Proposal/Dissertation Review Checklist

Start Date:_____Date to be returned_____

Name of Committee Chair:_____ _____Committee Member 1_____Committee Member 2_____

Manuscript Title:_____ _____

Abstract:
- ❑ Statement of the problem and why it is important to address it is clear.
- ❑ Description of who are concerned with the problem and the context is included.
- ❑ Research method used to study the problem is explained, including data collection and sampling of subjects.
- ❑ A brief explanation of theories to support research is provided.
- ❑ The main findings/results and what conclusions/implications can be drawn from them is stated.

Introduction/Statement of the Problem:
- ❑ A brief exposition of the context and/or background on your topic and why it is important is provided, using supporting literature.
- ❑ Description of who are concerned with the problem and the context is included.
- ❑ How pervasive the problem is and how it has been addressed are discussed.
- ❑ A problem statement is provided that addresses the issue under study and the gap in the existing literature that you seek to fill.
- ❑ A statement of purpose is provided and the position you are taking is explicitly stated.
- ❑ The specific part you are researching and the methodology are briefly discussed through the purpose statement.
- ❑ The central research question(s) is (are) introduced, perhaps as part of the purpose statement.
- ❑ Definition of terms is provided (for quantitative studies).
- ❑ Hypotheses are provided either in introduction and/or at the start of the methodology section for quantitative studies.
- ❑ Relevance/significance of topic: a brief explanation of theories to support the research is provided.
- ❑ A brief transitional sentence or paragraph provides a conclusion for the section and objectives describing the organization of the proposal.

Literature Review:
- ❑ Historical issues, context or background on topic are expended upon.
- ❑ How others have conceptualized the problem is addressed.
- ❑ Previous research, significant findings, relevant or current studies are discussed.
- ❑ Factors/variables that explain the problem are introduced.
- ❑ Theories used to explain the problem are explored.
- ❑ What is lacking and has not been significantly researched is addressed.
- ❑ A brief transitional sentence or paragraph provides a conclusion for the section and reiterates the research question/purpose for the study to lead into the methodology.

Note: The Research questions and sub-questions can be directly incorporated into the methodology section.

Research Questions:
- ❑ A statement of purpose is provided or reiterated.
- ❑ Research questions or research objectives (for qualitative/inductive process) are stated.
- ❑ Hypotheses are formulated (for quantitative studies); each hypothesis relates to the research questions; a null hypothesis is provided for each hypothesis.

Methodology:

- ❑ An explanation of research method and design to be utilized, using supporting literature is provided; distinguish between different approaches within the same research method and advocate for why you chose the one you did.
- ❑ Data collection techniques (field research, participant observation, surveys, experiment, etc…) are detailed.
- ❑ Instruments used to gather data are discussed, including the kinds of questions used—surveys (including validity and reliability issues) or interview protocols.
- ❑ Quantitative data collection and analysis:
  - o For quantitative methods, provide an operational definition of concepts, variables, units of analysis, population, sampling method and sample size.
  - o Clearly delineate statistical data analysis: Descriptive statistics; hypothesis testing (one sample, two samples, ANOVA, Chi-Square); bivariate measures of association (nominal, ordinal, interval-ratio); correlation; or regression.
  - o Discuss analysis software to be used if applicable (e.g. SPSS, Stata, MINITAB, SAS, Excel spreadsheet)
  - o Discuss ethical issues relating with research with human subjects, how you plan to address those in your research design, and other IRB concerns.

  - ❑ Qualitative data collection and analysis:
    - o Discuss context for the research, participants/subjects recruitment, sample size, type of sampling used, and researcher biases.
    - o Provide data analysis procedures (e.g. open coding, axial coding, selective coding, in vivo codes, preexisting; thematic analysis, horizonalization, categories/categorical aggregation, etc…).
    - o Discuss analysis software to be used if applicable (e.g. NVivo, Atlas.ti, Nud.ist, HyperRESEARCH, MAXqda)
    - o Discuss ethical issues relating with research with human subjects, how you plan to address those in your research design, and other IRB concerns.
- ❑ Tentative timeline is outlined; remember to include time for the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process.
- ❑ A brief transitional sentence or paragraph provides a conclusion for the section and leads into the next section.

