



2026-27

PHD DISSERTATION

HANDBOOK

Bakke Graduate University
strengthens leaders who steward resources
with and for vulnerable people and places,
by means of contextual, Christian-based education
innovatively delivered throughout the urban world.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Academic Cabinet
APA7	American Psychological Association (writing format style)
BGU	Bakke Graduate University
DC	Dissertation Committee
DD	Dissertation Defense
DTL	Doctor of Transformational Leadership
DP	Dissertation Proposal
DS	Dissertation Supervisor
GC	Graduation Coordinator
IRB	Institutional Review Board
OR	Oral Review
ORC	Oral Review Committee
PhDAT	PhD Advisory Team
PLC	Personal Learning Community
SR	Second Reader
TR	Technical Reader

PART 1.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT BGU

The information contained in pages 1 through 23 of this document is required by BGU's accreditation association, TRACS. The "Core Appendices" is a separate document that goes into much more detail about the topics lightly touched on in this first section, which can be found by going to BGU's online library in Populi or

<https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/handbooks-catalogs>.

Who is BGU?

History

Originally founded in 1990 under the name Northwest Graduate School of the Ministry (NWGS), Bakke Graduate University (hereinafter BGU or "the university") provides graduate level leadership education focusing on rigorous academics, immediately practical application, and involving a global constituency of faculty and students. BGU is accredited through the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS) and is fully recognized by the US Department of Education. BGU has earned a strong reputation within academic Christian service, and business organizations.

During the last fifteen years, BGU has journeyed from its founding identity as a one-church based educational organization faithfully serving the Northwest United States to its current role as the school of choice for international urban leaders on five continents. This network was originally assembled as young leaders under the urban track of the Lausanne movement in the 1980s and was called the Lausanne Urban Associates. As Lausanne ended this initiative in the late 1980s, these same leaders and more were reassembled by Dr. Ray Bakke through the International Urban Associates (IUA). Now, this growing, global, urban network of leaders has acknowledged and responded to a strong need for a unifying educational experience that prepares and equips them for transformational work in a global world. BGU's strategic plan outlines the ways in which it is responding to this educational opportunity for expanded excellence in the sphere of Christian service while charting a path of outstanding stewardship and solid business practices. (See BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 1* for a more detailed history of BGU, which can be found by going to BGU's online library in Populi or <https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/handbooks-catalogs>.)

Mission Statement

BGU's mission statement is as follows:

Bakke Graduate University strengthens leaders who steward resources with and for vulnerable people and places, by means of contextual, Christian-based education innovatively delivered throughout the urban world.

Accreditation

Bakke Graduate University is a member of the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS) having been awarded Reaffirmed Status as a Category III and IV Institution by the TRACS Accreditation Commission on April 21, 2020; this status is effective for a period of ten years (Licensed until April 2030). TRACS is recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE), the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE).

Transnational Association of
Christian Colleges and Schools
15935 Forest Road, Forest, VA 24551
Phone: 434-525-9539; Fax: 434-525-9538
info@tracs.org; www.tracs.org

Government Agency Approvals

Selected academic programs of study at BGU are approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for enrollment of those eligible to receive benefits under Title 38 and Title 10, U.S. Code. Veterans of United States armed services organizations should contact the Student Finance Coordinator to ensure proper documentation is presented and information is adequately communicated to the Veteran Affairs Office. Students participating in joint degrees that are the result of an agreement between BGU and an international school are not eligible for Veteran benefits.

Faith Statement

BGU was founded as a non-denominational Christian university. Doctrinally, the institution stands for the fundamentals of the faith as taught in the Christian Scriptures and handed down through the centuries by the Church. Consistent with this purpose, the faculty and directors of BGU acknowledge the creeds of the early church and the confessions of the Protestant communions to which they severally belong. BGU explicitly affirms the classic ecumenical creeds, the Nicene Creed, the Apostles' Creed, and the more recent evangelical confession known as the Lausanne Covenant (BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 2*, hereinafter referred to as "the Statement of Faith"). The Board of Directors, full-time faculty and staff as well as students are invited annually to affirm BGU's Statement of Faith.

Vision

BGU looks beyond itself to embody the commonly-held vision of an international network. BGU serves and is served by a large international network of urban leaders, and its

vision is shaped by these networks and partners. The vision of BGU includes the following key components (for full descriptions, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 3*):

1. Served by and Serving Emerging and Experienced Transformational Leaders
2. Proclaiming the Whole Gospel, through the Whole Church, to the Whole World
3. Kingdom Sharing
4. Bible-based Perspective and Values Education
5. Accessibility to Life-Long Learning for Global Christian Leaders
6. Web-based Educational Services

Institutional Objectives

The institutional objectives for BGU are as follows (for a full description of each, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 4*):

1. **Spiritual Formation:** This university will help a student have increased trust in God, while dynamically developing and stewarding its partnerships and networks.
2. **Perspective:** Shifts in worldview, mindset, new ways of seeing themselves and God, will result as the BGU 8 perspectives are integrated in students' lives and outreach/influence.
3. **Knowledge:** Prophetically disruptive and ethically sound knowledge is needed to accomplish Spiritual Formation and Perspective Transformation.
4. **Skills:** Hands-on leadership-related skills are taught, demonstrated and evaluated throughout BGU's academic and non-academic services to students.
5. **Application:** BGU students apply their learning in their life and work during their studies and after they graduate, while expanding their own partnerships and networks and becoming increasingly Christ-like.

Overall Objectives

The overall objectives for all BGU's programs (for full description, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 5*):

1. Deliver Practical Ministry Instruction
2. Deliver Biblically-Based Curricula
3. Provide a Faculty Composed of Successful Global Practitioners
4. Deliver Instruction through Adult Learning Educational Approaches
5. Instill in Students a Recognition of the Diversity of the Church
6. Provide Leadership Training to Build the Local Church within a Global Perspective
7. Instill in Students the Reality of Globalization

Educational Values & Philosophy of Engagement

The educational values and philosophy of BGU form the guidelines of how BGU will develop courses, form networks, select students, faculty, and staff, while pursuing its unique

approach to graduate education. BGU is a community formed around spiritual reflection, authentic relationships, and sacrificial service. It is an accredited higher educational institution committed to developing incarnational servant leaders who are intentional instruments of God in their communities and workplaces. BGU collaborates with an emerging global network of organizations, churches, and schools to develop transformational leaders who seek peace in their cities worldwide. For a complete list of these values, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 6*.

Core Values

BGU's Core values are as follows (for full details, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 7*):

1. Passion
2. Celebration
3. Respect
4. Integrity
5. Community

Ministry & Educational Philosophy

Practical Ministry Philosophy Based on Mentoring

The courses of Bakke Graduate University (BGU) are taught by seasoned instructors who are academically qualified and currently engaged in practicing what they teach. The instruction provided in the classroom is based on principles of *modeling* and *mentoring*. As in other professional fields, such as law or medicine, Christian practitioners who are being trained for Christian leadership benefit from practicing *mentors* who teach not only from a textbook but from a life of experiences. BGU's instructors have proven track records in leading effective ministries or professions, and therefore teach from a practical as well as from an academic viewpoint. The doctoral and master's degrees are designed so that Christian practitioners will accomplish significant academic growth while grounded in very real practice. The goal of BGU is to stretch, challenge and equip its students to be transformational leaders in the global context.

Academic Program Based on Biblical Foundations

The educational philosophy of BGU emphasizes the equipping of individuals for effective ministry as well as providing a sound biblical framework within which all service must take place. *All courses are taught from a biblical perspective and are Christ-centered.* The Bible is recognized as the primary and authoritative Christian text for all Christian faith and practice. Therefore, the various forms of ministry taught at BGU are defined and evaluated according to biblical descriptions. It is also recognized that all Christian service occurs within a specific cultural environment. Therefore, the content of the curricula is continually evaluated and adjusted to ensure that biblically-defined leadership principles are applied in forms which are culturally relevant to society.

The educational philosophy of BGU also focuses on the nature of the church and the formation of a biblical self-identity for pastors and professional leaders. The curriculum assumes

that the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20 and the Great Commandment of Matthew 22:35-40 are the standards by which all service is to be measured.

Health & Security

BGU strives to ensure the health and safety of its staff, faculty, and students according to and beyond relevant state and federal requirements. BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 8* provides a list of emergency procedures that are applicable in its Dallas, Texas, office and classrooms.

Community Standards of Conduct

BGU's desire is to create an environment that is restorative and redemptive. Therefore, with the help of the Holy Spirit, Board members, students, administrators, faculty and staff strive to live lives that reflect the Kingdom values expressed in the Community Standards of Conduct. However, violations of the expressed principles and policies described in this document and in the Lausanne Covenant may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or termination. These standards include:

1. Statement on Academic Freedom
2. Statement on Academic Integrity
3. Statement on Christian Conduct
4. Title IX
5. Statement on Non-Discrimination
6. Statement on Harassment
7. Statement on Sexual Standards
8. Statement on Respect for People and Property
9. Statement on Substance Abuse
10. Statement on Fraud and Abuse
11. Statement on Fraternization

For a detailed description of these standards, detailed information about violations of BGU's Standards of Conduct, and disciplinary sanctions, please see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 9*.

Complaint Procedures

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) adopted rules codified under Title 19 of the Texas Administrative Code, Sections 1.110 – 1.120, on October 25, 2012. These rules create a student complaint procedure to comply with the U.S. Department of Education's "Program Integrity" regulations, which require each state to have a student complaint procedure in order for public and private higher education institutions to be eligible for federal Title IV funds. In December 2011, the Office of Attorney General of Texas issued an opinion stating that THECB has authority under Texas Education Code Section 61.031 to promulgate procedures for handling student complaints concerning higher education institutions. For details about this procedure, please see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 10*.

Fraud, Abuse, & Accurate Representation

BGU is committed to maintaining an educational entity that is not involved in any form of fraud or abuse and will not support practices or procedures that are designed to deceive students or falsify information to students. BGU proactively investigates and resolves all complaints and other reports or findings that raise suspicion of fraud and/or abuse. Such cases and findings are reported to external regulatory and law enforcement agencies as required by law and contract. Following receipt of the complaint/fraud and abuse referral, the process for dealing with complaints is explained in BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 10*. BGU is committed to accurately representing itself to the public in all of its publications, its website, its classrooms, and any communications with others.

Academic Services

BGU Website

BGU's website contains a section devoted to Student Resources which include:

- Downloadable documents (<https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/student-documents-to-download>).
- Handbooks & Catalogs (<https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/handbooks-catalogs>).
- Graduation Information (<https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/graduation-information>).
- Title IX Information and Standards of Conduct/Clery (<https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/standards-of-conduct-clery/title-ix>).

Orientation

BGU has created an Orientation course (PREP101) and an Orientation Packet for every incoming student. In addition to links to welcoming videos from the BGU President, Academic Dean, Registrar, and program directors, the Orientation Packet contains numerous instructional videos for assistance in writing, formatting papers, etc. In addition, BGU provides synchronous orientation sessions each term regarding online learning and resources that are recorded and made available to all students. Each faculty, at the beginning of a course, also provides an introductory synchronous course orientation session that is recorded and made available to all students enrolled in the course. (See BGU Core Appendices-Appendix 11 for the Orientation Packet.)

Writing Assistance

BGU has purchased Unicheck, a plagiarism checker that has been incorporated into Populi. When documents are uploaded into the online classroom, Unicheck will immediately show quoted materials that have not use quotation marks or proper citations.

BGU also has created a free writing certificate “course” that can assist students in learning to write academically (especially important for students for whom English is a second language). To register for this free course, students can contact BGU's eLearning Team. Students are also provided with numerous writing resources through the Writing Center.

Library/Learning Resources

BGU offers its students a variety of alternatives for accessing books and research materials for courses and as preparation for their final projects. The onsite Library that is located at BGU's Dallas Office contains over 4,000 volumes. There is a collection of dissertations and theses produced by BGU graduating students and there are also other research resources available to students. The library collection is cataloged and indexed, and a searchable database can be accessed on any of the computers provided in the library. The computers are also available in BGU's Dallas Office for student use to gain access to online search engines and for internet research.

