academic Services will return the dissertation to the candidate for required corrections after the initial reading by the APA style reviewer. Additional reviews will need to be set up if the reviewer requires the candidate to make changes. Each additional APA review after the first one will cost the candidate an additional fee (the first review is complimentary). If the dissertation needs additional reviews and further corrections, only one unbound copy and the pages showing marked corrections need be resubmitted.

After the APA checks are completed and paid for, the candidate will re-submit the final copy of the dissertation to Graduate Academic Services. When the final corrections are completed, Graduate Academic Services will give the candidate instructions for electronic manuscript submission to ProQuest and any additional documents that will be required at this point, such as final dissertation fees, copyright form and fee, etc.

The candidate will submit a hard copy of the dissertation, along with the dissertation processing fee, to Graduate Academic Services for APA style review. The following steps after

the oral defense of the dissertation will expedite the final signing of the dissertation by the Dean of the College of Law and Public Service:

- Make the changes in your dissertation as agreed by your committee at the oral defense in a timely manner.
- Submit the dissertation in its final form, electronically, following the requirements of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition (2020) to the Assistant Director of Academic Services.
- Submit one unbound copy of the dissertation, in its final form, on plain copy paper to Graduate Academic Services.
- [Submit your manuscript to ProQuest/UMI](#) for publication.

7. Final Dissertation Approval

Once all the steps have been completed, Graduate Academic Services will forward the signature page to the Dean of the College of Law and Public Service for approval and signature. After the Dean has signed the signature page, a grade change report is sent to the Registrar's Office. This completes the dissertation process. The doctoral degree will be posted if all financial obligations to the University are fulfilled and all other program requirements have been met. Please keep in mind that all the above steps must be completed within one-year from the date of the oral defense, or the student could be subject to a new oral defense as well as an oral re-examination fee equal to one unit of tuition.

Dissertation Work Guidelines

Now that you have completed all coursework, it is time to focus on writing your dissertation. This process requires guidance from your dissertation chair to help you make adequate progress. Most importantly, it needs you to be highly organized and focused on the work ahead. Faculty are usually available to meet in person or virtually with students on a regular basis. However, feedback on any substantive work may take up to three weeks from the date of submission. Please remember that work submitted needs to be as complete as possible in order to develop efficient channels of communication and avoid unnecessary hold ups. In other words, the more complete a draft is when submitted, the more chances you will have of receiving meaningful feedback. Prepare to be flexible and understanding of the fact that faculty will have other commitments, such as classes, conferences, and travel that may require increased coordination to schedule meetings and windows to review your work. The better your communication with your dissertation chair, the more chances you will have to organize your dissertation work schedule and stay on track for graduation.

Student Professional Conduct Statement

“As a student in the College of Law and Public Service, I agree to always present myself in a professional manner and engage in conduct appropriate to a professional in my field while engaging in class or dissertation related work, whether inside or outside the classroom.”

Inappropriate, discourteous, or unprofessional conduct are determined in the professor’s sole discretion. Consequences may include a verbal or written warning, reduction in overall grade, failing or not receiving credit for the class or dissertation hours, recusal of committee chair or any other member, removal from the program, and/or referral to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

Faculty Expectations

Faculty will require students to initiate contact for setting up meeting dates and times. Students are expected to keep to the mutually agreed upon check-in meetings or communicate ahead of time any changes or unexpected conditions that may prevent students from making these meetings or skipping deadlines. Faculty will then reserve the right to reschedule at their convenience. Faculty understand that circumstances outside of your control may happen, so make sure you communicate promptly and frankly with your dissertation chair if that is the case. Please remember that faculty reserve the right to hold most communication via email if you constantly miss scheduled appointments. Moreover, for work that requires review and feedback, make sure to keep to the deadlines and agreements with your dissertation chair. Otherwise, delays may occur, and your progress may be hindered, as last-minute changes may not be swiftly accommodated.

Other Considerations

The best policy is open and timely communication with your dissertation chair. Make sure to have a list of goals you want to accomplish and an overall plan for the academic year (including summer) or at least the semester. Be sure to communicate both to your dissertation chair ahead of time, if possible. While it is up to each individual faculty to determine the frequency and length of

time with which they are able to meet students, you should make sure to communicate your needs, but do not feel discouraged if your requests cannot be accommodated swiftly.

