

Doctoral Program

Ph.D. in Leadership Policy Manual



Mission

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To learn. To love. To serve.

Guided by Franciscan values and the ideal of “knowledge joined with love” and rooted in the Catholic and liberal arts traditions, Alvernia is a rigorous, caring and inclusive learning community committed to academic excellence and to being and fostering:

- broadly educated, lifelong learners
- reflective professionals and engaged citizens
- ethical leaders with moral courage

Vision

To Be a Distinctive Franciscan University, Committed to Personal and Social Transformation Through Integrated, Community-Based, Inclusive and Ethical Learning.

Integrated Learning—combining liberal arts and professional education and blending rigorous inquiry, practical experience and personal reflection in the classroom, on campus and in society.

Community-Based Learning—engaging the local, regional and global communities as partners in education and service.

Inclusive Learning—welcoming people of diverse beliefs and backgrounds; responsive to the educational needs of recent high school graduates, working adults and established professionals and senior citizens; respectful and self-critical in our dialogue about differences in values and perspectives.

Ethical Learning—challenging individuals to be values-based leaders by developing habits of the mind, habits of the heart and habits of the soul.



Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership (Ph.D.)

General Objectives

The goal of the program is to provide an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary focus that requires a critical examination of contemporary theories of leadership within a value-based framework. The program demands academic rigor that engages students in the systematic analysis of research and current theories of leadership; it will also prepare individuals to contribute to the knowledge of leadership and function as agents of change in a contemporary and diverse society. Specific goals of the program include:

- To develop at the doctoral level a cadre of talented leaders who aspire to or currently hold positions with leadership responsibilities in educational, community or corporate organizations.
- To develop individuals who can analyze and evaluating various leadership theories and their relevance to existing and emerging research findings.
- To make contributions to the body of knowledge in educational, community and corporate leadership.
- To advance the capabilities of individuals to critically analyze research findings and their implications for leaders within organizational contexts.
- To develop professionals who are capable of visionary leadership in generating institutional and social policies that acknowledge and respond to the contributions of diversity.
- To enhance the ability of individuals to critically examine ethical issues that impact leaders within an increasingly complex and pluralistic global environment.
- To promote social justice and social responsibility as a leader by increasing understanding of policies, legal constraints and socioeconomic conditions that contribute to social, economic and political inequities and that impact organizations.
- To have students make scholarly contributions to their area of concentration through original research that focuses on either advanced qualitative or quantitative methods.

The three areas of concentration within the Ph.D. in Leadership are Corporate Leadership, Educational Leadership and Community Leadership

■ **Corporate Leadership** will prepare professionals for leadership positions within various fields of business. Through coursework in advanced research and scholarship in corporate leadership, this program will enable executives to continue to develop their leadership talents and research capabilities and understand their transformative role and responsibilities as servant leaders. Exploring global issues, opportunities and the challenges of leading a workforce with individuals from diverse backgrounds will contribute to their effectiveness and ability to be visionary agents of change.

■ **Educational Leadership** will prepare educators to meet the challenges of contemporary school leadership at all levels of administration, including higher education. Through coursework in advanced research and scholarship, this program will enable individuals to develop their leadership talents and research capabilities, as well as to understand their responsibilities as agents of change within an increasingly complex and demanding educational system that is expected to meet the needs of all children. Individuals will contribute to the knowledge base as leaders responsible for creating and improving learning communities in our global society.

■ **Community Leadership** will prepare professionals for leadership positions as agents of change in government and community organizations. Coursework will include advanced research and theories of leadership, critical analyses regarding the impact of social welfare policies and procedures, entrepreneurial strategies, research-based assessment of programs and evidence-based management. This program will enable leaders in government and community organizations to act as agents of change and to contribute to a greater understanding regarding community leadership.

Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership

Required Courses - 60 credits

Research Core Courses (18 Credits)

Research Colloquium

Quantitative Research: Design and Analysis

Qualitative Research: Design and Analysis

Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research

Select one of the following:

Instrument Design and Analysis

Advanced Qualitative Research: Design and Analysis

Advanced Quantitative Research: Design and Analysis

Leadership Core Courses (18 credits)

Leadership: Advanced Systems Theory and Research

Organizational Analysis: Culture, Theory and Change Strategies

Moral and Ethical Foundations of Decision-Making

Theories in Organizational Structure and Strategic Leadership

Leadership: Diversity and Social Justice in Complex and Global Organizations

Negotiations and Conflict Resolution for Contemporary Leaders

Elective Courses for Corporate Leadership Concentration (Select 4 courses — 12 credits)

Developing Human Resources in Organizations

Organizational Policy and Finance

Economic Development of Organizations

Leadership and Communication Theories

Leadership and Spirituality

U.S. Presidents as Leaders

Leadership for Sustainability

Dissertation Proposal Seminar

Elective Courses for Educational Leadership Concentration (Select 4 courses — 12 credits)

Advanced Supervision and Leadership Theory

Curriculum, Culture and Instructional

Leadership Educational Policy and Leadership

Organizational Policy and Finance

Current Issues in Education

Developing Human Resources in Organizations

Leadership for Sustainability

Dissertation Proposal Seminar

Elective Courses for Leadership in Community, Policy, and Governance (Select 4 courses — 12 credits)

Development and Evaluation of Organizational Policies and Programs

Federal, State, and Local Governmental Relations

Economic Development of Organizations

Organizational Policy and Finance

Developing Human Resources in Organizations

U.S. Presidents as Leaders

Leadership for Sustainability

Public Policy Leadership and Strategic Change

Power, Institutions, and Leadership in a Globalized World

Continued on next page.

