

Family Social Science Doctoral Program: Two-Study Format Dissertation

A two-study format dissertation consists of two original scholarly empirical articles. The studies may come from one or more primary data sources (i.e., a dataset created specifically for the dissertation), and/or one or more secondary data sources (i.e., pre-existing data). If the studies are coming from the same dataset, it is up to the committee to ensure that the two studies are distinct (e.g., two identical studies that differ only by their dependent variable, or two different qualitative questions addressed in the same interview or source of qualitative data, would not suffice and would be unlikely to be published as distinct articles. The two studies may build on one another or be connected by a broader theme (e.g., factors contributing to adolescent mental health). The format provided below should be seen as a broad guideline with elements that are anticipated to be part of your proposal and not mandatory requirements. **You should be in communication with your advisor and committee to tailor these guidelines to your specific needs and project.**

Proposal

The proposal should include an introduction (Section 1) that provides an overall theoretical rationale, a statement of the problem, how it will be divided into two studies, and how the two studies address the overall research question. Following the introduction (Section 1), the student will provide a fully developed section for each planned study. Section 1 will be broader and Section 2 and Section 3 will be more in-depth and specific to that study's research question. Each section will include the following:

Section 1/Chapter 1 (approximately 2-5 pages)

- Introduction to the overall topic covered in the dissertation
 - Statement of the overall problem
 - Significance
- Theoretical rationale
- Research question
- Summary of each study and how each study will address the research question

Section 2/Chapter 2: Study 1

- Introduction
 - Literature review
 - Theory
 - Current Study Section
- Methods
- Plan of Analyses

Section 3/Chapter 3: Study 2

- Introduction
 - Literature review
 - Theory
 - Current Study Section
- Methods
- Plan of Analyses

Tables and Appendices (as needed)
References

Defense

The final dissertation submitted to the committee for defense must include the following:

All that was included in the proposal (Sections 1, 2, and 3), plus

- **Results for each study** (add to Section 2/Chapter 2 & Section 3/Chapter 3 respectively - see final dissertation format that follows)
- **Discussion** for each study including limitations, implications for research, policy, and/or practice for each (add to Section 2/Chapter 2 & Section 3/Chapter 3 respectively - see final dissertation format that follows)
- **Section 4/Chapter 4** (see final dissertation format that follows; approximately 2-5 pages)
 - Synthesis that *integrates the results from the two studies* in response to the research question posed in Chapter 1
 - Broader implications for research, policy, and/or practice

Final dissertation format (Please refer to Graduate School guidelines for final formatting instructions; there is a link provided in the FSoS Graduate Handbook)

- Title page, acknowledgements, abstract, table of contents, etc.
- Chapter 1: Integrative introduction
- Chapter 2: Study 1
 - Introduction
 - Literature review/theory
 - Methods
 - Results
 - Discussion
- Chapter 3: Study 2
 - Introduction
 - Literature review/theory
 - Methods
 - Results
 - Discussion
- Chapter 4: Integrative synthesis of findings from both studies and implications
- Tables, appendices, references, etc.