To maximize efficiency in your own work process, avoid submitting outlines or a couple of pages of work, expecting your dissertation chair to offer substantive comments or suggestions every few days, as this may not be possible. For any requested changes from your dissertation chair, make sure to submit a separate document that outlines the changes you made and the pages in your draft that were modified as a result. Each faculty has a preference on how to receive and review requested changes, so make sure to learn the specific expectations of your dissertation chair before submitting your drafts for review. Regardless, please remember that the more details you provide about completing requested changes or even the reasons why you did not make the changes or address comments, the easier it will be for your dissertation chair to review your work and return it in a timely manner.

Dissertation Work in the Summer

Additional issues need to be observed for the summer months. As you may be aware, faculty in the Department of Public Administration are on a 10-month contract, from August 15 to June 15, each academic year. This time is usually taken by the faculty to conduct their own research, participate in conferences, provide service to the profession, and as downtime. While this may seem like a limitation to your plans for steady progress on your dissertation, it does not have to be the case. The faculty are committed to your success and to offer the necessary direction for you to achieve your goals. As such, during the summer months you will be able to keep working with your dissertation chair, under slightly modified conditions.

Expectations for Faculty and Students During the Summer Months

From June to August, faculty will be available to meet with students, at minimum, for a thirty-minute check-in on a monthly basis. You can also expect to receive feedback on any work within three weeks from the date of submission. Please remember the requirements for work submitted outlined before. As mentioned above, while time and availability may be limited, faculty nonetheless will be able to work with you over the summer months. Please remember, however, that rescheduling meetings might be more difficult over the summer months.

Policy on Academic Honesty

The faculty in the Department of Public Administration expects from students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, submitting the same work in more than one class without receiving advance written authorization from instructors, using websites that charge fees or require uploading of course materials to obtain exam solutions or assignments completed by others and present the work as their own. The university, college, department, and faculty expect students to write their own papers and to provide full and accurate citations for any specific ideas or language—words, phrases, sentences—taken from outside sources, including the internet. During the dissertation process it is possible, and even expected, that students will use their own work from the time spent in the program, but it is the student's responsibility to ensure the appropriate use of such resources. Please remember, when in doubt, consult with your faculty member or dissertation chair.

As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves at least one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Plagiarism is taking credit for someone else's work, whether deliberately or unintentionally. This includes but is not limited to turning in all or part of an essay or the dissertation written by someone other than yourself -a friend, an editor or ghost writer, an internet source, or using artificial intelligence (AI) resources, etc.- and claiming it as your own. This also includes using information or ideas from research material without citing the source, any part or component of the dissertation not properly attributed to the author(s) or material that has been plagiarized at any level. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings under the College and/or the University's policy on [Academic Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Policy for Participation in Commencement Ceremony

Prior to May 1st of the year of [Commencement](#):

- Completion of all program components and requirements.
- Submission of Oral Defense Announcement, Dissertation Abstract, and Dissertation Form 3 requesting approval for the oral defense to the Assistant Director of Academic Services and Graduate Academic Services.
- Be in good academic and financial standing.
- Apply for graduation and pay graduation fee.
- If you plan on attending commencement, complete the Commencement Form and pay the Cap and Gown rental fee. This is not required if you do not plan to attend commencement.
- Contact Graduate Academic Services to ensure that you are cleared for graduation.

Policies on Continuous Registration, Inactive Status, and Leave of Absence

Students will be considered for [Advancement to Candidacy](#) at the end of their third year of coursework through the appropriate faculty procedures. When a student meets the criteria established by the department, the faculty will notify Graduate Academic Services, who in turn will inform the student if any outstanding action or program requirement is needed for the Application for Advanced Candidacy. If you are an international student, please make sure to follow any additional guidelines for [International Students and Engagement](#).

1. Continuous Registration

Doctoral students will register for PADM 697C (Dissertation I) for their 7th and 8th semesters and pay for one unit of tuition each semester. Students who have not completed the dissertation requirements at the end of the 8th semester will be required to register for PADM 697D (Dissertation II) and pay for two units of tuition each succeeding semester. Continuous registration is mandatory until all requirements for the degree have been fulfilled (including the periods of dissertation review required by your committee and the APA readers), approval from the Dean is received, and the degree is posted.

2. Inactive Status

Doctoral students who allow their registration to lapse for two consecutive years will be placed on inactive status. This means that the grades for Dissertation I and II will be changed from IP (In Progress) to NCR (No Credit). The Dissertation Committee, if constituted, will dissolve and all other University services will cease. Students seeking reinstatement need to [email](#) Graduate Academic Services or call 909.448.4011.