Students are permitted to select an elective course that is not in their area of concentration with the approval of the Ph.D. Program Director.

Elective Courses for Leadership in Community, Policy, and Governance Continued

(Select 4 courses — 12 credits)

Policy Analysis, Design, and Implementation in Complex Systems

Coalitions, Networks, and Leadership in Advocacy

Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership Course Descriptions

All course descriptions can be found in the [Graduate Academic Catalog](#).

Dissertation (12 credits)

Dissertation I

Dissertation II

Dissertation III

Dissertation IV

Course Sequence and Academic Completion

The recommended sequence of courses can be found in the **Academic Completion Plan**.

<i>Course</i>	<i>Benchmarks for progression in PHD Dissertation Courses</i>
PHD 910 3 credits P/F *	<u>Preparation of the Proposal</u> Students will prepare their dissertation proposal for approval by the committee. Students will not be cleared to register for research course(s) (912, 914) until an approved proposal with original committee signatures is submitted to the Ph.D. Program office.
PHD 912 3 credits P/F *	<u>Research</u> These courses provide the student with an opportunity to dedicate all of their time for dissertation research. Students should work with their committee to establish goals and measurable outcomes to monitor progress. It is recommended that students register for one research course per semester (it is necessary to seek approval from the dissertation chair to register for 912 and 914 simultaneously). Only students that are prepared to write the final sections of their dissertation will be cleared to register for 916 – refer to Dissertation Manual p. 15 for deadlines and additional requirements.
PHD 914 3 credits P/F *	
PHD 916 3 credits P/F *	<u>Analysis, Writing and Defense</u> Students will complete their dissertation work in preparation for the defense during PHD 916. Students can choose to take 916 and 980 in the same semester, with the intent to defend in that semester, and must comply with the timeline in the Dissertation Manual. Students can also separate 916 and 980, using all of 916 to complete the dissertation. However, the student must enroll in PHD 980 in the subsequent semester (excluding the summer) and cannot take PHD 901 between 916 and 980. For example, if PHD 916 is taken in the Spring without PHD 980, the student <i>may</i> defend in the Summer but <i>must</i> defend the following Fall. The final copy of the dissertation must be submitted to the Director of the Ph.D. Program for approval for the student to register in PHD 980. Refer to Dissertation Manual p. 15 for deadlines. The student must submit an Application to Graduate to the Registrar's office. When the chair and student agree, the student will be cleared to register for PHD 980—the defense. Students that successfully defend must then submit an approved dissertation with original committee signatures to the Ph.D. Program office. To graduate, students must demonstrate that they have also submitted a properly formatted dissertation to ProQuest Dissertation Publishing for library access.
PHD 980 Defense P/F *	

*University policy for incompletes and withdrawal apply. At the chair's discretion, an incomplete may remain open into the next semester(s) as long as the student maintains residency by registering for PHD 901 (1 credit) each semester. Students should refer to the "continuous enrollment" policy in the Ph.D. policy manual. Students may take the PHD Dissertation courses in the semester or MOD format. One or two "readers" will be added to each committee for the defense. They will receive a letter of acknowledgement for service to our students and the institution. The dissertation process is outlined in the Dissertation Manual.

QUALIFYING EXAMS

Qualifying Examination Purpose

The purpose of the qualifying examination is to determine whether or not the student has learned, analyzed, synthesized and evaluated subject content in the core program as well as his or her specific area of interest. It also tests the student's ability to engage in research. The student must be able to integrate and apply the results of academic coursework in the areas of research, leadership, and a specific area of concentration. The qualifying examination is developed by faculty teaching in the program and is based on course content as defined by course syllabi. The Director of the Ph.D. Program reviews all questions submitted by the faculty and assembles the final set of questions to be included in the exam. New sets of questions for the Qualifying Examination are generated every year. To prepare for the exam students should keep a running bibliography, materials from courses, and additional resources relevant to their area of focus in the format appropriate for their discipline. These resources should be organized around the three areas: research, leadership, and the area concentration.

Qualifying Examination Process

The qualifying examination is administered in the fall semester. Students are eligible to take the qualifying examination after successfully completing all required courses during the first six semesters of the program (36 credits) as shown in the Course Sequence table (p.5), typically, year 3 for cohorts. Eligible students must register for PHD 900 Qualifying Exam in the fall semester of the third year in the program. Instructions and exam materials will be posted on the Canvas platform of the course. Students are responsible for all information posted on Canvas.