BGU's main online library of over 6,000 volumes is made available to every student regardless of location in an online format. This library contains a rich collection of research guides and resources, and eBooks for social sciences, business, and theology. The Online Library is overseen by a MLS Librarian, Jennifer Roman (Jennifer.Roman@bgu.edu) who is available to assist students with in-depth research, search strategies, referral, and reference questions. The Online Library also provides guidance on academic writing, citation styles, and paper formatting, and provides a portal for students to express feedback and contribute suggestions on additional resources for the Online Library. Students also have off-campus access to the ProQuest® databases, which include ProQuest Religion, the ProQuest Business Research Library and the ProQuest Newsstand of national newspapers including the Christian Science Monitor. The ProQuest Databases can be found in the Research Guide section of the Online Library. Furthermore, BGU has subscribed to the EBSCO SOCindex. And for a nominal fee, students can register with the Society of Christian Scholars (www.scshub.net) and have access to the EBSCO Humanities and Behavioral Sciences Collection, Religion and Philosophy Collection, Leadership and Management Source as well as the Education Source databases.

Online Mentoring

BGU's Online Mentoring allows students the opportunity to meet with an academic advisor/mentor in group and individual settings to discuss their degree roadmap and enjoy prayer, counseling, coaching, and ongoing encouragement using either phone, Zoom, or other video technology.

BGU Online Helpdesk

BGU's Helpdesk is available to all students for easy access to Frequently-Asked Questions as well as access to technical support staff for questions, consultations, tutorials, and feedback. The Helpdesk is available Monday through Saturday, honoring Sunday as a Sabbath day.

Office of the Registrar

The Registrar's Office arranges course schedules, receives and processes student admission applications and course registrations, and maintains a repository of academic records. Students should contact the Registrar for official and unofficial transcripts, registration information, financial account questions, issues concerning grades, and any other inquiries related to student records. Appointments may be scheduled for advisement on course schedules, class registration, etc., by contacting the Registrar via email at Registrar@bgu.edu.

Counseling and Advising Appointments

Upon admission, each student is assigned a specific advisor. The role of the advisor is to guide the student to make the best academic choices for the development of his/her degree and to ensure the student's best integration and growth with BGU. It is the advisor's responsibility to contact his/her advisee at least once a month. Students are required to keep appointments with that advisor throughout the course of their degree programs. To schedule an advising appointment, students may contact BGU at (214) 329-4447, or via email. For students who are unable to attend an appointment in person, a phone/Zoom appointment will be scheduled. In addition to the student's academic advisor, the Director of Student Services (Katie Berube) and Director of Spiritual Formation (Dr. Nita Kotiuga), the following staff and/or faculty members are also available for advising appointments:

Doctoral Degree Students	
Prospective Students	Allison Sherwin (Allison.Sherwin@bgu.edu)
Admission Procedures	Allison Sherwin (Allison.Sherwin@bgu.edu)
General Academic Questions	Bunmi Morgan (Bunmi.Morgan@bgu.edu)
General Academic Advisor	Martine Audéoud (Martine.Audeoud@bgu.edu)
DMin/DTL Dissertations	Bill Payne (Bill.Payne@bgu.edu)
PhD Dissertations	Martine Audéoud (Martine.Audeoud@bgu.edu)
Master's Degree Students	
Prospective Students	Allison Sherwin (Allison.Sherwin@bgu.edu)
Admission Procedures	Allison Sherwin (Allison.Sherwin@bgu.edu)
General Academic Questions	Bunmi Morgan (Bunmi.Morgan@bgu.edu)
General Academic Advisor	Martine Audéoud (Martine.Audeoud@bgu.edu)
Master's Final Project	Yvonne McKenzie (Yvonne.McKenzie@bgu.edu)
Capstone Project (EMBA)	Scholastica Olagunju (Scholastica.Olagunju@bgu.edu)

Admission Policies

Admissions Standards

BGU graduate programs have a unique focus on global urban leadership realities. The university is committed to the equipping of transformational leaders in business or various forms of Christian service. BGU not only seeks to strengthen those who come with traditional academic qualifications but also those who lead effective transformational organizations and who have a proven record of leadership without a traditional academic background. In many settings, both internationally and nationally, leaders have not had adequate access to educational opportunities. Non-Western and non-formal qualitative learning is given considerable value at BGU. Based on these convictions, BGU encourages transformational leaders worldwide to apply for its graduate programs. Each applicant will be evaluated on his/her merit and will receive a recommendation from the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet, regarding the most appropriate academic program. Students who are re-entering a BGU program after having gone away for several years need to fill the Special Program Extension Request form with new PLCs that will be presented to and approved by the AC. For specific standards, please see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 12*.

Student Status Classifications

BGU students are classified under various classifications ranging from full-time, to part-time, auditors, and educational experiences. For a complete list and definition of each, please see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 13*.

Transfer Credit Policy

If students have accumulated credits from other academic institutions that they believe may be applicable to their BGU degree, they may petition the Academic Dean at the time of admission for transfer of those credits (advanced standing). The Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet, may approve a transfer of a maximum of 50% of the total required credits in the degree program. Only courses for which the applicant has received a B or better will be considered for transfer. For the complete process, please refer to BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 14*.

On occasion, credits from a non-accredited institution may be counted as credit toward a BGU degree. For the full explanation and requirements, please refer to BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 57*.

Admission Requirements & Procedures

Admission to any of the master's programs or doctoral programs at BGU is based on a selection process conducted by the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet. The Academic Cabinet reviews each application thoroughly to determine the applicant's qualifications, as well as compatibility of the university programs to the applicant's educational goals. The applicant will then be approved by the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet after all required application materials have been received by the university. For the step-by-step process, please refer to BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 15*.

Personal Learning Community

BGU attributes much of its students' educational success to what is called the "Personal Learning Community" (or PLC). Students identifying three to five individuals or PLC members who agree to support the student during the course of his/her studies. The admissions process includes the requirement that a minimum of three PLC members must be identified, each of whom shall submit a completed PLC Agreement to BGU before an applicant will be considered for acceptance. The PLC can be close friends, co-workers, pastors, spouse, children, etc., each of whom will be asked to read assignments, provide periodic evaluations, and assist the student in staying accountable to completing their degree. For a description of the specific requirements of the PLC, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 16*.

English Language Proficiency

Each student must demonstrate English-proficiency by: (1) showing that English is his/her native language, or (2) by having successfully completed an undergraduate or graduate school program in which English is the primary method of instruction, or (3) exhibiting sufficient English-language capabilities to succeed in the classroom and in BGU programs as measured by a score of not less than 80 on the internet-based TOEFL or TOEFL-equivalent exams taken within the last five years. As an alternative to the TOEFL, BGU will accept the

IELTS (International English Language Testing System) if a student has scored 6.5 or better, or a copy of the certificate that is awarded at the completion of the Total Immersion Program (TIP). Applicants who can fulfill the qualifications may submit a TOEFL Waiver Request with their application.

Students who are taking the TOEFL test should use BGU's code number of **0709** so BGU will receive the final score directly from the testing agency. For on-line information about TOEFL testing locations and practice tests go to www.ets.org/toefl.

Minimum Technology Requirements

Since *every* BGU course includes participation via the internet, the minimum requirements for participating in courses for both students and professors include:

1. For email attachments: with dial-up connection a 1MB file can take 10 minutes to download.
2. For rich content web pages: dial up (54KB) will be able to load but it will take a while. If the document contains a number of embedded images and media, 512KB will be sufficient.
3. For Audio Steaming: at least 128 KB for Web Conferencing (video with low resolution/quality options): 900KB for two-person video session, higher for more participants. For better quality: 3.5 MB-10 MB for streaming video.
4. For students to be fully visible and audibly present in online interactions/classes: the use of a webcam and good microphone speakers is recommended.

International Students

The term "international student" is used at BGU to denote both internationals who attend courses in the United States on visas, as well as those who are legal, permanent residents of the United States. BGU is not authorized to issue visa documents for the F-1 Student Visa.

Admission as Special Student

Any applicant who does not meet the admission requirements of an individual degree is conditionally admitted under "Special Student Status" (SSS). Persons who are interested in applying to a degree program under SSS are asked to complete the online application and to provide official or unofficial transcripts and a current CV or resume to the Admissions Office for preliminary review. The applicants applying for a master's degree are also asked to fill out an equivalency worksheet if they have not graduated with the requisite undergraduate degree. This worksheet will assist the Academic Dean in determining whether the courses and work previously completed are of a sufficient quality and quantity to be considered for SSS before the applicant is presented to the Academic Cabinet. The Academic Dean will recommend the path of either a degree completion program elsewhere or admission under SSS. The Academic Dean's recommendation of potential eligibility is required in order to be permitted to continue the SSS application process. BGU allows a maximum of 15% of its student body to be classified as SSS. In the event an applicant requires admission under SSS and BGU already has reached the 15% maximum of its enrollment designated as SSS, the applicant will be required to wait one or two terms until an opening occurs before being admitted. As of the date of the approval of BGU's handbooks and catalog by the Academic Cabinet and the Board of Directors, 14 students were identified as SSS, which represents less than 6% of the total student body.

Students under SSS who do not maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) or who do not complete any courses for a period of one year or more will be automatically withdrawn. Students admitted under SSS will be required to take a minimum of two 4-credit (or 3-credit for MA) courses per year and maintain a 3.0 GPA. If students are unable to take two courses per year, they will be placed on a leave of absence and removed from SSS. If and when they return to active student status and there are no SSS slots available, students will be placed on a waiting list and will only be allowed to take courses once they are reinstated to SSS. Once students have successfully completed two courses, they will be removed from SSS. For more details, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 17*.

Admission with a Degree-Completion Program

Qualified applicants who are studying in a BGU-approved degree-completion program at the bachelor-degree level and who have one year or less remaining in that program may apply for a BGU master's degree program. Applicants may be accepted "pending bachelor's degree completion." Upon acceptance, students will then be eligible to take up to two courses prior to the Registrar's receipt of their final official transcripts.

Special Needs Policy

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 mandate equal opportunities for students to participate in or benefit from the services offered by BGU. As such, BGU endeavors to respond to the special needs of students with disabilities. Ramps and elevators provide access to BGU's Dallas, Texas, offices and classrooms. Special efforts are made to schedule classes in facilities that are accessible, and parking places are reserved in all campus parking areas.

A qualified individual under the ADA must have a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities. Major life activities involve caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

A qualified student with a disability must meet the academic and technical standards required for admission or participation in an education program or activity. It is the responsibility of the student to make his/her needs known in a timely manner to the Director of Student Services of BGU. Reviewing and granting accommodation for special needs can take up to eight weeks, so students should ensure timely processing of their needs by communicating in writing the type of accommodation as soon as possible.

Students reading in English for whom English is a second language (ESL) may read or write 25% slower than what is required of English-speaking students. Students who are reading or writing in Chinese should calculate that 10 pages of English are equal to seven pages of Chinese.

Financial Policies

Tuition and Fees

BGU seeks to provide excellence in education, while keeping costs as reasonable as possible. Student tuition and fees cover only a portion of the total operating costs of the university. The charges listed are effective as of July 1, 2023, and are subject to change without

notice. Tuition and fees will change periodically and students are *required to pay the rates in effect at the time each course is held*. It is incumbent upon the student to verify current rates. All amounts are quoted in US Dollars. Check BGU's website for Administrative Fee for specific classes, which varies for each course. For a list of all tuition and fees, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 18*.

- All students and auditors must pay the full tuition and fees prior to gaining access to the first day of class unless that student has made prior arrangements with the Director of Finance to make monthly payments or they have been approved for a FAFSA student loan.
- New applicants must also either pay all tuition and fees prior to the first day of class or at the very least make payments consistently while in class according to payment plans. Failure to do so before the end of the first month of class will result in a “course lock” (i.e. student will be locked out of class) until agreed payment has been made.
- All payment plan students must make their first payment prior to the first course in order to gain access to the course. Failure to do so before the end of the first month of class will result in a “course lock” (i.e. student will be locked out of class) until agreed payment has been made.

Course Registration

Course tuition and fees are due 14 days prior to the first day of the on-line portion of the course. Students who have not made payment or arranged for a payment plan will have a Financial Lock added to their account until the above-mentioned arrangements are made with BGU's Finance Department. Students will not be allowed to take classes unless their accounts are paid in full, or they have a payment plan in place on which they are current. The Administrative Fee is due at the same time as tuition except for city immersion courses. The Onsite Administrative Fees for city immersion courses are due six weeks prior to the onsite portion of the course and are, for the most part, non-refundable.