3. Leave of Absence from the DPA Program

Doctoral students may request a [leave of absence](#) if: 1) the student is in good academic standing, and 2) the reasons for the request are financial issues, medical problems and/or military duties. Requests for leave of absence must be done in writing and would need the approval of the Program Director. With a leave of absence, a student may be absent from the University no more than two semesters (consecutive or alternate). Please be aware that students will need to go through the [Graduate Appeals Process](#) for such requests to be granted, as this is not a department decision.

During the leave of absence, the student is placed in inactive status. This action stops the maximum period allowed for completion of the program. No tuition will be charged and, while on leave of absence, the student will not receive any academic or administrative services from the University's faculty or staff members. Students must clear all financial obligations before a leave of absence can be granted. ULV policies prevent requests for a retroactive leave of absence to be considered.

Use of the APA Publication Manual

The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition, has been approved as the style guide to be used by doctoral students at the University of La Verne. Students need to be knowledgeable of the contents of the manual as they write their dissertation. However, Graduate Academic Services also has specific requirements that are not in the APA Publication Manual. Those modifications are available in the [APA/ULV Guide](#) for graduate students.

1. Abstract of the Dissertation

The abstract should consist of one paragraph of 250 words or less, which includes a well-structured summary outlining the most important points of your study:

- The first component should be a brief statement of the purpose of your research (covering what your study is about and the reason(s) why it is important.
- The second component is the methodology, or how the research was conducted.
- Third, include your main research findings.
- The fourth component describes the implications of your work for the larger body of academic literature.
- Last, include key words that help identify and classify your work.

See a sample on page 19.

Sample of Oral Defense Announcement for DPA Dissertation

University of La Verne

Defense of a Doctoral Dissertation

Doctor of Public Administration Program

Title

(This field can be as many lines as is needed)

by

Author

Day of Week, Month, Year

Time

Location

Examining Committee:

Dissertation Chair: Name, Degree

Committee: Name, Degree
Name, Degree

College of Law and Public Service

Accessibility & Accommodations:

If you require a reasonable accommodation to participate, please [contact](#) Melinda Davenport, Associate Director of Administration and Faculty Support, or call 909.460.2035 at least a week prior to the event.

Sample of Abstract for DPA Dissertation

DIFFUSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTIONISM: SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAGS BAN
POLICY IN CALIFORNIA.*
(TITLE IN ALL CAPS)

By

Name, DPA

Supervising Professor: Name, Degree

Since the introduction of policy diffusion theory to understand how and why policies diffuse and are adopted across jurisdictions, regions, or countries, policy adoption behavior, diffusion patterns, and the mechanism of policy diffusion have been extensively studied and applied to other policy fields. Despite growing awareness of environmental concerns and policy diffusion in policy research, environmental policy diffusion has received less attention than other policies due to ambiguous economic benefits and the inability to observe short-term effects. City-level policy diffusion has also received less attention than state-level policy diffusion due to the often-similar socioeconomic and political characteristics under state and county governments. This study integrates Social Network Analysis (SNA), Geographic Information System (GIS), and Event History Analysis (EHA) to illuminate California's city-level environmental policy diffusion mechanisms. Empirical evidence shows that policy is diffused geographically through a channel of communication. Therefore, SNA and GIS provide useful analytical instruments for city-level environmental policy diffusion research, and EHA completes the argument on city-level environmental policy diffusion. This study's findings emphasize the importance of network structures, geographical proximity, and diffusion mechanisms in environmental policy diffusion. This study demonstrates that California's environmental policy diffusion followed the imitation mechanism. This study also finds that political, whether citizens prefer Democratic presidential candidates, and geographic features, proximity to the Pacific Ocean and having neighboring cities that adopted the policy, positively affect environmental policy adoption and diffusion in California. An interdisciplinary approach using SNA, GIS, and EHA provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing and understanding city-level environmental policy diffusion.

Keywords: Environmental Policy, Policy diffusion, local government

Abstract must follow the guidelines of page 17.

***Credit: Sekwen Kim, Ph.D.**

Sample of Dissertation Cover Page

UNIVERSITY OF LA VERNE

La Verne, California

TITLE

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of Public Administration

Name

College of Law and Public Service

Department of Public Administration

Month, Year

DPA Chair Request Form



DISSERTATION COMMITTEE – DPA PROGRAM CHAIR REQUEST FORM
--

Please [email](#) this form directly to the DPA Program Director, no later than May 31st.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

You must provide a brief description of your intended dissertation topic, identify two faculty members (as first and second choice), and provide a rationale for each selection.