Qualifying Exam Part I

The Qualifying Exam consists of two parts:

Part One – a written, take-home exam administered on Canvas during the first weekend in October. The exam will open Friday at 5:00 PM and close on Sunday at 11:59 PM. Only in extenuating circumstances will make-up exams be approved by the Program Director.

The questions will be organized into two sections (research methods and leadership theory). The student must answer all questions.

At the start of the exam, students will receive the packet containing the qualifying examination questions on Canvas. To end the exam, students upload their answers to the drop box on Canvas by the due date above. The exam is submitted to plagiarism and AI detection software. Students may use notes, readings, textbooks, and other resources to construct their answer. All work must be original and cited in APA format. The exam will have strict page limits, and students must follow all instruction.

The Director of the Ph.D. program will code the exams and remove student names for anonymous grading. Two members of the program faculty will evaluate each student's exam independently of each other using the following criteria:

1. **Organization:** Evidence of a logical, coherent and meaningful consistency in the structure of the response. Evidence of a planned presentation of major and minor points with a clear flow from beginning to the conclusion.
2. **Completeness:** Evidence of having covered all parts of the examination questions in the response that reflect depth of thought and core concepts.
3. **Relevance:** Maintenance of pointed and clear relationships in the response to the examination; avoidance of digression from main points of the examination; avoidance of filler material: avoidance of redundant material.
4. **Cogency:** Depth of insight and understanding exhibited in response; power of the performance, penetration of thought and argument stated; precision of facts and knowledge displayed; strength of logic or positions or propositions.
5. **Documentation:** Evidence of reliance on a broad base of knowledge and experience pertinent to the question, which comes from pertinent and scholarly inquiry and the accumulated experience of others as well as that of the respondent.
6. **Citation:** Appropriate citation, that is giving credit for the work of others within responses.
7. **Self-Directedness:** Indication of ability to engage in independent research

Qualifying Exam Part II

Part Two – a written, take-home case analysis. The Part Two case will be posted in Canvas on the day of the Part I exam. The case analysis (electronic format) is due in Canvas uploaded to a Canvas drop box by 11:50 AM on the second Monday after the Qualifying Exam Part I. The PHD program director will code all submissions and remove student names for anonymous grading. Each submission will independently reviewed and graded by two faculty members teaching in the program.

This case analysis should be a conceptual synthesis with proposed action steps to address a dilemma presented in the case. The analysis should take the form of a short paper (10 page maximum, not including a cover page and bibliography, 12 point font, APA format, Double-space throughout, inclusive of headings, quotations, references, etc.). Successful cases demonstrate the ability to apply concepts studied in the core doctoral courses for each area of concentration, and the ability to synthesize, organize and express a course of action to address a dilemma illustrated in the case.

Students will be advised of their scores on both sections of the exam by the first Saturday of December.

The examination is graded as Pass with distinction (P+), Pass (P) or Fail (F). All parts of the examination must receive a grade of Pass (P) in order to pass the qualifying examination. If the student does not pass one or more of the questions, he or she will be notified to arrange a meeting with one or more members of the graduate faculty to defend areas of deficiency. Students who do not successfully defend their answers will be required to contact the Ph.D. program director to arrange a retake of the failing area(s) during the Spring semester.

Students who fail the required “retake sections” of the qualifying examination are ineligible for admission to the doctoral candidacy and will be Academically Dismissed from the Ph.D. program.

Entrance into Candidacy

Once the student has passed both parts of the qualifying examination, he or she is officially entered into candidacy. This means that the student is considered to have mastered a significant body of knowledge and has indicated an ability to do independent research. He or she is a candidate for the doctoral degree, with successful completion of the dissertation being the remaining requirement.

Student Publications and Presentations

Doctoral student giving presentations, submitting publications, and so forth, may use Alvernia University doctoral student as part of the author credits. One may also list current employment. For example:

Jane Smith
Vice-President, ABC Home Health
Doctoral Student
Alvernia University

Upon passing the qualifying examination and receiving approval for the dissertation proposal, one is officially entered into candidacy. This means that one is considered to have mastered a significant body of knowledge and has indicated an ability to do independent research, dissertation being the remaining requirement to be met.

Attaining the status of candidate does not entitle one to use the Ph.D. credential after one’s name. It is neither correct, nor permissible to use “Ph.D. candidate, Ph.D. (C.), or any other variation thereof as a credential. One can and should make a statement that one is a Ph.D. candidate in the doctoral program at Alvernia University. For example:

Jane Smith
Vice-President, ABC Home Health
Doctoral Candidate
Alvernia University

Second authorship or acknowledgement should be considered for a faculty member or peer when he or she has contributed to or strongly influenced your work.

DISSERTATION OVERVIEW AND COMMITTEE

Dissertation Purpose

“The dissertation is the beginning of one’s scholarly work, not its culmination. Dissertation research should provide students with hands-on, directed experience in the primary research methods of the discipline, and should prepare students for the type of research/scholarship that will be expected of them after they receive the degree.” (p. 3)

“Regardless of the differences certainly and naturally existing among the various fields and disciplines of study, the dissertation must be an extended, coherent, written work or original research, demonstrating a doctoral candidate’s comprehensive knowledge and mastery of methodological, historical, topical, empirical and theoretical issues relevant to the chosen research subject. It must be a significant contribution to scholarship.” (p. 7)

Council of Graduate Schools. (1991). *The role and nature of the doctoral dissertation*. Washington, DC: Council of Graduate Schools.

