The WSU Doctoral Student Experience

Understanding the Dissertation Writing Process and Doctoral Student Experience at WSU

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. This study will help us better understand the process students go through during the final stage of their doctoral education. As doctoral training in the United States continues to evolve, it is important that we learn more about students' perspectives and identify any obstacles that may stand in the way of successfully completing one's dissertation.

To begin the questionnaire, enter the access code we sent to you. Please use the survey's "Back" and "Next" buttons (not your browser's back button) to navigate through the questionnaire. Your responses will be saved as you provide them, so if you need to stop before you've completed the questionnaire, you can continue where you left off when you re-login to the survey. Once you've completed the final question, click the "Submit" button. You are welcome to review your answers before you submit them.

Please, enter your Access Code listed in the message we sent to you:

Submit Personal Access Code

Contact us sesrcweb1@wsu.edu 1-800-833-0867 - © SESRC 2013
Social and Economic Sciences Research Center, 130 Wilson Hall, Washington State University, Pullman, WA, 99164-4014 USA

Question 1 of 45
In what year did you officially complete your preliminary examinations?

Question 2 of 45
Have you already selected a specific dissertation topic?

- No
- Yes

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Question 3 of 45

Which one of the following best describes your current status in the dissertation process?

- Have not yet begun any research or writing for your dissertation
- Working on a dissertation proposal
- Have completed a dissertation proposal
- Are in the early stages of research/writing for your dissertation
- Are about halfway completed with the research/writing for your dissertation
- Are mostly completed with the research/writing for your dissertation
- Have fully completed your dissertation

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Question 4 of 45

Please type the name of the primary field of your dissertation research.

Name of primary field

Now, choose the code from this list that best describes the primary field of your dissertation research.

- Number of primary field [Click here for list of codes]

If you have a secondary field for your dissertation research, list the name and number.

Name of secondary field
- Number of secondary field [Click here for list of codes]
- No, I do not have a secondary field for my dissertation research

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Select the category that best represents your field:

- Research and Administration
- Teacher Education
- Teaching Fields
- Other Education

More Engineering Codes:

- Aerospace, Astronautical & Astronautical Engineering
- Agricultural Engineering
- Bioengineering & Biomedical Engineering
- Ceramic Sciences Engineering
- Chemical Engineering
- Civil Engineering
- Communications Engineering
- Computer Engineering
- Electrical, Electronics & Communications Engineering
- Engineering Management & Administration
- Engineering Mechanics
- Engineering Physics

Select the category that matches your field:

- History
- Foreign Languages and Literature
- Letters
- Other Humanities

More Humanities Codes:
Question 4b of 45

Do you have additional fields of your dissertation research?

- No
- Yes

Question 4c of 45

Please list the names and numbers of these additional fields.

Name of third field

- Number of third field (Click here for list of codes)

Name of fourth field

- Number of fourth field (Click here for list of codes)

Question 5 of 45

Is any part of your dissertation research explicitly directed at solving a specific real-world problem or problems?

- No
- Yes
Question 6 of 45
Do you consider your dissertation research to be interdisciplinary?
- No
- Yes
- Not sure

Question 7 of 45
Is any part of your dissertation research funded by a research grant, fellowship, or scholarship (of any type)?
- No
- Yes

Question 8 of 45
Were any of these funding sources awarded to: (check no or yes for each)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yourself</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your primary advisor/committee chair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another committee member/advisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone else, please specify:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Question 9 of 45
Which one of the following statements would you say best describes your dissertation research?
- My research is grounded within a single discipline
- My research is primarily grounded within a single discipline, but I occasionally use elements from other disciplines
- My research draws significantly from two or more disciplines

Question 10 of 45
If your research draws significantly from two or more disciplines, please list each of these disciplines.
- Discipline one
- Discipline two
- Discipline three
- All other disciplines

Question 11 of 45
If your research draws significantly from two or more disciplines, would you say that the multiple disciplines included in your research:
- Are primarily used in a way that maintains each discipline’s unique perspective
- Are primarily intermingled, synthesized, fused, or integrated in a way that makes your approach distinct from those typically found in any of the disciplines you draw from
Question 12 of 45
A particularly important issue we are trying to better understand is the variety of different ways in which research may or may not incorporate multiple fields or disciplines. For the following questions, please think about whether your dissertation research fits these descriptions.

Is your dissertation research focused on a problem or question that is beyond the scope of a single field?
- No
- Yes

Question 13 of 45
Does the nature of your dissertation research require you to collaborate with individuals whose expertise is in fields other than your own?
- No
- Yes

Question 14 of 45
Do the articles, journals, and/or books you cite in your dissertation research:
- All come from one field of study
- Mostly come from one field, but a few are from other field(s)
- Come extensively from more than one field
Question 15 of 45
Do the theories, concepts, and/or perspectives you use to shape your dissertation research questions:
- All come from one field of study
- Mostly come from one field, but a few are from other field(s)
- Come extensively from more than one field

Question 16 of 45
Do the methods, tools, techniques, and/or data used in your dissertation research:
- All come from one field of study
- Mostly come from one field, but a few are from other field(s)
- Come extensively from more than one field

Question 17 of 45
Will the implications of your dissertation research be relevant/applicable to one field or multiple fields?
- One field
- Multiple fields
Question 18 of 45
Have you either presented, or plan to present, your dissertation research at conferences that are designed to bring together researchers from multiple fields?
- Yes
- No

Question 19 of 45
Have you either published, or think you might publish, your dissertation research in a journal (or other outlet) that speaks to multiple fields?
- Yes
- No

Question 20 of 45
Would you say that your dissertation research modifies (alters) elements of multiple fields in order to create common ground between them?
- Yes
- No

Please explain your answer to the above question.
Question 21 of 45

Next, we’d like to ask a few questions about your impressions and experiences in your doctoral program.