Those who attend a city immersion but fail to complete all assignments by agreed-upon deadlines will forfeit all tuition and fees. If the course tuition was not yet paid in full, the student's account will be assessed for all course tuition and fees, if applicable.

Refund Policy

Courses require considerable advance preparation and expense by the university based on student registrations and deposits. Therefore, the following refund policies are enforced, based upon when a student withdraws from a course in relation to the course starting date. For the full refund policy, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 19*.

Course Extensions

A student may apply for extensions due to extenuating circumstances as long as 80% of the coursework has already been completed. For the full refund policy, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 26*.

Financial Aid

BGU understands the financial stress that can result from the pursuit of graduate-level education. To help ease that burden, BGU has sought to identify various financial aid

opportunities for qualified students wishing to attend BGU, but who do not have the financial resources to do so. BGU's hope is that these resources and financial aid packages will help students move forward with their educational goals. For more details about financial aid, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 20*. For information about Title IV funding, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 21*.

Financial Appeals Process

If a student feels that his/her situation warrants an exception to the financial policies or regulations, he or she is encouraged to file a written appeal to the Registrar for consideration by the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet. The Office of the Registrar will be responsible for investigating the circumstances of the appeal and making a report to the Academic Dean for final resolution at the next Cabinet meeting.

Academic Policies

Identity Verification in Distance Learning

BGU's identity verification policy applies to all credit-bearing distance education courses or programs offered by BGU, beginning with the application for admission and continuing through to a student's graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from study. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that BGU operates in compliance with the provisions of the United States Federal Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) concerning the verification of student identity in distance education.

The HEOA requires that institutions offering distance education courses or programs have processes in place to ensure that the student registering for a course is the same student who participates in the course or receives course credit. For more details, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 22*.

Student's Right to Know Act

The Student Right-to-Know Act, passed by Congress in 1990, requires for institutions eligible for Title IV funding, under the Higher Education Act of 1965, to calculate completion or graduation rates of certificate- or degree-seeking, full-time students entering that institution, and to disclose these rates to current and prospective students. Since Bakke Graduate University (BGU) is an institution that participates in a Title IV program it is required to disclose graduation/completion rates of all students by race/ethnicity, gender and by sport (not applicable), and the average completion or graduation rate for the four most recent years. To read more about the Student Right-to-Know Act, please visit the National Center for Education Statistics website at <http://nces.ed.gov> and see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 23* for the updated version of BGU's graduation rates, which are also available on BGU's website at: <http://bgu.edu/about/university-profile/student-right-to-know-act>.

Student Privacy (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of personally identifiable information contained in a student's educational record. FERPA applies to all schools that receive funds under various programs from the U.S. Department of Education. See BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 24*.

Security Program

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued final regulations to amend the Standards for Safeguarding Customer Information. These requirements mandate that BGU have a program in which protects student financial aid information. BGU's Security Program is outlined in detail in the Core Appendices-*Appendix 59*.

Online Courses/Distance Education

According to TRACS, the Federal definition of *Distance Education* is "education that uses one or more of the technologies listed to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies may include the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMS, if used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed above."

All of BGU's courses include an online component and most courses are completely online. The Populi online software is BGU's Learning Management System (LMS). The minimum requirement for BGU's courses is a computer and reliable access to the Internet, which is the same requirement for all courses for all students. Students register for online courses just as they register for hybrid courses in Populi. The student will be required to participate in both synchronous and asynchronous class interactions, which include online discussions, real-time virtual classroom sessions, readings, and other requirements which, if not fulfilled, will result in a lower grade, as described in the syllabus for each course. Students and professors are required to be in direct and substantive communication on a weekly basis throughout the course.

Independent or Directed Studies

Students may include a total of two courses (or maximum 8 credits) of independent studies in their program. PhD students are allowed a total of three courses (or maximum of 12 credits) of independent studies in their program. Any exception to this policy must be approved by the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet. An Independent Study is defined as a course that the student designs with the assistance of a professor or a course in which the student is working with the professor individually, and not in conjunction with other students. One of the unique characteristics of BGU is its global student body; therefore, it encourages students to take classes where interaction with this international cohort enriches the learning experience. See BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 25* for details. Independent and Directed Studies require the student and professor to meet weekly during the 3-month module in which the course is taken.

Correspondence Courses

According to TRACS, the Federal definition of correspondence education is “education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the institution provides instructional materials by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor; interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student; correspondence courses are typically self-paced; and correspondence education is not distance education.” No correspondence courses are available to BGU students.

Changing Course Credits

A student can only be allowed to increase or decrease the number of credits for a course upon review and agreement of the Academic Dean and agreement of the student’s Program Director. A student can only double a course’s credits twice in the course of a program.

Course Requirements

BGU's degree programs include fully online courses as well as hybrid courses that combine online components with face-to-face urban immersions, local cohorts and mentors. Urban immersions are held in various large cities on five continents and all travel expenses are the responsibility of the student. BGU has strict attendance policies, reading, assignments, and projects. For a full description of these requirements, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 26*.

Grading Policies

Course grades are submitted by the instructor to the Registrar’s Office approximately two to four weeks following the date the students submit their projects. Final grades are based upon the course syllabus. Any course grade below a 2.67 GPA or B- will not be considered passing. Students must maintain an overall minimum 3.00 GPA to graduate. Students receiving a low course grade may invoke a one-time opportunity to resubmit their assignments. The student must then re-submit the revised project or assignments within 30 days of receiving the final grade and pay an additional \$100 to have the work re-graded. After the re-submission, the grade may be changed at the discretion of the course instructor or Academic Dean if warranted by an improved project and/or assignment. Grade points are calculated by multiplying the grade numerical value by the number of credit hours for a class. Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated by dividing the total grade points by the total accumulated credit hours. If a student’s overall GPA drops below 3.00, that student will be placed on Academic Probation and has one year to bring their GPA up to 3.00 or above. If the student fails to bring the overall GPA to above 3.00 within the one-year period, he/she will be withdrawn from the school. (See the Grading Scale BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 27*.)

Grading Rubrics

BGU has designed grading rubrics that shall be used by all professors in determining the grades for all student projects, online interaction, journals, etc. Rubrics are loaded into every course in Populi, BGU’s LMS, under “Files.” To see some of the rubrics in BGU’s online library, go to:

<https://bgu.populiweb.com/library/resource.php?resourceID=11175577>

Credit Hour Definition

According to TRACS, the Federal definition of a credit hour is as follows: “A credit hour for Federal purposes is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates some minimum amount of student work reflective of the amount of worked expected in a Carnegie unit: key phrases being ‘institutionally established,’ ‘equivalency,’ ‘reasonable approximate,’ and ‘minimum amount.’” For graduate-level work, one credit hour for BGU students is defined by the academic work consisting of professor instruction/student interaction, reading assignments, group projects, class presentations, and independent project work and is equivalent to a minimum of 45 hours of work. Each degree program defines how many credit hours are needed to earn the degree.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

All students must meet the following standards of academic achievement to be classified as students in Good Standing. The qualitative standard requires the student to achieve and maintain a minimum overall or cumulative grade point average of 3.0 for the entirety of the program. The quantitative standard requires all students to complete their program of study within the normal time frame for completing the program. For details about how BGU determines SAP, academic probation, and dismissal, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 29*.

Degree Program Duration and Time Limits

A maximum of seven (7) years and minimum of three (3) years will be allowed to complete a BGU degree. The time limit will begin on the student’s acceptance date. An extension may be granted, at the discretion of the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet, if the student demonstrates steady progress toward degree completion and has a legitimate need for more time. Extensions must be requested in writing to the Registrar’s Office explaining the extenuating circumstances and providing a projected completion date.

Withdrawal from the University

There are two ways in which students may be withdrawn:

1. *Request Withdrawal:* Students requesting a withdrawal should submit a “Request to Withdraw” (found on BGU’s website at <https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/student-documents-to-download>) and submit to the Registrar’s Office (Registrar@bgu.edu). The Academic Dean or Registrar will seek to hold a face-to-face or Zoom exit interview with a withdrawing student or at a minimum ask the withdrawing student to fill out an Exit Interview form. If withdrawing is due to financial reasons, arrangements need to be made to pay any outstanding balance due BGU.
2. *Withdrawal due to lack of involvement:* Students will be withdrawn who a) fail to request extensions for coursework that is more than six months overdue, b) are inactive for more than 12 months and have not responded to any BGU communications, or c) maintaining an outstanding balance for over a year without contacting BGU to set up a payment plan. The Registrar’s Office will give the student a 30-day cautionary email (and copy the student’s advisor) before proceeding with the withdrawal.

Reinstatement of Withdrawn Students

A maximum of seven (7) years and minimum of three (3) years will be allowed to complete the doctoral programs (DMin, DTL, and PhD). A maximum of six (6) years and, except for transfer students, a minimum of two (2) years will be allowed to complete the master's programs (MATL). The time limit will begin on the student's acceptance date.

Students who want to be reinstated after having been withdrawn or inactive for over a year and less than 7 years will need to petition the Academic Dean's office for approval and will need to update their personal data and PLC contact information. If the student has attended any other institution(s) during his/her absence, arrangements must be made for an official transcript (showing good standing) to be sent from each institution to the Office of Admissions (see Transfer policy above). Exceptions and appeals may be made to the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet.

Teach Out Policy

In the event that BGU is forced to close its doors or to eliminate a program, it has a developed a policy to care for every current student to ensure either a teach out or transfer to another accredited institution to complete his or her degree. See BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 60*.

Degree Extension

BGU, in accordance with standard academic procedures, requires that a student complete his/her program within seven years, including all coursework and final projects, from the date on which the student enrolled for his or her first course. Any student who has not completed the degree within the 7-year limitation may appeal to the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet, to be allowed to exceed the limitation by filling out a Degree Extension Request (downloadable from <https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/student-documents-to-download>). This document includes a short statement about why the student was unable to complete the program within the 7-year limit as well as a plan for completion within a relatively short period of time, which will need to be approved by the Academic Dean in consultation with the Academic Cabinet.

Dissertation Advisory Team

BGU's Director of Final Projects coordinates a Dissertation Advisory Team. The purpose of that team is to review dissertation proposals, review the congruence of expertise between proposed dissertation supervisors and second readers and the theme of a given dissertation, as well as to review any academic issue pertaining to the dissertation writing process. It reports to the Academic Cabinet on a monthly basis.

Dissertation in Foreign Language

Because BGU has partnerships with organizations around the globe, there are instances when students may wish to write their dissertation in their native language. While BGU approves that practice, there are certain parameters that guide that practice. For the specific requirements refer to BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 58*.

Graduation Policy

BGU's academic curriculum and course calendar is designed for a June Graduation; however, BGU students may complete their coursework anytime during the year and their transcript will indicate they have met the requirements of their designated degree program (if all financial obligations have been met. A commencement ceremony is held once a year on the first Saturday in June every year. All graduating students are encouraged to attend and to invite their friends and family to celebrate their accomplishment during the June commencement service. DTL and DMin students must complete the majority of their core classes before they will be allowed to take the dissertation proposal writing course (RES701). A student may appeal this decision by submitting a request to the Academic Cabinet via the Registrar's Office. See further graduation and candidacy requirements listed under each degree program.

All charges assessed to the student's account, e.g., course tuition, graduation fees, library fees, Dissertation, or Masters Final Project (MFP) fees, etc., must be paid in full before a degree will be issued. The deadline to submit all required course work, final projects, and payment of all dues for June graduation is April 30 (or before an oral review can be scheduled, whichever comes first).

The Catalog in effect at the time of a student's matriculation shall determine the complete requirements for graduation. The Dissertation Handbook that was in effect when the student took the research course will contain the requirements by which that student must abide when writing his/her dissertation. Any exceptions to this policy or special cases will be handled by the Academic Dean in consultation with the Academic Cabinet.

Audit Registration Policy

Auditing students, spouses of students, and alumni may register for courses up to six (6) weeks before the first day of the professor-led class session/immersion portion of a course, *depending upon space availability*.

BGU's Social Media Policy & Disclaimer

Bakke Graduate University encourages interaction among users on BGU's social media sites but is not responsible for the content of other contributors published on any official BGU websites, pages, or affiliates. This is including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Wikipedia, Foursquare, Google+, Instagram, Pinterest and all other social media websites listed here or not listed. For details about BGU's policy, please see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 30*.