This section contains the policies and procedures that provide the organizing framework for the doctoral dissertation and the expectations for its completion. It is each student’s responsibility to be clear in communications, to seek out faculty, to follow-up and to follow through.

The faculty will be available to guide, consult, teach, model, facilitate, push, encourage, introduce, make connections, provide support, critique, give constructive feedback, and help students to grow further as a self-directed learner.

All students are responsible for understanding and adhering to the contents of this section of the *Ph.D. Policy Manual*. This section on the *Dissertation Process* is an essential reference and contains information on policies and procedures pertinent to the completion of your dissertation.

Dissertation Committee

Composition

The student will work with his or her committee to develop a dissertation. The committee will assist the student in defining the research hypothesis and in designing the research study with attention to underlying concepts, theoretical constructs and analytic frameworks, and appropriate research design methods.

Near the end of the student’s required academic coursework, he or she will have become familiar with most of the faculty through courses, conversations, and readings. The student should select a doctoral research committee chairperson from among the doctoral faculty. Each doctoral research committee will consist of 3 members and 1 or 2 readers. Additional committee members may be suggested at the discretion of the committee chairperson. One outside committee member (including the Chair) may be selected with approval by the Ph.D. Program Director.

The student will ask the prospective outside member to provide the program director (and committee chair, if the outside member is not the chair) a resume and evidence that the following criteria have been met.

1. Must be a recognized individual practicing within the area of concentration or expertise related to the dissertation topic.
2. Must be able to articulate theoretical and/or practice aspects of the profession relative to the dissertation topic.
3. Must be able to demonstrate a high level of experience in the student’s area of dissertation interest.
4. Is involved in professional development activities in an ongoing manner.
5. Can share knowledge and willing to participate in educational endeavors.
6. Must hold a terminal degree in the field of study relevant to the dissertation topic.

A chairperson should be selected with care, with the intent that this individual will serve as doctoral research committee chair through to graduation. A good working relationship is necessary as the student and committee chairperson must make many decisions together. Committee members function as resources to the student and can provide guidance and counseling in their areas of expertise.

Once the committee has been formulated, the student will complete and submit the *Dissertation Committee form* (available in the Dissertation Manual) for approval by the Director of the Ph.D. Program. The Dean will send a letter of appointment to each committee member. Thereafter, any changes to the committee must be approved by the committee chairperson in consultation with the Program Director, but if the change is to the committee chairperson, approval must be granted by the Director of the Ph.D. program.

Responsibilities of the committee chair

The committee chair serves as the student's primary research advisor and assumes primary responsibility for supervising the doctoral student's dissertation, in which role she or he:

1. helps the student and other members of the committee define roles
2. helps student to narrow research topic to something possible
3. helps assure research is meaningful and will add to the body of knowledge about the student's area of concentration
4. conducts the "proposal meeting" where the student presents the final draft proposal to all committee members for their approval and "sign-off"
5. sets up a regular schedule of meetings with the student
6. gives substantive and organized feedback on the research process
7. serves as the arbitrator and final determinate in areas of disagreement among committee members and/or between members and the student
8. conducts the student's oral defense and approves via signature

Responsibilities of committee members

Committee members serve on the student's dissertation committee, in which role they:

1. participate in the "proposal meeting" and approve via signature
2. offer expertise in methodology or topic area
3. give substantive and organizational recommendations for sections for which they are the expert
4. read and approve final draft
5. participate in the oral defense and approve via signature

Responsibilities of readers

The Ph.D. Program Director in consultation with the Graduate Dean may select one or two readers to join a dissertation committee one month in advance of defense. The readers read the final draft of the dissertation in preparation for the defense. Readers participate in the oral defense process.

The Student

The student should thoughtfully seek out appropriate faculty for his or her committee, and must make and keep appointments. The student has primary responsibility in consultation with the chairperson and committee for:

1. development of the dissertation proposal
2. submissions to IRB for approval in a timely fashion before the proposal is approved by the committee
3. seeking outside editorial and statistical/methodological assistance if needed
4. obtaining approval from the chairperson before making any changes in process or analysis
5. submitting drafts with copies to all committee members for feedback in accordance with established time-lines
6. preparing for the oral defense
7. preparing bound copies for the Alvernia University Library, Dissertation Abstracts, and the Ph.D. Program Library

DISSERTATION

Overview

The dissertation is the culmination of the doctoral program and as such must attest to a high degree of scholarly competence for students. Students will advance after approval of the dissertation topic and successful completion of the qualifying examinations. The research for the dissertation (if required) must be submitted and approved by the Alvernia University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The dissertation must report, in an accepted scholarly style, an original investigation of a research problem or theory of significance in the student's area of concentration. The final product will demonstrate the candidate's ability to conduct original qualitative, quantitative or mixed method research design in an area related to leadership in an educational, public or private organization. Student participation in dissertation seminars and periodic meetings will facilitate the development and progression of their dissertation.