What is the name of the WSU department, program, center, or committee that supervises your doctoral studies?

Department/centr/committee/program

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Question 22 of 45

How much training would you say your doctoral program has provided you in each of the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>A Little</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>A Great Deal</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formulating original research questions</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing and conducting data analysis</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing and teaching your own classes</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing and delivering presentations at conferences or meetings</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing and submitting research manuscripts for publication</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing and submitting grant proposals</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing job application materials</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewing for jobs</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Question 23 of 45

How would you rate the guidance your program provides to its doctoral students for each of the following issues?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finding an advisor</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forming a committee</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming obstacles to successful degree completion</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding appropriate balance between work/school and personal/family life</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 24 of 45
To what extent does each of the following statements describe the students in your doctoral program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not At All</th>
<th>A Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A Great Deal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The students are supportive of one another</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is high morale amongst students</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are confident about their future job prospects</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 25 of 45
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your doctoral program at WSU?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Question 26 of 45
Which one of the following best describes your doctoral program?

- Your program encourages students to take courses in other departments
- Your program neither encourages nor discourages students from taking courses in other departments
- Your program discourages students from taking courses in other departments
Question 27 of 45
Are any of your doctoral committee members from departments other than your own?
- No
- Yes --> Please list which department(s): 

Question 28 of 45
Is your doctoral program housed within or linked to a research center or research institute?
- No
- Yes
- Not sure

Question 29 of 45
Is your doctoral program considered to be an interdisciplinary program?
- No
- Yes
- Not sure
Question 30 of 45

And now a few questions about the degree you will be earning from your doctoral program.

What is the field of study that your doctoral degree will be awarded in?

Primary field of study

Next >>

Question 31 of 45

Are you earning a minor or additional degree (in another field) in conjunction with your doctorate?

- No
- Yes --> Please list the degree type and the field of study:

Next >>

Question 32 of 45

In what year (approximately) do you expect to graduate and receive your doctoral degree?

YYYY

Next >>

Question 33 of 45

Have you faced any obstacles to completing your degree in the timeframe you originally intended?

- No
- Yes
Question 34 of 45
Please describe the obstacle(s) that have delayed the completion of your doctorate.

Question 35 of 45
While completing coursework for your doctoral degree, about how many graduate courses have you taken outside of your program or department?

- None
- 1-3 courses
- 4-6 courses
- 7 or more courses
We would also like to learn more about the sources of financial support related to your doctoral education.

Which one of the following has been your primary source of financial support while working on your doctorate?

- Fellowship, scholarship, or grant
- Teaching assistantship
- Research assistantship
- Other assistantship
- Traineeship, internship, or clinical residency
- Loans (from any source)
- Personal savings or personal earnings (other than from sources listed above)
- Spouse’s, partner’s, or family’s earnings or savings
- Employer reimbursement/assistance
- Foreign (non-U.S.) support
- Other – please specify: ____________________

Have you taken out loans (of any type) to finance your education, including loans for undergraduate and master’s training (if applicable)?

- No
- Yes

How concerned are you about your ability to pay off student loans once you graduate?

- Very concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Not very concerned
- Not at all concerned
Question 39 of 45

Has the extent of your loan debt caused you to regret your decision to pursue your doctoral degree?

- Yes, very much so
- Yes, a little
- No, not at all

Question 40 of 45

Have you received tuition remission (a tuition waiver) for any of your WSU doctoral studies?

- No, have no had any tuition waived
- Yes, a portion of tuition has been waived
- Yes, all tuition has been waived

Question 41 of 45

Has any of your doctoral research or graduate educational funding come from the National Science Foundation’s Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship (IGERT) program?

- No
- Yes
- Not sure
Finally, just a few more questions.

Have you received a master's degree (e.g. MS, MA, MBA) or equivalent?

- No
- Yes --> Please list the field(s) of study: ______________________________

What was the primary field of study for your first bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS, AB) or equivalent?

Field of study: ______________________________

Are you currently located on or near a WSU campus, or are you working on your degree remotely from another location?

- On/near WSU campus
- Somewhere else

Thank you for completing this survey. If you have any additional thoughts about any of the above topics or the survey itself, please share them here:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
You are about to finish this survey.
To submit the survey click "Submit survey" button below.
To review your answers starting from the beginning click "Review your answers" button.

Submit survey  Review your answers

You completed questionnaire has been received.
Thank You