Bakke Graduate University thanks any contributor in advance for their contributions to the university's social media pages, and for their compliance and assistance in creating a safe and vibrant online community. BGU abides by the European General Data Protection Regulations (EGDPR) (<https://gdpr-info.eu/>) in its communications. Any questions or concerns should be emailed to info@bgu.edu.

Wiki-websites & Artificial Intelligence (ChatGPT, etc.)

BGU discourages the use of Wiki-related websites since they are not academically peer reviewed. BGU also discourages the use of artificial intelligence programs like ChatGPT or Jasper to create original academic documents since those sources cannot be properly cited,

thus posing the issue of plagiarism. Furthermore, the information provided by such sources is often not academically reliable and may not reflect the original and critical thinking processes of the author.

Finally, students need to ensure that the privacy of the subjects of their research is protected. AI-related sources are not private nor encrypted, thus open to the whole world. Once something has been uploaded to one of these sites, that information becomes available to anyone who uses the service. Private or institutional proprietary data should thus not be shared over Wiki- or AI-related sites.

On the other hand, Wiki- and AI-related tools may be used to provide certain information that students may need to critically evaluate a particular topic or subject. See for instance the following article from the American Psychological Association:

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2023/06/chatgpt-learning-tool>.

Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) provides generally that: 1) students shall have the right of access to their educational records; and 2) educational institutions shall not release educational records to non-school employees without the consent of the student (or former student). With few exceptions, which are provided by law, students may see any of their educational records upon written request to the Registrar. For more details, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 31*.

Transcripts

All transcript requests must be authorized in person or in writing and must include the student's full name, Social Security number (US taxpayers only), date of birth, dates of attendance at BGU, the complete name and address of the office or person to whom the transcript is to be sent, and the signed authorization to release the transcript. There is a \$5.00 charge for every transcript issued. A minimum of *four days*' notice is required when requesting copies of official transcripts. A Transcript Request can be downloaded from the BGU website:

<https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/student-documents-to-download>.

Institutional Review Board

Bakke Graduate University (BGU) requires the conduct of ethical practices in relation to all research related to human subjects. BGU has adopted the guidelines outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 (Public Welfare), Part 46 (Protection of Human Subjects). This document is available at <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/regulations/45-cfr-46/index.html>

Before collecting data related to specific types of research with human subjects, all students, faculty, project supervisors, and other staff members must obtain approval from the BGU Institutional Review Board (IRB) when required by the guidelines established in Federal regulations § 45 CFR 46 and described in the *BGU Institutional Review Board Policy and Procedure Manual* (available on the BGU website). Engaging in research with human subjects without IRB approval when required has serious ethical implications and violates university and

Federal policies. Some categories of research that will probably require approval of the IRB include the following:

1. Research involving interaction with children
2. Research involving prisoners
3. Research that involves deception or withholding of information from subjects
4. Research that involves intense physical exercise
5. Research that may cause emotional distress or discomfort greater than what would be expected in daily life

The IRB team coordinator reports to the Academic Cabinet on a monthly basis. For more information on the types of research requiring IRB approval, visit the BGU website.

<https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/handbooks-catalogs>

Referral Policy

Current BGU students may earn tuition credit by referring a new student to BGU. For the guidelines and the complete policy, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 56*.

Academic Programs: Description, Requirements & Outcomes

Bakke Graduate University currently offers five U.S. Accredited Academic Programs. Students in all five programs are invited to attend courses with those in other degrees, thus providing them with the additional advantage of experiencing BGU's unique geographic, cultural, and organizationally diverse relationships. BGU degrees provide theological, operational, and personal skill sets for entry into the most diverse range of world realities, from a call and ministry with those in abject poverty to a call and ministry with those in the corridors of the powerful. All five programs engage the unique niche areas of expertise in the BGU network of students, alumni, and faculty. For a list of the areas of expertise for each of these individuals, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 32*.

Master of Arts in Transformational Leadership (MATL)

The Master of Arts in Transformational Leadership (MATL) degree is designed especially for urban ministry leaders who desire greater expertise and skill in leading transformation in cities or for leaders of start-up organizations or small to medium-sized existing organizations, who need practical skills in leading teams and organizations. Students can specialize in personal leadership development or dig deeper in the core topic areas of relief, development or advocacy. Students can also access a unique set of theological core courses designed for leaders working with younger populations in global urban centers. Through Elective and Capstone courses, this degree is designed to contribute to the student's unique personal and organizational needs. For the program outcomes, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 33*, and for the program outline, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 34*.

Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA)

Bakke Graduate University offers an accredited, values-driven Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) degree for working adults that takes into account the

worldwide marketplace trends and the need for organizations that are both socially responsible and profitable in today's global contexts. This degree is designed to provide students with the knowledge, perspective, models, mentors, relationships, and skills to address their work, their calling, and the whole of their life in an integrated manner. Leaders enrolled in this EMBA can be involved in for-profit, non-profit organizations (NGO) or governmental organizations. The EMBA is a hybrid program that includes both online and face-to-face courses and immersions into global best business practices. Students are exposed to cross-cultural, internationally-oriented faculty, case-studies, historic, and emerging trends in the various fields of substantive, advanced business study. Students will also have opportunities to travel as part of their education to see first-hand the application of these skill sets and principles. The BGU EMBA is unique as every topic is taught from the perspective of social, spiritual, economic and environmental transformation of students' own lives, their organizations, cities and industry sectors. BGU's EMBA graduates are prepared to integrate their work, character and calling to make a positive difference in their career and impact. For the program outcomes, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 35*, and for the program outline, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 36*.

Doctor of Ministry (DMin)

BGU's Doctor of Ministry (DMin) is a ministry degree program designed to enhance the leadership skills of individuals engaged in Christian ministry. BGU's DMin program is unique in many ways. We are not recruiting lone rangers into this program, but ministry leaders. The DMin is distinct from the PhD or ThD in that its primary focus is on implementing and strengthening effective ministry rather than preparing the participant for research or teaching in purely academic arenas. BGU follows the medical model of preparing doctors for surgery in the operating room. At BGU, the cities are the labs, and practitioners are professors. Although the DMin is not designed as simply a research degree, in recent years many seminary educators have chosen the DMin degree to enhance their ability to provide training relevant to practical issues in Christian ministry.

Those who pursue a DMin with BGU will obtain a doctoral education in the discipline of ministry to provide global transformation throughout the world. Students who have graduated with a DMin from BGU have utilized their degrees to:

- Plant global churches
- Develop and engage missional ministries throughout the world
- Pastor churches globally implementing ministries to transform lives and communities
- Develop faith-based non-profits
- Develop global mentoring ministries to disciple global communities
- Leadership development that has a global impact in the church and the community
- Develop ministries that assist individuals who are oppressed and abused to provide liberation and transformation

For the program outcomes, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 37*, and for the program outline, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 38*.

Doctor of Transformational Leadership (DTL)

The Doctor of Transformational Leadership (DTL) is designed for leaders in organizations that are focused on urban relief, development or advocacy, economic, political, social or cultural influence, from a Christian perspective. These organizations can be non-profit,

for-profit or government entities. BGU asks every student to write every assignment, including the Dissertation, in ways that benefit his/her sending organization. The DTL is distinct from the PhD or the EdD in that its primary focus is on implementing and strengthening effective organizational practices rather than preparing the participant for research or teaching in purely academic arenas. Once the student has completed his/her degree both the organization and the student will have been strengthened. For the program outcomes, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 39*, and for the program outline, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 40*.

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Innovative Urban Leadership

The PhD in Innovative Urban Leadership is designed to equip scholar-practitioners and thought leaders to innovate in the urban context. Leaders will accomplish this goal as they build on demonstrated leadership practice and research skills to exemplify sustainable and regenerative leadership grounded in collaboration, community, and context. For the program outcomes, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 51*. For the Program Outline, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 52*.

Degree Completion Requirements

For the details of each degree's completion requirements, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 41*.

High Honors

The designation of "High Honors" will be given to graduates, and designated on their diploma, when they have graduated with high honors in light of having attained an overall GPA of 4.0 or higher to attest to the high quality of their work. Graduating with honors is based on the GPA earned at BGU (not transferred credits).

Academic Calendar

To see the current academic calendar, refer to BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 42*.

Role of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors (hereinafter referred to as "the Board") has ultimate legal responsibility for governance of the institution. The Board is a legislative, not an executive, body with primary responsibility for the determination of policy. The Board's primary role is to ensure the financial and legal health of the school and to oversee the hiring, firing, and activities of the Chief Executive Officer (President). The Board establishes broad policies which are executed by the President and his/her executive administration. While the President is always free to recommend policy, the Board determines policy and carries out its programs and exercises its control through the President. The Board's major responsibility is to assist, guide, and evaluate the progress of the institution. The Board holds the President accountable for effective administration of the school. (See the Organizational Chart for lines of authority in BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 50* and the members of the Board of Directors in *Appendix 46*).

Staff and Faculty

See the following appendices for a complete list of BGU's administrative staff (BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 43*), adjunct faculty (BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 44*), resource faculty (BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 45*), Board of Regents (BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 47*), and all staff (BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 48*).

Academic Cabinet

The Chief Academic Officer is responsible for decisions affecting the academic integrity and effectiveness of the University and will delegate portions of this responsibility to the appropriate individual staff and faculty leaders. The Academic Cabinet serves as a standing advice process entity to support this effort. The Academic Cabinet advises regarding student acceptance and scheduling of courses, appointing of faculty, maintenance of all BGU academic documents such as the catalog, handbooks, curriculum, and syllabi.

Bakke Graduate University reserves the right, but is not obligated, to remove comments or posts that are racist, sexist, abusive, profane, violent, obscene or spam; that advocate illegal activity, include falsehoods, contain commercial solicitations, are wildly off-topic, or cannot be translated to English using free online tools; that libel, incite, threaten or make ad hominem attacks on BGU students, employees, guests or others. BGU also reserves the right to remove comments or posts that are deemed negative or offensive by the page's administrators. Violators will be banned from the page.

Office of the Registrar

The Registrar's Office arranges course schedules, receives and processes student admission applications and course registrations, and maintains a repository of academic records. Students should contact the Registrar for official and unofficial transcripts, registration information, financial account questions, issues concerning grades, and any other inquiries related to student records. Appointments may be scheduled for advisement on course schedules, class registration, etc., by contacting the Registrar Registrar@bgu.edu or calling Julia Burk at the BGU office at 214-329-4447 ext. 120.

Certificates

Intensive Certificates

Graduate Certificates and Professional Development Certificates are opportunities for life-long learners to glean from what BGU has to offer without the commitment to a full graduate-level degree. For more information on certificates, please see BGU Core Appendices – *Appendix 53*.

PART 2.

DISSERTATION HANDBOOK

Welcome to the BGU PhD Dissertation Handbook! This handbook aims at guiding you through your dissertation writing process.

You should begin thinking about your dissertation during your first course with Bakke Graduate University (BGU). As a PhD student, you will culminate your studies by researching and writing your dissertation. This handbook will help you accomplish that task. Since abbreviations are used extensively in this part of the handbook, please review the List of Abbreviations on page xxiv of this manual.

PhD Dissertation Framework

PhD Dissertation research has been framed for decades and centuries by the western and Greco-Latin philosophies and worldviews. As we operate in a global Christian university, it behooves us to question these underlying assumptions and to re-imagine what a global PhD dissertation could look like.

For decades and centuries perhaps, research methodologies at the highest levels have been dichotomized into quantitative or qualitative approaches. More recently, a ‘mixed approach’ has often been adopted. However, dichotomizing research approaches into qualitative and quantitative approaches is very western/Greco-Roman. The Enemy dichotomizes (splits in two) and brings death (a very strong visual would be Salomon threatening to split the only surviving baby into two and killing him!). BGU PhD Dissertations are called to be life-giving!

Preamble: Research from God's Perspective

Let us start to go back to God, the triune Creator while realizing that investigating and doing research is holy ground and an act of worship¹ as it is setting out to collaborate with the creative work of our Triune God. Hebrews 10:19 can help set the foundational framework for this.