The student will work with his or her committee to develop the dissertation topic. The committee will assist the student in defining the research hypothesis and in designing the research study with attention to underlying concepts, theoretical constructs and analytical frameworks, and appropriate research design methods. Candidates will be cautioned that all work on the dissertation is to be original and proposed exclusively by the candidate.

Candidates will be required to first defend their research question and proposed methodology through a presentation to their dissertation committee (proposal defense). Second, when required, candidates must secure approval from Alvernia University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before he or she can initiate the proposed research. Third, candidates will be required to present and defend their completed dissertation to his or her committee and the Alvernia University community at large. Students will receive a passing (P) grade upon successfully defending their dissertation. Finally, the process will be completed when the document is submitted for publication on *ProQuest*.

IRB Process

All doctoral students are required to abide by the policies and procedures of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). All students must consult with their advisor and the chair of the IRB to determine need for IRB approval to conduct research and to answer specific questions regarding the IRB process. It is the responsibility of the student to complete all the necessary paperwork within the appropriate timeframes as outlined by the IRB and the committee chairperson. Failure to complete this process in a timely manner may result in delay of the student's academic progress. As required by Federal Guidelines 45 CFR 46, dissertation proposals will not be approved without evidence of IRB approval (or evidence that IRB approval is not required). Initiation of research without appropriate approval will be considered academic misconduct and will result in dismissal from the doctoral program.

Students should login to IRBNet for more information on forms, and the processing of applications. For questions students should contact the [Instituional Review Board](#) at Alvernia.irb@alvernia.edu.

Approval of the research by the IRB does not absolve the researcher from the responsibility to abide by the principles of Beneficence, Autonomy/Respect, and Justice or any federal, state, or local laws regarding research with human participants.

Proposal

The proposal is a foundational expansion and finalization of the student's research idea. In the proposal, the student will present, explicitly, the final research question. A thorough literature review is present in the proposal and is utilized to justify the study and the methodology for study. Additionally, it will include the finalized methodology, including as appropriate, the specific sampling strategy, including the target sample size, the final form questionnaire (already piloted) or research tools, and the processes for analysis. The approved proposal becomes a contract between the student and the committee regarding the exact nature of the dissertation project. Once approved, the proposal cannot be altered without the agreement of all parties (including IRB as appropriate).

The proposal is negotiated between you and your committee that, at a minimum meets the following requirements:

1. It specifies a clear, mutable problem or opportunity to be solved.
2. It must identify the possible or probable causes of the problem
3. It must provide a brief, but critically analyzed review of the research and literature relevant to that problem
4. It must delineate specific research or evaluation procedures for assessing the effectiveness of that intervention.

All proposals for dissertation research must use the most current edition of the discipline recommended format, including typeface, spacing, margins, headings, references and citation style. The following format should be used for your dissertation proposal to ensure completeness and orderly development and organization. Students should utilize information provided to them in the core and advanced research courses to further clarify what comprises each of these topic areas. The proposal is limited to 15-20 pages, not including references and appendices.

1. Title page
2. Introduction
 - a. Statement of the problem
 - b. Significance of the problem

- i. Significance to society/community (more global view)
 - ii. Significance to the profession/discipline
 - c. Purpose of the Study: aspect of the problem which you are interested
 - d. Significance of Addressing this Problem Stated in professional/discipline specific terminology
 - e. Delimitations of the Study
- 3. Selected Review of the Literature
 - a. What is known about the topic (develop own subheadings)
 - b. Cultural context (reflexivity issues if a qualitative study)
 - c. Conceptual Background, theoretical background, constructs
 - d. Operational Definitions
 - e. Summary and critique of what is known and unknown (student must connect to his or her own research)
 - f. Research question
 - g. Hypothesis (as) (if applicable)
- 4. Methods
 - a. Research design to be used
 - i. Rationale
 - ii. Threats and how they will be addressed
 - b. Subjects (Participants)
 - i. Number and how determined
 - ii. Inclusion criteria and how/why determined
 - iii. Exclusion criteria and how/why determined
 - iv. Characteristics
 - v. Recruitment procedure
 - vi. How will informed consent be obtained
 - c. Setting
 - d. Equipment
 - e. Independent and dependent variables operationalized
 - f. Instruments, measures and psychometric data, reliability, validity, trustworthiness
 - g. Procedures
- 5. References (only those that are cited in proposal)
- 6. Proposed timeline for Dissertation Research Process
- 7. Appendices
 - a. Interview guides, checklists, surveys, etc.
 - b. Definition of terms here if not in selected review of literature

Once accepted by the chair as satisfactory, the Ph.D. Program Director must be informed by the chair 10 days prior to the scheduled proposal defense, for arrangements to be made for a location and time. The student will distribute copies of the proposal to the members of his or her dissertation committee at least 10 days prior to the scheduled meeting of his or her committee. This meeting is conducted in person or when necessary, virtually. During this conference, the student presents a brief oral integrated summary of the proposal and discusses and answers questions posed to him or her about each area and its relation to his or her special area focus. The committee members provide feedback on the proposal. The need for any changes will be discussed with the student by the committee. Students may be asked to redefine areas of the proposal and/or re-write the proposal. The committee chair will work with the student to bring about a final proposal that is satisfactory to all. The chair will notify the student upon final approval of the proposal by the committee. When the proposal approval page is signed by all members of the committee, the proposal cannot be altered without the agreement of all parties including IRB. A copy of the signed proposal must be submitted to the Ph.D. Director's office.