Results/Findings:

- ❑ Narrative is limited to describing results/findings.
- ❑ For quantitative, relevant numbers and percentages that make up your sample or that describe your variables are accurately stated (descriptive statistics).
- ❑ Data analysis—results/findings are described accurately.
- ❑ Tables/graphs accurately describe and relate to the narrative of the findings/results.
- ❑ Quoted and/or paraphrased statements are used to support summary of findings (qualitative).

Discussion/Significance of study/Implications/Conclusions:

- ❑ The meaning of results/findings are clearly explained or interpreted.
- ❑ Results and findings are related to literature review on subject matter.
- ❑ Conclusions drawn are justified by the results.
- ❑ How the study will advance knowledge within your field of study is addressed.
- ❑ Addressing limitations—problems with results/findings are identified and implications assessed.
- ❑ Practice-related contributions are discussed.
- ❑ Implications, questions or directions for future research are addressed.

Appendices Suggestions:

- ❑ Provide sample survey or interview protocol.
- ❑ For qualitative, provide a log of activities.
- ❑ For quantitative, provide explanation of coding schemes/code book or sheet.

Content/Organization:
- ❑ Subtopics for sections are missing/titles of sections are inappropriate.
- ❑ Summaries/conclusions at the end of majors sections are provided.
- ❑ Paragraphs are organized into coherent themes.
- ❑ Sections are organized into coherent themes.

Grammar and Mechanics:
- ❑ Formatting of paper must is consistent with style guidelines.
- ❑ In-text citation is consistent.
- ❑ Documentation in the reference page is correct and consistent.
- ❑ Sentence structure/fragments/run-on sentences/subject & verb agreement errors are addressed.
- ❑ Spelling/missing word/word choice errors are addressed.
- ❑ Correctness of punctuation is addressed.

Comments on content and organization:
- ❑ Some of your ideas are good in that you were able to relate your analysis to the subject matter.
- ❑ Some of your ideas are good, but you were not able to sufficiently provide clear analyses by connecting definitions/explanations to the subject matter.
- ❑ Avoid paragraphs of less **than 4 sentences** by providing a topic sentence and development of ideas.
- ❑ Break up page-long paragraphs into manageable paragraphs with clear topics.
- ❑ The paper did not provide sufficient analysis (i.e. connecting theory to explanations of the subject matter).
- ❑ The conclusion is rushed or did not provide a moral or justification for the paper.
- ❑ The title for the paper is missing/ subtopics for sections are missing/ titles of sections are inappropriate.
- ❑ The formatting of the paper needs work: titles centered & capitalized/ subtopics flushed left/ indented paragraphs
- ❑ The paper is limited to a summary of the subject matter.
- ❑ This paper did not follow the outline for the assignment.
- ❑ **WARNING! Some phrases/ paragraphs have been plagiarized. Please revise, following appropriate APA guidelines for citations.**

Comments on Grammar and Mechanics:
- ❑ Please use the APA style guide to help you pay close attention to the details of proper in-text citation and referencing of sources—avoid winging it!
- ❑ In formal writing, avoid using "I," "we" (first person), or the general "you"; use third person (*he, she, it, one*, or the appropriate common nouns).
- ❑ There are punctuation problems in which either the wrong punctuation is used or the appropriate punctuation is missing.
- ❑ Some sentences are much too long; several ideas are jammed into one run-on sentence.
- ❑ Some sentences have no subjects or some are fragments.
- ❑ There are many choppy sentences, which result in confusing statements.
- ❑ Words of titles (except for prepositions/articles) must be capitalized.
- ❑ *Dropped* quotes: quotes are not **properly** introduced with signal phrases, explained or punctuated.
- ❑ Subject and verb agreement errors occur.
- ❑ Spelling/ missing word/ word choice errors occur.
- ❑ The reference page is missing/ is not properly formatted.

Additional Comments:

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Rubric developed by Claire Michele Rice. Research method contents adapted from Mary Williams (2003), "Notes on Senior Project," Florida Memorial University, Miami , FL; Neil J. Salkind. *Exploring Research*, 5th Edition (2003), Pearson/Prentice Hall. Adopted for journal review process by Florida Education Fund (2005).

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