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

The foundation of the Christian researcher is first the blood of Christ, but also the freedom that His blood has acquired us. If we do not realize the spiritual impact and significance

¹ Many thoughts shared in this section have been taken from: Martine Audéoud (2023). *Research as Worship*. Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft.

of our research, then we do not have this freedom. Thus, doing research is to worship. So how will we worship in doing this research? It is by putting our hearts in sync with God's heart so that we can look together with Him at present situations and reflect where change needs to take place. Then in Hebrews 10:20, we have this new way that is *new, living and open* through the veil (reference to the OT tabernacle). The way forward for research has thus three new qualities:

- *New*: A researcher is looking for new ways, systems, etc.
- *Living and life giving*: Research brings *LIFE*. Our research should breathe *LIFE* and bring *LIFE* by taking the old dichotomous paradigms (e.g. quantitative vs. qualitative, etc.) to a higher and life-giving level.
- *Open*: Research should not be limited and the researcher should be open to the above-mentioned newness. There are unlimited creative approaches that the Lord wants us to experience in research – because of His liberating blood.

We don't do this research alone. Someone has done this research before us while coming down on earth incarnationally while becoming this high-priest officiating on our behalf before the Father.

In Hebrews 10:22, we have the conditions, i.e. perhaps what we call the limitations, the biases of the researcher. How does the researcher do his/her worshipful research? With a heart that is truthful, sincere, that does not seek anything for itself. It is a heart that beats in unison with God's to find a solution to a research problem. It really does take time to enter into the heartbeat of God and to understand God's real intent in research. As we enter into God's presence, it does give courage and full assurance to do research, research that is contextualized and inculturalized, and that may take on new approaches compared to hundreds of years of traditional expectations of research. This assurance of faith will sustain us while our conscience is daily purified in His presence. This is part of our humanity that needs to be constantly placed in God's light and purified by Christ's blood. Also, externally, we need to have our 'bodies washed', i.e. purified by the influences that we receive, often unknowingly, through media, through our predecessors, through our readings, etc. It is by constantly going back to God, to His word, that we can come back to be in unison with God to bring *LIFE* through our research.

In Hebrews 13: 12-13 we read: *And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore.*

Jesus went out of the Jewish camp, out of the system, out of the trodden paths. As Christian researchers who seek to research in harmony and worship with God, we need to get out of the trodden paths and pre-established systems. There will be blessings while moving 'out of the camp', but there will also be suffering. We might bear His disgrace. But we don't go out anywhere, we go out towards HIM. He is the center of our worship in research and will give life to our research.

BGU's PhD Program Focus

BGU's PhD program focuses on training of scholar-practitioners, leaders who do scholarly research in order to solve a practical problem in their community and propose principles that will change individuals, families, organizations, and communities for the better. Because of this educational emphasis, BGU does not consider research methods as ends in themselves. Instead, those methods must undergird actions that innovate and transform. The data

you collect for a standard dissertation or a portfolio approach should result from systematic scholarly research—research that clearly leads to your proposed strategies for innovation and transformation. You are a scholar practitioner. As a scholar you do the research; and as a practitioner you follow up with ensuing innovative transformational strategies.

Consequently, what practical approaches to research could be envisaged?

A Trinitarian Research Dance

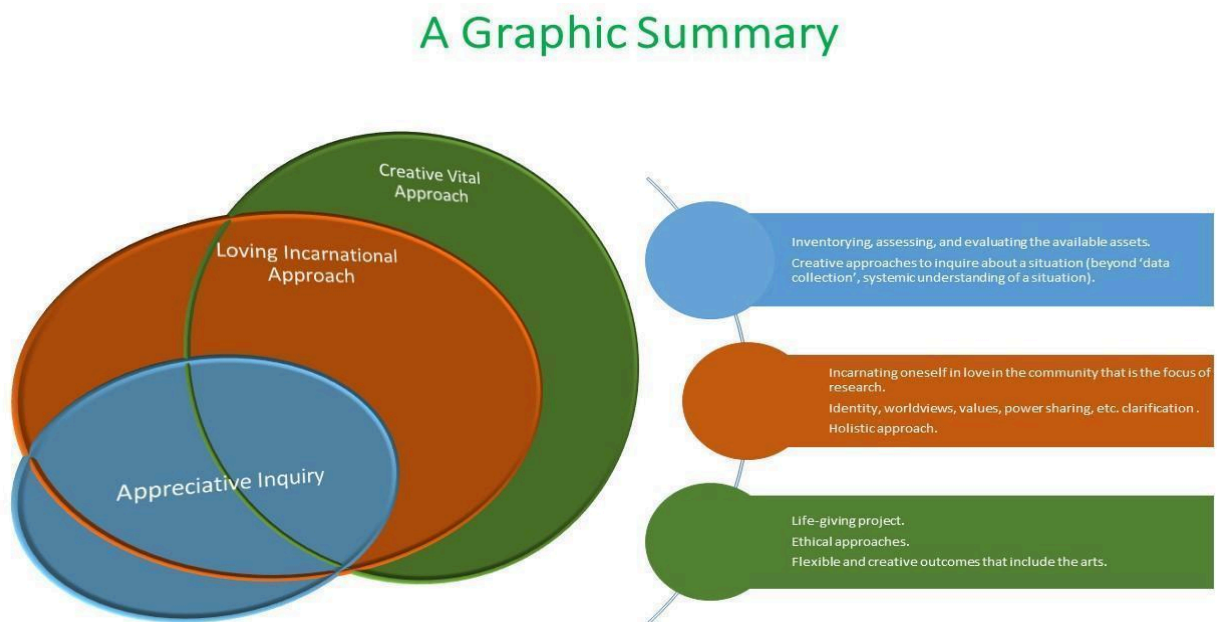
The Trinity, in love, relates to its creation for salvation and the creation of an abundance of life within an unpredictable dance. Therefore, we would like to invite each researcher to enter into this divine Trinitarian research dance while framing research within the following Trinitarian paradigms²:

- *Appreciative inquiry approach*, i.e. inventorying, assessing, and evaluating the available assets. This is action research. A biblical example for this approach would be Nehemiah's posture when he arrives in Jerusalem. He takes the time to understand the situation, its assets and liabilities from God's viewpoint, although the inhabitants of Jerusalem had gotten used to a very basic and insecure city and had lost the sense of the calling of their city.
 - Creative approaches to inquire about a situation (beyond 'data collection', systemic understanding of a situation)
- *Loving incarnational and relational approach*, i.e. incarnating oneself in love in the community that is the focus of research. To follow-up on our Nehemiah leader, in spite of his high-level position at the king's court, he moved to Jerusalem to live with his people, develop relationships and credibility while mobilizing them towards a change of their situation – because he loved God, he loved His people, he loved His city.
 - Identity, worldviews, values, power sharing, etc. clarification
 - Holistic approach
- *Creative vital approach*: Developing a research project needs to be a life-giving project. God has called his people to *reign in life* (Romans 5: 17) because of God's abundant grace. In spite of all the opposition, Nehemiah devised clever systems to rebuild the city and thus secure life and joy (Nehemiah 12:27) to its inhabitants.
 - Ethical approaches
 - Flexible and creative outcomes that include the arts

² The following article has been an inspiration: *Guiding Principles for Indigenous Research Practices* (<https://ucanr.edu/sites/creatingpartnerships/files/258879.pdf>) as well as numerous exchanges with research partners under the direction of Dr. Fohle Lygunda, Director of Africa Center of International Studies.

Figure 1

A Graphic Summary of Approaches



As life-giving research, the outcomes of your dissertation will also need to be congruent to the BGU PhD Program outcomes (please see Table 1).

Table 1

BGU PhD Program Outcomes

BGU PhD PROGRAM OUTCOMES	
Criteria	Ph.D. students will
Spiritual Formation – How will this program help students have increased trust in God while dynamically developing and stewarding their partnerships and networks?	- Demonstrate a biblical or theological basis for innovation in their life and work, especially in the context of authentic community. - Demonstrate personal spiritual growth that significantly demonstrates right relationships with God, self, others, and creation
Perspective – What shifts in worldview, mindset, new ways of seeing themselves, God, and others will result from this program? How are the BGU 8 perspectives addressed in this program?	- Engage and facilitate urban leaders in innovation and transformation to harness a culture of innovation - Facilitate transformation in urban institutions and organizations while embracing the eight perspectives of transformational leadership to advance God's kingdom: calling-based, incarnational, reflective, servant, contextual,

	shalom, prophetic, and global.
Knowledge – What knowledge is needed to accomplish Spiritual Formation and Perspective Transformation?	• Demonstrate that they have acquired knowledge, understanding, and value of how to conduct and apply research to the challenges and innovative contributions of urban living.
Skills – What hands-on skills will be taught, demonstrated, and evaluated in this program?	• Demonstrate the ability to conduct innovative, quality research, including a wide variety of research methodologies combined with excellent communication. • Demonstrate the ability to lead organization, community and team innovation while using a. proficiency in theories of organization and team innovation; and b. knowledge of how leadership styles and organizational culture impact organizational innovation
Application – How will the student apply the content of this program in their life and work during their studies and after they graduate?	• Use and apply measures of innovation in a significant transformation while a. identifying contextualized best practices of innovative leadership b. articulating why leaders need innovation c. identifying knowledge of the value of an innovative leadership model to an organization d. helping urban leaders identify their organization's innovative profile

The syllabi for all your BGU classes, as well as the dissertation writing courses, include the “Eight Perspectives of Transformational Leadership” taught at BGU. These perspectives are *calling-based*; *incarnational*; *reflective*; *servanthood-based*; *contextual*; *prophetic*; *shalom-oriented*; and *global*. Transformational leadership aims to empower church congregations, other organizations, communities, cities, and entire cultures to allow people to experience greater levels of God’s shalom. Your dissertation will demonstrate one or more (optimally all) of the eight perspectives of transformational leadership.

Your Research from a Practical Perspective

The biblical story of the Aramean siege of Samaria (2 Kings 7:3-14) illustrates some of the steps involved in applied research.

Problem statement. People in Samaria are starving because the Arameans have laid siege to their city. Four men with leprosy, just outside the city gate, face an impossible choice. If they enter the city, they will starve. If they surrender to the Arameans, they will be killed.

Research. The four outcasts decide to cross over to the Arameans. “We will die either way,” they say, “so let’s take our chances with the enemy.” Their findings surprise

them. The Arameans have completely abandoned their encampment. Food is everywhere, and the famished “researchers” begin gorging themselves.

Application. It dawns on the leprous “research team” that they must share their findings with their starving fellow residents of Samaria. Back they go and announce what they have found to the gatekeepers, who then inform the government. The news transforms conditions within the city. Soon, there is abundant food and starvation ceases.

The PhD program is a research-practitioner’s degree program with an emphasis on the application of research to professional practice. Your BGU dissertation may be developed in a standardized dissertation format, or you may use a “portfolio approach” (see Appendix C). Either of these approaches will immerse you in four major steps of *applied research*.

1. Identify a problem that requires leadership within a given context.
2. Research existing literature to learn what others have done regarding the problem.
3. Research conceptual, theoretical, and empirical data by collecting and analyzing information from people within your context to help you understand the problem and factors that could be involved in solutions.
4. Propose recommendations that apply to your findings to individuals, families, communities, for-profit or nonprofit groups, church congregations, other types of organizations, or entire cultures.

BGU’s PhD program focuses on training of scholar-practitioners, leaders who do scholarly research to solve a practical problem in their community and propose principles that will change individuals, families, organizations, and communities for the better. Because of this educational emphasis, BGU does not consider research methods as ends in themselves. Instead, those methods must undergird actions that innovate and transform. The data you collect for a standard dissertation or a portfolio approach should result from systematic scholarly research—research that clearly leads to your proposed strategies for innovation and transformation. You are a scholar-practitioner. As a scholar you do the research; and as a practitioner you follow up with ensuring implementation of innovative transformational strategies.

Your dissertation project will involve personal interaction with a population of people within your context. As a participant-researcher, you will work in partnership with many other people to understand and propose lasting solutions to the problem on which you are focusing. You will also need to collaborate with your Personal Learning Community (PLC) as vital members of your dissertation project development team. Your PLC members can help you to integrate your dissertation project within your communities, organizations, and local/regional/national church bodies.

Timeline

A timeline applicable to the year before graduation will be shared with graduating students.