Dissertation Progression

Once the student's dissertation committee and the IRB have approved the proposed research, the student may proceed with the research project. It is suggested that the student develops a timeline for completion, and within that schedule build considerable flexible time, as faculty will have responsibilities outside the dissertation committee as will the student.

Dissertation Report Format and Contents

The final report is a comprehensive account of the student's study and analysis designed to answer a specific research question, and propose new knowledge, or insight regarding the area of study. The dissertation is always written in past tense, as it describes what has been accomplished and achieved, relative to what the student set out to do. It is suggested

that along the way, students submit to their chair and or committee members, draft copies of the dissertation in smaller subsections. It is the student's responsibility to proofread, check for style and grammar, examine for subject-verb agreement, tense agreement, and non-sexist language. Students are responsible for all editing and the services of a professional editor may be recommended prior to the required final editing. It will be the responsibility of the student to pay for such editing expenses if deemed necessary.

Dissertation Components

Each of the components that follow should be included in the final dissertation. Furthermore, these general guidelines for a dissertation should be observed:

1. Each chapter should stand alone (i.e. a person should be able to understand each chapter without having to read the entire body of the final report.
2. Tables and figures must be labeled so as to have meaning without text, and must be discussed within the body of the text.
3. The study should be able to be replicated.
4. Appropriate standards of inquiry (qualitative or quantitative) must be observed for the study or the discipline. This should include discussion of validity, bias, reliability, limitations, and a reader should know the 'power' of the study.

Assembly of the Dissertation

The dissertation should be assembled in the following order:

Parts of the Dissertation	Status
Title Page	Required
Approval Page	Required
Copyright	Optional
Abstract	Required
Acknowledgements	Required
Table of Contents	Required
List of Figures	When Relevant
List of Tables	When Relevant
Chapter I: Introduction	Required
Chapter II: Review of Related Literature	Required
Chapter III: Methodology	Required
Chapter IV: Results	Required
Chapter V: Discussion	Required
References	Required
Appendices	Required

The parts to be included in a dissertation should be determined by the student and his/her advisory committee. Students have the option to copyright their dissertations at the time of *ProQuest* submission. This will result in a charge.

Oral Defense of Dissertation

Upon acceptance of the draft copy by the committee, the student will be invited to defend his or her research and the conclusions and recommendations drawn from it. The defense must occur in person, or virtually with the approval of the Ph.D. Director. The purpose of the defense is to ensure that one is thoroughly competent to articulate, explain and defend any and every aspect of the dissertation. The defense is the final presentation and clarification process among the student and his or her committee.

The student, in preparation for the defense, should be able to explain in detail the rationale for the study, the methodology, the results, interpretations, implications and recommendations. Additionally, the student should be prepared to critique his or her dissertation critically and answer questions relative to the research, or to hypothesize based on findings of the

research. Furthermore, the student will be expected to examine his or her study considering current knowledge and discuss contribution of the findings of this study to that knowledge base.

Upon completion of the defense, the committee will deliberate to determine the outcome of the dissertation. A unanimous approval vote with signatures by all committee members is required for the student to pass the defense requirement. Students are required to take all necessary steps to format the dissertation for submission to dissertation abstracts. It is required that students provide a copy of the dissertation with signatures for library access.

Application for Dissertation Defense

Submission Deadlines for Final Copy of the Dissertation (must be enrolled in PHD 980)

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
Application to Graduate	By August 15 th	By January 5 th
Submission of Dissertation to Ph.D. Director	By August 15 th	By January 5 th
Dissertation Defense Application	By September 1 st	By January 20 th
Readers Assigned	By September 15 st	By February 5 th
Dissertation Defense Date	By November 1 st	By April 1 st
Submission of Final Copy of the Dissertation and UMI Submission	By November 15 th	By April 15 th
Conferral Date	December	May

Students are responsible for the following steps prior to the defense of the dissertation:

The final copy of the dissertation must be submitted to the Director of the Ph.D. Program for approval for the student to register in PHD 980. The Ph.D. Program Director in consultation with the Dean may select one or two readers to join a dissertation committee at least one month in advance of scheduled defense. Students must submit electronic versions of an abstract of their dissertation, and a biography (no more than one paragraph), to the Ph.D. Program Director with the application for the dissertation defense. This information is used to create the announcement about the student's dissertation defense and sent via email to the Alvernia University community. The student should consult with the dissertation chair to determine how to manage the presentation at the dissertation defense. Defenses begin with an introduction of the candidate by the dissertation chair, followed immediately by the presentation. Candidates often use PowerPoint presentations, distribute handouts of this presentation to the audience, and discuss the dissertation for approximately an hour. A question and answer session follows the presentation. An electronic file of any materials that will be distributed as handouts during the defense should be sent to the Ph.D. Program Director at least one week prior to the scheduled defense. Students should bring a clean copy of the dissertation title page for the committee to sign at the end of the defense.

