Meeting Milestones: Assessing the Effect of a Dissertation Proposal Development Course on the Quality and Timeliness of Dissertation Proposals and Defenses

Creighton University Office of Academic Excellent and Assessment SOTL Grant
Submitted November 2015

Abstract

The development of a doctoral dissertation is a two-phase process. First, students must develop a quality proposal and successfully defend it before a committee of experts. After a successful proposal, students must conduct the remainder of their research, write a quality dissertation based on this research, and defend the final product before their committee. This project analyzes the effect of a new proposal construction course on the quality and timeliness of both dissertation proposals and final dissertations in the EdD Program in Interdisciplinary Leadership. The researchers plan to use a mixed-methods approach to inform this effort. Specifically, the researchers will survey students that participate in the course about their experiences and to analyze and compare data regarding the length of time it takes students to reach the proposal and dissertation defense milestones. We also plan to interview faculty members that teach the course regarding their perceptions of the course and its value to student research efforts—specifically quality and timely completion of the dissertation. The results will be used to further improve the course and to subsequently improve students’ learning experiences and dissertations.

Principal Investigator
James R. Martin Jr., Ph.D.
EdD Program in Interdisciplinary Leadership
402-280-3413
JimMartin@creighton.com

Co-Investigators
Leah Georges, Ph.D., M.L.S.
EdD Program in Interdisciplinary Leadership
Phone: 402-280-3414
LeahGeorges@creighton.edu

Gretchen Oltman, J.D., Ph.D.
EdD Program in Interdisciplinary Leadership
Phone# 402-280-3418
GretchenOltman@creighton.edu