Time Limits for Project Completion

Failure to meet non-negotiable deadlines in the timeline will generally result in your graduation being delayed until the following year. Any exceptions must be approved by the Academic Dean. Financial penalties will be incurred. If you plan to graduate at a time beyond 7 years from the date you started, you must submit a Program Extension Request to the Academic Dean.

If you fail to graduate in the original year, graduation will be moved to the following year. The tuition rate for the dissertation process will be adjusted to the new tuition rate. A financial penalty of up to \$800 may be incurred if you are listed as a graduate in the Registrar's records, but fail to give a 90-day notice, indicating you will not complete the dissertation and Oral Review process in time for the graduation ceremony. Any extensions beyond the seven-year maximum require the Academic Dean's approval upon submission of a Program Extension Request.

Writing Standards

Dissertations are to be written based on APA7 writing standards based on the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th Edition). Proposal and dissertation templates are available on the BGU website or from the Academic Dean. If you write your dissertation in your mother language that is not English, you must present a final version to BGU which meets the English standards and formatting and includes an abstract in English.

Each dissertation is expected to be worthy of publication. The BGU Main Library in Dallas, Texas, maintains bound copies of all dissertations and supporting documentation for graduates from 1999 to 2021. A PDF version of all dissertations are available in the Populi online library. Your dissertation will be available on the BGU website if you sign a dissertation release agreement form. Dissertations should be a minimum of 200 pages and a maximum of 300 pages within the text body. Minimum page requirements may be negotiated when there is considerable original content in the appendix or for a portfolio approach. The charge for the technical editing of your dissertation will be calculated based on the number of pages and the time it takes to do the technical review of the dissertation. Unfortunately, this price cannot be anticipated ahead of time, but will be added to your account once the technical review is finished.

Research Design

Dissertations must include a well-argued research design methods approach (qualitative, quantitative, action research, appreciative inquiry, case study, or mixed-methods). This design will guide your data gathering process which is intended to provide an understanding of the problem from the perspective of the dissertation project participants. The research process must lead to the proposal of innovative transformational strategies. In addition to a convincing

rationale for choosing the specific design, there must be a full description of and rationale for the sampling methods used to select the participants in the dissertation project.

The alternative portfolio approach may include creative means for implementing research for the dissertation project. However, acceptable research methods must still be used in scholarly form (see Appendix C). Various research methods are available for gathering relevant data and facilitating interaction among the people involved in the dissertation project. Several research tools are discussed in the Research Methodology courses (see Table 1 for a sample of research tools).

Table 2

Sample of Research Tools

Tools	Description
Interview	Face to face, Zoom (or other video-conferencing platforms) or phone conversations
Survey/Questionnaire	Distributed via mail, email, or a web-based instrument designed to collect data on specific issues related to your dissertation project
Narrative	First-hand personal stories that provide a view of reality from a specific person's perspective
Focus Groups	Short-term or ad-hoc groups designed to provide a forum to discuss issues related to the dissertation project
Participant Observation	Researcher functions as both observer and participant with people in the community dissertation projects

Basic Dissertation Design

As described later in this handbook, you have a few options regarding the format for your dissertation. However, all dissertations must meet the following minimal standards:

1. address a specific problem or opportunity for transformation and innovation related to your context with a practical design implementation strategy;
2. demonstrate doctoral level critical thinking which includes clearly articulated, documented arguments for every claim made in the dissertation report;
3. show clear goals and implementation steps;
4. include an appropriate qualitative and/or quantitative research design to be applied to a clearly identified sample of people from the population involved in your dissertation project;
5. identify effective innovative transformational strategies to mobilize appropriate resources to begin to address the specific problem or opportunity;
6. include an evaluation strategy to determine how well the dissertation research methods and innovative transformational strategies met stated goals;

7. reflect the cultural context and desired purposes of a community or organization (for example, the dissertation should not present a western solution in a nonwestern context);
8. show awareness of the past and present, while interrupting the status quo to produce positive transformation in the lives of people, organizations, and communities;
9. serve as a possible resource to others in similar roles and contexts (target audiences for whom the dissertation would be replicable must be identified in the audience section of the introduction chapter along with possible publication/distribution strategies to these audiences);
10. reflect insights from appropriate inter-disciplinary fields of study (e.g. community development approaches, business models, communication strategies, theological principles, psychological/sociological models, etc.) in relation to the dissertation project;
11. demonstrate a clear and concise writing style based on the APA format (current standard is APA 7th Edition); and,
12. show evidence of collaborative learning within the candidate's PLC and among other people affected by the dissertation project.

Demonstrated Knowledge and Skills for All Dissertations

Throughout your dissertation process, you will be expected to demonstrate that you have gained specific knowledge and skills required for a doctoral degree. The following sections briefly describe these expectations.

Demonstrated Knowledge

Your dissertation should demonstrate that you have gained or strengthened your knowledge to do the following:

1. compare/contrast various cultural worldviews based on an incarnational understanding;
2. identify characteristics of global economies and interdependence, assessing their contextual relevance;
3. identify effective innovative transformational community development approaches;
4. identify effective organizational approaches including entrepreneurial endeavors;
5. critically assess past and current knowledge and conceptual frameworks related to your specific dissertation project topic;
6. identify your own worldview, assumptions, biases, and emotional responses;
7. compare/contrast various research methodologies and data-gathering approaches; and,
8. identify/compare/contrast biblical and secular principles of transformational leadership.

Demonstrated Skills

Your dissertation should demonstrate that you have gained or strengthened your skills in the following areas:

1. excellent implementation of several of the eight BGU transformational leadership skills;
2. effective communication, collaboration, and leadership skills with people of diverse cultures and backgrounds;
3. effective project and team management skills with ability to delegate responsibilities and implement assessment/accountability processes;
4. excellent creative problem-solving skills;
5. doctoral level critical thinking and writing skills;
6. thorough critical awareness of conceptual frameworks applicable to solving your research problem;
7. appropriate use of qualitative, quantitative, or mix-methods research skills;
8. excellent design and use of data-gathering approaches;
9. effective use of graphical tools to display, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate data;
10. critical use of online libraries, search engines, databases, and other online resources with ability to evaluate validity and usefulness of online content; and,
11. integration of systematic inquiry research skills with application to professional practice resulting in the transformation of individuals, families, organizations, and communities with success criteria based on biblical principles.

Summary of Dissertation Phases

You are encouraged to begin thinking about a dissertation focus during the first course of your program. This early dissertation project concept formulation allows you to tailor your subsequent courses to inform your dissertation development. More details are provided throughout this handbook. The following is a summary of the dissertation phases.

Phase 1: Course Reflections

In every course, you should be asking yourself, *What did I learn today that will inform my dissertation?* Recording these insights into a course journal will allow quick access of valuable information when it comes time to write the dissertation. Another useful technique while taking courses is to maintain an ongoing document to store segments from class papers, quotations from reading resources and other research items that may be useful for your dissertation. You should also be in continual conversations with your PLC communities as you develop a dissertation project within your cultural context.

Phase 2: Research Methods Courses

You need to enroll into your Research Methods courses where you will develop your Dissertation Proposal (DP). *The proposal must be submitted to the Registrar by July 20 in the year prior to anticipated graduation.* The PhD Program Director, in consultation with the PhD Advisory Team (PhDAT) will determine if any changes are necessary before final approval is given. Based on this submission deadline, it is recommended that you enroll in the final proposal writing course (RES801b) no later than the January term (January to March) in the year prior to anticipated graduation.

Phase 3: Dissertation Supervisor, Dissertation Committee, and Comprehensive Exams.

You need to select your dissertation supervisor (DS) during your proposal writing courses (RES 801a and 801b). Your DS must have an earned PhD, preferably in a related field, and sufficient time to work with you to complete the dissertation process over about a one-year period. If the potential DS is not a member of the BGU faculty or has not been previously approved by BGU, you will need to arrange for their vita to be submitted to the PhD Program Director who will forward to the PhDAT and the AC for approval.

In addition to a supervisor, in conjunction with the PhD Program Director and the PhDAT, you will need to constitute a Dissertation Committee (DC). At least three members of the DC need to hold a Ph.D. These committee members should be approved by the Academic Cabinet.

- The Committee Chair will be the dissertation supervisor (needs to hold a PhD).
- One of the Committee members will be a BGU representative (needs to hold a PhD).
- One of the Committee members will be a content expert.
- At least one of the Committee members will be external to BGU and belong to the community of the dissertation writer (Context Expert).

The DC, in conjunction with the PhDAT and the PhD Program Director, will set up a Comprehensive Examination that you will need to take *before* starting to write your dissertation, after your proposal is approved by the AC.

Phase 4: Dissertation Course Registration

You should register and pay for the Dissertation Part 1 course (DIS 802a) prior to taking the Comprehensive Exams. Your Comprehensive Examinators are paid from these course fees, so it is essential that you arrange payment in a timely manner. After you have passed the Comprehensive Exams, you will begin writing the dissertation chapters.

- DIS 802a focuses on your taking the Comprehensive Exams and on writing Chapter 1 of your dissertation.
- DIS 802b focuses on writing your Chapter 2 (Literature Review) and your Chapter 3 (Research Methods) of your dissertation or your foundational chapters if you choose to use another dissertation outline.
- DIS 802c focuses on writing your Chapter 4 (Data Collection and Analysis) or your last chapters of your dissertation (except for the conclusion and recommendations).

- DIS 802d focuses on writing your last chapter (Recommendations and Conclusion) of your dissertation, doing your Dissertation Defense (DD) and making the final corrections on your dissertation.

Phase 6: Editors and Proofreaders

The DS should determine if the first draft of the dissertation needs the services of a professional writing editor or proofreader. If the writing does not meet BGU standards, you will be required to hire and pay for an editor.

Phase 7: Role of the Dissertation Committee

Under the guidance of your DS, you will need to do your research and write your dissertation in conjunction with your Dissertation Committee (DC). Your DC will need to approve the final draft of your dissertation. Your Dissertation Committee will:

1. administer the Comprehensive Exams under the supervision of the PhD Academic Coordinator;
2. guide you during your research and dissertation writing process;
3. read a completed draft of the dissertation and approve the draft by submitting to the GC the *Evaluation Criteria for Dissertation* (Appendix E);
4. pay attention to issues such as clarity of writing, critical thinking, overall organization of the dissertation project report, and innovative leadership contribution of the dissertation project; and,
5. participate as a member of your DD committee.

Phase 8: BGU Technical Reader

After you have revised your dissertation document based on recommendations from your DS and DC, you will need to email a Microsoft Word document of your dissertation to the PhD Program Director for approval. The document will then be forwarded to the BGU Technical Reader (TR) who will review the document for grammar and conformity to APA standards. You will then revise your dissertation based on recommendations from the TR and again receive approval from your DS.

Phase 9: Dissertation Defense

In addition to submitting a written dissertation, you are required to participate in a Dissertation Defense (DD) process designed to appraise the value of your dissertation project. Consideration will be given to the following:

1. the relevance of conceptual frameworks based on literature generated especially from within your specific context;
2. the relevance of well-formulated research questions that address the defined problem of your dissertation project;
3. the thoroughness and applicability of your research design;
4. the relevance and innovativeness of your recommendations; and,

5. the quality of your innovative transformational leadership demonstrated through the dissertation project.

You may schedule your DD through the Graduation Coordinator (GC) after you have satisfactorily made revisions in your dissertation document based on the review by the BGU TR and received approval from your DS. Specific procedures for the DD are described later in this handbook.

Phase 10: Archiving of Dissertations

Before final submission of the dissertation to the GC, the document must show satisfactory revisions based on recommendations from the DC. After these revisions are completed and approved by the DS, a final digital document is to be sent by email to the GC. Dissertations in PDF form will be placed in the BGU Library. Students are free to print copies of their dissertation.