Once the dissertation has been approved by the committee, it is highly recommended that the student engage the services of a copy editor to assist in preparing the final document to comply with APA and *ProQuest* standards (see <https://www.etdadmin.com/main/resources>). Students should copyright their dissertations at the time of *ProQuest* submission. This will result in a charge to be paid for using a credit card. The format will be reviewed in the Ph.D. Program office, and if not returned to the student for revisions, the document will undergo a final review and approval by the Ph.D. Program Director. Students will not graduate until the dissertation is received by *ProQuest*.

Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership

Academic Policies

Graduate Outcomes

Specific knowledge, skills, and values inherent as outcomes in Alvernia Graduate programs are organized into five competency areas:

1. Interprofessional collaboration

- Relationship management
- Decision making based upon theoretical concepts

2. Knowledge of discipline

- Evidence based knowledge and practice
- Continuous quality improvement to achieve outcomes
- Professional behaviors

3. Effective communication

- Information literacy
- Advanced scholarly writing and oral communication
- Information management and technology skills

4. Ethical considerations and leadership

- Advocacy - individual, organization, community, global
- Ethical and moral leadership
- Social justice

5. Research Skills

- Quantitative and/or qualitative methods

Student Responsibilities

Students are solely responsible for assuring that their academic program complies with the policies of the university. Advisors are provided to assist students in planning their academic program. Advisors are not authorized to change established policy of the university. Alvernia University students should be familiar with and comply with all policies and procedures listed in their catalog and the appropriate student/program handbook.

The Alvernia University email system is the official communication channel for important information issued to students; students are responsible to check their Alvernia University email account on a regular basis. Failure to check this account is not an acceptable excuse for missing important information/deadlines that may be communicated by faculty or staff of Alvernia University.

Computation of Grades

At the completion of a course, each student is assigned a letter grade based upon the appropriate scale below: A = 4.0 (94-100); A- = 3.7 (90-93); B+ = 3.3 (87-89); B = 3.0* (83-86); B- = 2.7 (80-82); C = 2.0 (73-79); F = Failure (72 and below). *Less than 3.0 may = academic probation or dismissal.

Refer to program Handbook/Departmental Syllabi for possible approved adjustments related to the letter scale/grade computation.

Graduate Status

Alvernia will assess the candidate's strengths and academic potential using information provided by the student. Applicants for degree programs will be admitted to full, pending, or non-degree status as described below:

Full Graduate Status

Full graduate status includes submission of all required documentation, including official documents verifying the earned baccalaureate and master's degree is from an accredited college or university. Application materials are reviewed

and program acceptance granted by the Department of Graduate and Adult Education and the faculty in the selected program. Students may opt for full-time or part-time enrollment.

Students with full graduate status must respond to a written offer of admission that specifies the date of entrance into one of the graduate programs. Students must notify the Graduate and Adult Education Office of their intent to accept, reject, or change the effective date of entrance. The admission letter will serve as a permit to register for courses. In most cases, students will be offered admission for a five-year period.

Non-Graduate Status

Non-degree status allows students to enroll in graduate courses to earn graduate credit for professional certifications or professional development activities in their chosen field. These students must have earned a baccalaureate or other advanced degree from an accredited college or university. Students may be admitted with non-degree status with the approval of the Department of Graduate and Adult Education and the faculty in the selected program. Students granted non-degree status are not eligible for Stafford Loans.

Re-Entry Admissions Process

Students who have attended Alvernia previously and have left the University for one academic year or more, or have attended another institution must re-apply for admission. Re-entry students should be in good standing to be considered for re-admission. Students will be readmitted under the curriculum in the current catalog. Accepted Students wishing to return to the University must submit the following:

1. Application for admission
2. Official transcripts of all colleges and universities attended since Alvernia. Credit may be given for coursework in which the student has earned "C" or higher.

Notification of Re-Entry Admission Process

Applicants are notified of an admission decision once all required credentials have been received and evaluated. All acceptances are contingent upon the satisfactory completion of all college coursework and maintaining the minimum GPA requirements.

Academic Probation/Academic Dismissal

Students enrolled in the PHD program must earn a grade of "B" or better in PHD 701 Research Colloquium class to continue in the program. Students enrolled in the PHD Program must maintain a 3.25 grade point average (GPA) throughout the program. Students who fall below a 3.25 grade point average after 6 attempted credits will be placed on Academic Probation and must meet with their advisor to select the appropriate courses to improve their academic standing. A student who has been on Academic Probation previously and falls below a 3.25 grade point average again after at least 6 more attempted credits will be Academically Dismissed. A student who has been Academically Dismissed may write an appeal letter to the Program Department Chair if extenuating circumstances warrant a review of the academic record. Appeal letters should include documentation of the extenuating circumstances and at least one letter of support from the advisor or an Alvernia instructor. A student who does not appeal or whose appeal has been unsuccessful will no longer be enrolled in a Graduate Program and will not be entitled to Financial Aid.