Brief Description of Dissertation Topic:

Selection 1: _____ **Choice Description:**

Selection 2: _____ **Choice Description:**

The form will be reviewed by the Program Director, who will approve or deny your request based on the following factors: faculty availability, appropriateness of fit, time concerns, and faculty acceptance of the request. Incomplete submissions will be returned without review.

DPA Dissertation Form 1

University of
La Verne

**DISSERTATION FORM 1 – DPA PROGRAM
DISSERTATION COMMITTEE**

Name: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Request for approval of the following dissertation committee:

Committee Chair (Must be from approved list. Exceptions must have prior approval of the DPA Program Director and the Associate Dean of Public Administration):

Name Signature

Committee Members

Name Signature

Name Signature

NOTE TO CANDIDATE – The above committee is a recommendation to Graduate Academic Services. The DPA Program Director, in consultation with the Associate Dean of Public Administration, reserves the right to assign or realign committee members based upon load and availability of individual members. Student must be in good academic standing and be current in registration.

APPROVAL OF DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

The faculty listed above have been approved to serve on the dissertation committee:

Signed:

DPA Program Director

Associate Dean of Public Administration

DPA Dissertation Form 2

University of
La Verne

**DISSERTATION FORM 2 – DPA PROGRAM
APPROVAL OF STUDY PROPOSAL**

Name: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

The undersigned have reviewed and approved my formal study proposal:

Committee Chair

Committee Member

Committee Member

IRB Approval: Exempt Expedited Standard
No Human Subjects Involved

NOTE TO CANDIDATE – Please attach a copy of your approved proposal and the IRB approval letter to receive Form 2 authorization.

NOTICE OF APPROVAL OF STUDY PROPOSAL

Signed: _____
DPA Program Director

Date: _____

DPA Dissertation Form 3



DISSERTATION FORM 3 – DPA PROGRAM APPROVAL FOR ORAL DEFENSE

Name: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

The undersigned have reviewed and approved the oral defense announcement and the final draft of the dissertation. We hereby declare the candidate ready for Oral Defense:

	Committee Chair
	Committee Member
	Committee Member

The following arrangements have been agreed for the Oral Defense:

Date	Time	Location
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NOTE TO CANDIDATE – The following documents must be emailed to [Mary Soto](#):

1. Application for graduation and fee	2. Cap and Gown order form and fee
3. Final draft of the dissertation	4. Abstract/Oral Defense Announcement
5. Map to the site (only needed if Oral Defense is held outside of the CLPS Campus)	

This form must be submitted at least three weeks prior to the scheduled Oral Defense. Additionally, ONLY if you plan to participate in graduation in the Spring semester, you must submit it no later than May 1st of the year you plan to graduate.

NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR ORAL DEFENSE

The Department of Public Administration has received your request to schedule the oral defense of your dissertation and, finding that all requirements to date have been fulfilled, hereby approves your request.

Signed: _____
DPA Program Director

DPA Dissertation Form 4



**DISSERTATION FORM 4 – DPA PROGRAM
ORAL DEFENSE STATUS**

Name: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

This is to certify that on _____ the candidate has:
Date

- Passed, with no revisions needed.
- Passed, with minor revisions needed.
- Passed, with major revisions needed (please attach comments)
- Not passed, defense to be continued (please attach comments)
- Failed (please attach comments)

Committee Chair

Committee Member

Committee Member

Received:

Final Approval:

DPA Program Director

Associate Dean of Public Administration

Date: _____

NOTE TO CANDIDATE – ULV policy requires that students must not exceed an eight-year time limit for completion of the DPA program. Please remember that students have one-year from the date of the Oral Defense to complete their dissertation process and obtain final approval from the Associate Dean of Public Administration. If the student does not complete this process within this one-year period, a new Oral Defense must be scheduled, and the student will cover an additional oral re-examination fee equal to one unit.

Sample of DPA Dissertation Signature Page

DISSERTATION BY

Name

Signature

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Committee Chair

Committee Member

Committee Member

Approved:

Dean - College of Law and Public Service

Date: _____

DPA Dissertation Guidelines Availability

These guidelines, as well as all forms, can be downloaded from [Blackboard](#). The electronic files are posted under the “DPA Community - Dissertation Guidelines” and on “All But Dissertation – DPA - Dissertation Guidelines.”

Unable to access Blackboard? Please [email](#) the Unified Service Desk or call 909.448.4130

Alternatively, you can also access the DPA Dissertation Guidelines [here](#).

For additional questions, please contact:

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