Figure 2

Graphic of Research Methods Courses

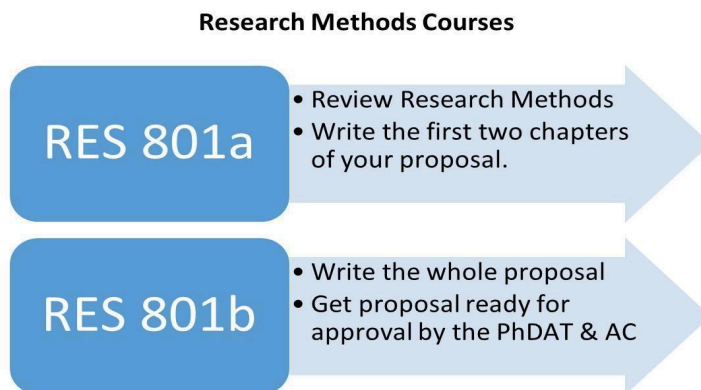
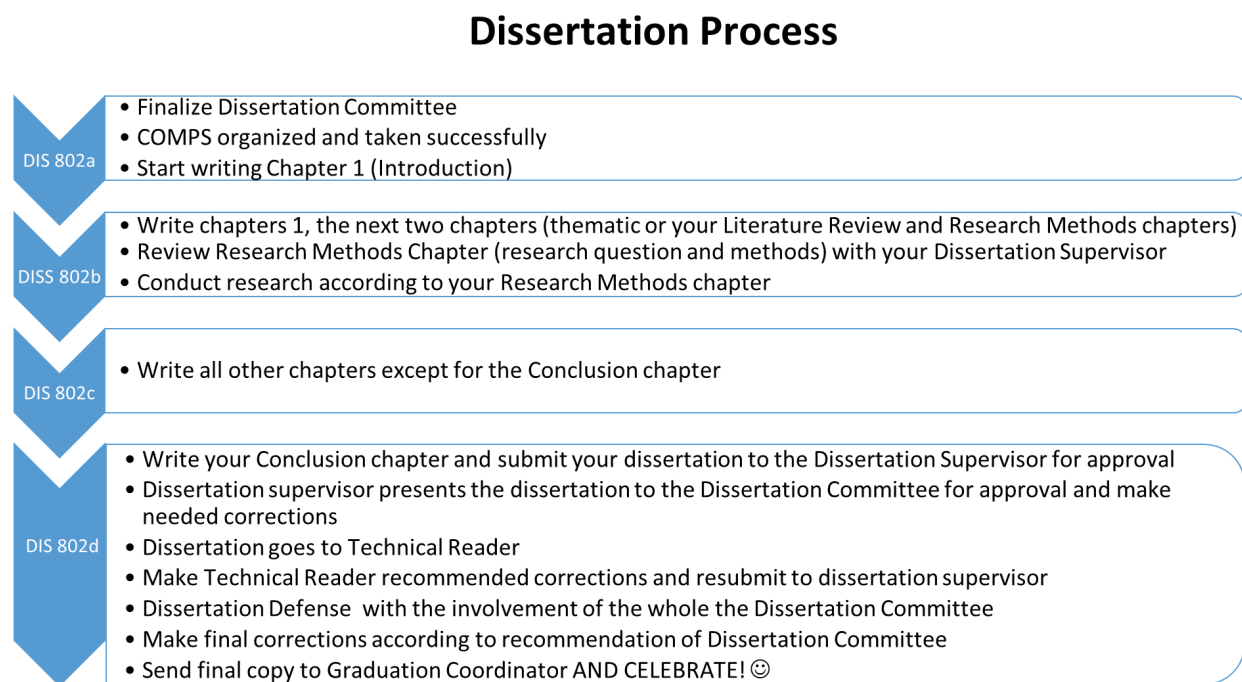


Figure 3

Graphic of Dissertation Process



Dissertation Options

The PhD degree program provides training for transformational leaders who are able to apply innovatively research and collaborative skills to help entities such as families, the workplace, nonprofit and for-profit organizations, and communities to solve their problems innovatively.

Standard Dissertation Format

A PhD dissertation may be developed in accordance with a standard dissertation format, generally comprised of the following chapters: 1) Introduction; 2) Literature Review (including biblical and transformational leadership sections); 3) Research Methodology; 4) Data Collection and Analysis; and 5) Discussion (see Appendix B). It is also acceptable to organize the written dissertation report thematically. For example, you could develop a standard introduction chapter followed by several chapters related to various topics relevant to the dissertation project. Each of these chapters would include a review of literature relevant to a topic, a research method, and the results. A dissertation organized in this alternative manner would conclude with a standard discussion chapter.

For either of these approaches, the dissertation will include the following procedures:

1. identify a problem to address;

2. determine your purpose for the dissertation project by indicating objectives that relate specially to the defined problem within your particular context;
3. develop a conceptual framework based on the work of other scholars and practitioners, especially within your country's context, that can be applied to your defined problem;
4. develop a literature review that thoroughly describes the components of your conceptual framework with two required sections on how biblical foundations and transformational leadership principles relate to your dissertation project;
5. design a research methodology for collecting relevant empirical data;
6. provide a detailed analysis of the collected data using appropriate tables, charts, and graphs to clearly display the data to be analyzed;
7. design an innovative transformational strategy to begin to address the issue at hand,
8. evaluate the validity, reliability, and generalizability of the research data collected and the effectiveness and sustainability of the innovative transformational strategy proposed through the dissertation project; and,
9. provide recommendations for future work and research related to the problem or opportunity.

Portfolio Approach

While the traditional dissertation approach generally results in a five-chapter written document, the portfolio approach may be implemented in a variety of forms to address issues related to individuals, families, the workplace, various organizations, communities, cities and countries. As the term *portfolio* implies, this type of dissertation project may include one or more creative approaches to address an issue. However, the written document for a portfolio approach must include the content expected in the first three chapters of a standard dissertation: introduction to the problem, literature review, and the research and dissertation project methodology (see Appendix C).

Personal Learning Community

You identified a Personal Learning Community (PLC) prior to being considered for acceptance into BGU (see the student catalog). This group is comprised of three to five significant people within your work or ministry environment. They provide you with moral support and a collaborative learning opportunity for your learning experience at BGU. Your PLC needs to be committed to reading your project paper for each course, to praying for you regularly, and to meeting with you four times a year to provide encouragement and strategic direction. Some of these meetings may involve a BGU program director or faculty member facilitating the conversation. Regarding your dissertation, your PLC should assist you in effectively relating the dissertation project to your context and providing networking opportunities relevant to your dissertation project. They can often connect you with valuable community resources and key personnel. Regarding your dissertation, the PLC's responsibilities include:

1. evaluating your context to determine an appropriate dissertation that addresses a real need;
2. guiding you in design, implementation, and evaluation of the dissertation; and,
3. reading your dissertation and providing valuable input in terms of its relevance and workability in addressing the stated problem.

Since the PLC is committed to reading your project papers for each of your courses throughout the BGU learning experience, they will be familiar with issues that have informed the development of your dissertation. Your PLC members may also be stakeholders of your dissertation and you are encouraged to involve them throughout your dissertation process.

Dissertation Supervisor

Identifying Dissertation Supervisor

A Dissertation Supervisor (DS) is to be selected during the RES 801a&b courses (proposal writing). You may suggest a supervisor that you have in mind, but you should contact the PhD Program Director for qualifications of approved supervisors. If you select a supervisor who has not been previously approved by BGU, you will need to arrange for the potential supervisor's vitae to be submitted to the PhD Program Director for approval by the PhDAT and the Academic Cabinet. If the DS has not been selected by the conclusion of the RES801a&b courses, the PhD Program Director or the PhD Academic Coordinator will assist you in identifying someone. You should also review the list of current faculty members (full-time, part-time, and adjunct) who hold a PhD, since they are all generally approved as dissertation supervisors. (See requirements listed in the next sections.) Your PLC may also have suggestions for a supervisor.

Supervisor's Role

Your DS is required to have an earned PhD degree and is expected to be familiar with the requirements of mentoring PhD candidates. Your DS is responsible for guiding you through all phases of the dissertation, articulating the program and institutional standards, serving as the primary reader for both content and writing style, and participating in your Oral Review (OR). Using a graded copy of the *draft* DP from the research courses, you and your DS will produce a completed DP will then be reviewed for approval by the PhDAT. Before submitting your DP to the PhDAT review, you need approval from your DS and DC (see evaluation form in Appendix D). Your DS will function in the following ways:

1. read and approve your proposal before it is submitted for PhDAT review using the *Evaluation Criteria for Dissertation Proposal* (Appendix D) as the approval form;
2. read each chapter of your dissertation as you develop the chapters, providing critical feedback on issues such as clarity of writing, use of good critical thinking skills, appropriate research methodology, impact of the transformational impact of the dissertation project, and overall organization of the dissertation;
3. read a completed draft of the dissertation and approve the draft by submitting to the GC using the *Evaluation Criteria for Dissertation* (Appendix E); and,

4. participate as a member of your DD committee.

Required Documents from the Dissertation Supervisor

There are several documents that the DS will be required to sign:

1. *Dissertation Supervisor Contract* – This document will be sent directly to your DS for a signature. The supervisor should sign and return the contract along with a vita and a signed W9 form. No payment will be issued to the DS until these documents have been received and you have paid the tuition for part 1 of the Dissertation (DIS 802a). After you have paid the tuition, the first half of the contracted amount will be paid to the DS.
2. *Dissertation Signature Page* – Two copies of the Dissertation Signature Page will be sent to the DC to be signed. These pages will be inserted into your dissertation in PDF form. Signature pages are due to the GC no later than March 15 of the graduation year so they can be inserted into your dissertation for finalization. The DS may choose to provide an electronic signature to the GC which can then be inserted into the Dissertation Signature Page.
3. *Evaluation Criteria for Dissertation Proposal* – The DS is to submit this evaluation form of the dissertation project proposal to the GC who will forward on to the PhDAT for approval (see Appendix D).
4. *Evaluation Criteria for Dissertation* – DS and DC Members are to submit this evaluation form as their approval for the dissertation draft to be submitted for a technical review (see Appendix E).
5. *Oral Review Evaluation Form* – You will participate in a DD (described later in this handbook), and your DC will fill out and submit a standard DD Evaluation form and return to the GC (see Appendix F).

Communication Issues with Dissertation Supervisors

It is important that you and your DS understand the expectations for how each will contribute to and facilitate various working relationships, including the roles of other readers, editors, and proofreaders. Below are some suggestions and guidelines for building an effective relationship between you and DS.

1. Agree on reasonable and clearly defined time frames and communication processes for you to submit your work in chapters to your DS and for the supervisor's responses (the supervisor should respond with written instructions).
2. Identify standards for the evaluation and revision process, including references to comments and recommendations received from the Research Methods course professors.
3. Discuss shared expectations for interacting with the hired editors and proofreaders.

Given the specific demands associated with each dissertation project, you and your DS have freedom to determine your meeting schedule. Meetings can be face-to-face, by email, online, or by telephone. If for any reason you or your DS experience repeated difficulties in keeping agreed upon schedules or other problems in the working relationship, the PhD Program Director should be contacted. You and your DS are strongly encouraged to keep a work record of the meetings and correspondence to facilitate communication and a productive workflow.

The Other Members of your Dissertation Committee

The other members of your Dissertation Committee (DC) serve as advisors for you and are expected to:

1. read a completed draft of the dissertation and approve the draft by submitting to the GC the *Evaluation Criteria for Dissertation* (Appendix E);
2. pay attention to issues such as clarity of writing, critical thinking, overall organization of the dissertation, and innovative leadership contribution of the dissertation project; and,
3. participate as a member of your DD committee.

At least three (3) of your DC members are required to have a terminal PhD degree or equivalent. A written evaluation by the DC Members should be sent to the DS and the GC. If DC Members are not members of the BGU Faculty or Adjunct Faculty, their vita, email address, and telephone number should be sent to the GC who will forward to the PhD Program Director for approval. A contract will be emailed to the DC Members describing responsibilities and fees. The DC members (not including the DS) will be paid \$300 to cover their contribution to your dissertation from the Comprehensive Exam until the completion of the dissertation process.

Editors and Readers

Given the availability of computer technology, it is expected that you will avail yourself of the appropriate technology required for producing a first-rate written product. The quality of the work should reflect attention to writing techniques such as grammar, spelling, content, organizational structure, standard formatting style required in your degree program, critical thinking, and bias-free communication. You are highly encouraged to use an online grammar program such as Grammarly to review your own work.

The quality of content and selection of style must be worthy of publication. The dissertation will be listed in various dissertation databases and will likely be drawn upon by future doctoral program candidates, as well as other candidates who are studying Christian leadership.

Proofreader

In addition to your DS and DC, a good proofreader is a critical asset to the overall presentation of the dissertation document. The proofreader should also assess your dissertation in terms of grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and general organization of the dissertation.