Dismissal for Non-Academic Reasons

Students may be dismissed from the graduate program for the following non-academic reasons:

1. Failure to respect the rights of others as evidenced by verbal, physical or mental abuse of others, harassment of any kind, assault, or any action, which endangers the rights of others.
2. Failure to abide by federal, state, and local laws, which prohibit the use, possession and sale of illegal substances.
3. Failure to adhere to the various professional codes of ethics, such as the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics.
4. Failure to function appropriately within the site placement settings, internships or practicums, as documented through evaluations by on-site supervisor and academic adviser. (Refer to the Practicum/Internship Manual for specific information on student requirements for the Master of Arts in Community Counseling.) Only the Provost may dismiss a student from the University for non-academic reasons. Students may appeal such a dismissal to the President.

Continuous Enrollment and Leaves of Absence for Ph.D. Students

In order to remain in good standing, and to avoid registration blocks, a student must be continuously enrolled each semester from the semester of matriculation until graduation. If for some reason, a student is not able to be registered, a leave of absence may be requested by submitting a request to the Director of the Ph.D. program for approval by the Department Chair. A student may not be granted a leave of absence for more than four semesters. The degree completion clock is seven years. A leave of absence will not extend this time frame. Students are required to register for 12 dissertation credits for the three semesters following the comprehensive exam (typically, 3, 6, and 3 credits respectively), and at least one semester hour is required to maintain enrollment thereafter.

Transfer of Credit

Students who have completed doctoral study in other programs may transfer a maximum of 18 doctoral credits into Alvernia University's Ph.D. Program. Transfer courses must be from an accredited university or college, and the student must have earned a minimum grade of "B" to receive transfer credit. The courses must be equivalent to appropriate courses in the Ph.D. Program at Alvernia University. Transferred credits do not count towards the cumulative grade point average at Alvernia University. An official transcript indicating the grade received and a complete course description or syllabus must be forwarded to the Ph.D. Program Director. After all the required information has been forwarded, transfer credits are reviewed and approved by the Director.

A.B.D. Pathway Transfer Credit Policy

This is a pathway for the student who has not completed the dissertation requirements of another doctoral program. Through a portfolio assessment of the competencies acquired from prior coursework, students may transfer in the equivalent for up to 42 credit hours in this 60-credit hour doctoral program. The A.B.D. pathway requires a minimum of 18 hours of coursework to be completed at Alvernia. Transfer courses will be considered individually for applicants who began doctoral coursework at another institution but are not A.B.D. The A.B.D. pathway is currently accomplished through a transfer exception process. Students will work with their admissions counselor for individual pathways

Life Experience Credit

The University does not award graduate level course credit or academic forgiveness based on life experience.

Graduate Program Grading Scale

At the completion of a course, each student is assigned one of the following letter symbols: A = 4.0; A- = 3.7; B+ = 3.3; B = 3.0; B- = 2.7; C = 2.0; F = 0.0; Less than 3.00 = probation. The grade point average is obtained by dividing the total number of quality points achieved by the total number of credit hours attempted.

Academic Grievance Policy

The Student Grievance Committee attends to grievances of an academic nature. The Committee is involved in a student grievance only if the proper steps have been followed by the student. Procedures can be found in the *Graduate Catalog*. The student must discuss the situation/grade with the instructor within 20 calendar days of occurrence/disagreement.

Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership Admission Requirements

How to apply:

Applicants should complete the online application (alvernia.edu/phd) and submit a non-refundable \$50 application fee. Admissions eligibility requirements include:

- Official transcript(s) indicating the applicant has earned a master's degree from an accredited college or university.
- Personal Statement- a one-page statement that summarizes the value of the program of doctoral study for his/her personal or professional growth and development.
- Writing Sample- Upload a copy of master's thesis/paper or published work. Alternatively, you may provide a written response to the following question: What do you think is a major or current issue, in your area of expertise, that has a significant impact regarding your community, educational institution or organization?
- Professional Resumé.
- Three letters of recommendation from professors, employers, or supervisors familiar with the applicant's professional experiences.
- Interview with the PhD. Program Director and Faculty member.

Test scores (GRE, GMAT, or MAT) may be needed in consideration of an applicant with a master's degree GPA below 3.25. International applicants may have additional requirements. Please visit alvernia.edu/gradandadult for more information.



Alvernia University is a thriving comprehensive university that empowers students to become ethical leaders with moral courage while providing an intellectually challenging environment with real-world learning experiences. Operating on 191 acres in historic Berks County, PA, the university of more than 3,000 students is conveniently located near Philadelphia and within an easy drive of New York, Baltimore and Washington, D.C.

Graduate & Adult Education

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