Editor

Based on reviews of the dissertation first draft by the DS, you may be required to hire an editor to ensure good quality in terms of grammar, sentence construction, overall organizational structure, and conformity to a designated writing standard required in your specific degree program. Although not required in all cases, securing a good editor is helpful to ensure that the dissertation has a quality of content and style worthy of publication. Remuneration for the editor is your responsibility. If English is your second language, you are encouraged to hire an editor familiar with the APA writing standard and for whom English is their first language to ensure correction of common grammatical errors. BGU's Writing Center may provide you with the names of potential editors. The TR may return your dissertation without reading it if it is obvious that you have not followed doctoral-level writing standards.

BGU's Technical Reader

After revisions are made to the dissertation based on recommendations from your DS, a possible editor, and the DC, a Microsoft Word document of the dissertation is to be emailed to the GC who will forward it to the PhD Program Director for a final review before the technical review. The dissertation will then be sent to the BGU TR who reviews the dissertation document for issues such as grammar, punctuation, plagiarism, and conformity to the APA format. Also, please use an online program designed to check for any plagiarism (tools are available in the online dissertation courses). If the TR finds evidence of plagiarism in an initial review of your dissertation, the document will be sent back to you for appropriate revisions before the technical review process can continue. You will make required revisions to your dissertation based on recommendations from the TR. The revised document is then again sent to your DS for approval. The BGU TR should not be confused with your own hired editor or proofreader. You will need to arrange for fees for these service providers. The TR fee is in addition to your graduation fee and is calculated based on the number of pages of your final dissertation.

Dissertation Proposal Development

You may use a standard five-chapter format, a thematically organized format, or a portfolio approach for your dissertation. For all formats, you will need to submit a Dissertation Proposal (DP). In conjunction with your DS, prepare a final version of your DP for submission to the PhDAT for review and approval. Once the dissertation is approved by the PhDAT, any other major changes to the proposal must be approved by the PhD Program Director. It will be assumed that your dissertation will be implemented and reported in accordance with the proposal unless approval is requested for revisions. The DP is generally 80 pages (+/- 10%) in length within the body text. All proposals need to be written within a designated template available on the BGU website and BGU's online library in Populi.

Dissertation Development

As has been previously indicated, you have a few options regarding the type of format you will use for your dissertation. However, no matter what option you select, the written report of your dissertation must be of high academic quality and worthy of publication. From the very first draft of the dissertation to the final manuscript, the document is to be written in good English grammar and sentence structure in accordance with APA standards. Proper

documentation must be included for all statistics, graphs, tables, direct quotations, and summarized opinions of various authors. Broad generalizations and opinions without proper documentation will not be accepted. Scripture references are to be placed in parentheses after the narrative Scripture within the body text of the dissertation, not rendered as footnotes. The specific content for the dissertation must be contextualized to your context. The dissertation is to be a minimum of 200 pages and a maximum of 300 pages in total length (not including front matter pages, appendices, reference list/bibliography, and vita). A dissertation of fewer pages may be accepted if there is considerable original content in the appendix or in a portfolio format.

After approvals of your DP from the DS, DC, and PhDAT, you can develop your dissertation. As previously mentioned, any major changes to the DP must be approved by the PhD Program Director. After you have completed the first draft of your dissertation and received approvals from your DS and DC, it is to be submitted to the GC who will forward it to the PhD Program Director for review before the technical review. You are responsible for obtaining permission to quote published sources, providing accurately quoted material, ensuring there are complete and detailed references, and addressing any other matters related to the final written format and production of the dissertation.

After you have completed the final manuscript of your dissertation and have completed your Dissertation Defense with required approvals, you need to send a Microsoft Word version of the dissertation to the GC who will coordinate the final processing of the dissertation.

Nondiscriminatory Language

BGU is firm in its commitment to the equality of women and men of every race and ethnic background and strictly enforces respect and reverence for all persons regardless of age, economic status, ethnicity, gender, and race. BGU requires all members of the community, board, administration, faculty, staff, and candidates to use language that exemplifies equality in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in writing. Therefore, candidates are expected to strive for accurate, unbiased communication and avoid debasing terms, stereotypes, and oppressive language within their dissertations. Candidates are strongly encouraged to read *Guidelines for Bias-Free Writing* by Marilyn Schwartz (1995) before they start to write their dissertations. The book *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach for Doctor of Ministry Theses* by Tim Sensing (2022) also contains excellent guidelines for unbiased communication.

Ethical Research Standards

BGU requires that all dissertations and other writing assignments conform to the ethical standards established by various professional associations, which include at least two principles related to writing at BGU. First, the rights and welfare of research participants must be protected, which often means using standards of anonymity unless given permission to use a person's name. BGU conforms to the standards for human research as established by the US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). An Institutional Review Board (IRB) Policy and Procedures Manual describes the requirements for all human research conducted by BGU students and faculty. These requirements are especially applicable to research involving *vulnerable populations* and/or *sensitive topics*. All proposals are reviewed by the PhD Program Director to determine if they need further review by the IRB for conformity to IRB requirements.

Second, intellectual property rights must be protected. This type of protection means using quotation marks for all direct quotations with appropriate documentation, citing of references for all opinions or other materials that are those of other authors, and appropriate permissions granted based on strict copyright contracts related to some content. Please use online programs such as Grammarly, Unicheck or a similar web-tool to check for possible plagiarism issues. Outright plagiarism is not acceptable. However, a margin of up to 15% similarity detected by a web-based similarity/plagiarism checker is considered acceptable. Over 20% similarity is deemed unacceptable.

Dissertation Defense

The Dissertation Defense (DD) is the final assessment process for the PhD degree program. After the technical review is completed, you need to make the required revisions based on that review. When your DS and DC have determined that your dissertation has met BGU standards, the supervisor will grant approval for you to schedule the DD.

The voting Dissertation Committee (DC) will consist of a designated BGU Representative, and your DC. Members of your Personal Learning Community (PLC) are encouraged to participate in the online DD, although they are not considered as voting members of the committee. Others may also be included as observers but are not voting members of the DC. The DD will usually require between one or two hours.

Because PhD candidates come from all over the world, the DD is generally conducted using an online conference platform. BGU personnel will schedule the online conference based on information you provide on the DD Scheduling Form. You are also required to provide PowerPoint slides (or other forms of visuals) for a 20- to 30-minute presentation you will share at your DD (see presentation outline below). You are highly encouraged to attend or review videos for a few DDs before your own.

Dissertation Defense Scheduling Process

Your DD will be arranged based on the scheduling process that follows.

1. After completing revisions to your dissertation based on recommendations from the technical review and receiving approval from your DS, you are to schedule the DD with the GC.
2. The GC will email the DD Scheduling Form to you.
3. You are responsible for contacting your DS and DC members to determine a convenient date and time for your DD. You will then communicate this information back to the GC using the DD scheduling form.
4. You are to submit the final DD scheduling form to the GC who will email instructions to DD participants. The BGU Representative is the facilitator for the online conference unless the Representative requests a different arrangement.
5. You will need to email a copy of your dissertation to members of the DC no less than one week before the DD date. As previously mentioned, you will need to prepare PowerPoint

slides (or other forms of visual presentations) highlighting the main points of your 20- to 30-minute presentation (see presentation outline below).

6. The GC will email the Dissertation Defense Evaluation Form to all DD participants approximately ten days before the scheduled DD date. This form is used as the criteria for your DC to evaluate your dissertation and DD session (see Appendix F).
7. The Dissertation Defense Evaluation Form is generally completed online by your DC and signed by the voting members of your DC (electronic signatures are acceptable). Immediately following the DD, the DS or BGU Representative will email the form to the GC.

Components of the Dissertation Defense

The BGU Representative will facilitate the DD session. To begin the DD session, you will give a presentation (15-20 minutes – Please respect that timeframe!) that covers the following topics (as previously indicated – provide Power Point slides).

1. What is the specific problem or opportunity addressed in the dissertation project?
2. What is the context of the dissertation project in terms of background and the current situation? In what specific ways did you try to adapt the dissertation project to your cultural context?
3. What are the essential components of the conceptual frameworks for your research (key models, principles, research findings, and conceptual frameworks you needed to be aware of)?
4. What are some of the most important literature sources you found helpful for the dissertation project and what sources are representative of the specific culture in which the dissertation project was implemented?
5. What are the main theological principles related to the dissertation project?
6. Describe the research design used (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods) and give your rationale for why you think this approach was best for your dissertation project.
7. Summarize the results of the research phase of your dissertation project.
8. What is the innovative transformational strategy that you recommend to begin to address the problem and what innovative transformational results are expected?
9. What communication strategies did you find helpful in working with people in your dissertation project?
10. Summarize new ideas you have learned through the dissertation project and
11. Summarize how you have grown in your ability to function as an innovative transformational leader through the dissertation project.

12. What are your plans for the future to sustain the proposed innovative transformation process through this dissertation project and what are your recommendations for your future research?

NOTE: Your DD presentation should not exceed 30 minutes. This limit will allow another forty to forty-five minutes for discussion.

Dissertation Defense Committee Deliberation, Vote, and Report

It is anticipated that the presentation and discussion phase of the DD will require approximately one hour, after which you and members of your PLC will be excused. The DC will then deliberate and designate a grade of “Pass,” “Conditional Pass,” or “Fail.” In its deliberations, the DC will consider the following criteria:

1. **Pass:** The dissertation and DD meet the BGU standards with the possible need for a few minor revisions and/or additions.
2. **Conditional Pass:** Significant changes are required in substance and/or style. Revisions must be reviewed and approved by the DS and signed off by the DC prior to graduation. Upon completion of satisfactory revisions, the grade will become a Pass.
3. **Fail:** Competence in either the dissertation preparation or the DD was unacceptable. The candidate may, with the written permission of the DC, work with the DS and SR to determine the appropriate corrective actions. As the dissertation project currently exists, the DC cannot recommend graduation.

Dissertation Defense Follow-Up

The following actions will be required following the completion of a DD.

1. The BGU rep or a designee will email to the DC a copy of the DD evaluation form completed online during the DD session.
2. DC members will review the DD evaluation form and give their approvals by email or recommend changes.
3. The DS will ensure that DC recommendations are incorporated into the dissertation by the student.
4. The DS will email the other DC members to indicate that the student has made the required revisions to the dissertation based on DC recommendations.
5. The DS will provide the GC with an electronic signature for insertion into the dissertation signature page. If the DS is unable or unwilling to provide an electronic signature, other arrangements will need to be made with the GC.
6. The student will email a Microsoft Word document of the dissertation to the GC for final formatting.

7. The student will follow all graduation arrangement guidelines sent out by the GC.

Approval and Recommendation for Graduation

With the exception of the dissertation, once all other course work has been completed and your Comprehensive Exams taken, you will be recommended to BGU's Academic Cabinet to be advanced to "Candidacy Status." Requirements for Candidacy Status include fulfillment of all academic and financial obligations to the school. In its meeting prior to graduation each year, the Board of Directors also approves all candidates for graduation. Physical graduation activities are generally held the first weekend of June. You are encouraged to attend the graduation activities unless extenuating circumstances prevent such attendance. Your diploma and an official transcript will be presented to you during the graduation activities if the dissertation has been submitted in a timely manner. You will also be "hooded" during the ceremony. Details about graduation will be sent to you in the months preceding graduation.

Common Writing Issues

All written materials related to the dissertation must conform to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th Edition). You are also encouraged to consult a manual on English usage and style, such as *The Elements of Style*, by William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White (2023). Citing of references is to conform to the APA7 writing format.

You should secure the help of a proofreader to review the dissertation for good grammar and sentence construction before the document is sent to your DC. As previously indicated, if your writing is not at a doctoral level, you will be required to enlist the services of an editor to produce an acceptable dissertation document. The DS, DC, and TR are *not* expected to function as proofreaders or editors for your dissertation in terms of punctuation, typographical errors, and grammar. Anticipating common writing errors for the first draft can eliminate much rewriting, and the following sections need to be reviewed and followed.

Structural Issues

The following issues are general guidelines for all dissertation writing.

1. Provide a detailed Table of Contents, including chapter titles and at least first level subheadings.
2. Provide an Abstract of the dissertation which is a paragraph of a maximum of 300 words.
3. Provide introductions to all chapters to prepare the reader for the content of the chapter and how it fits with the whole dissertation project.
4. Provide summaries at the end of each chapter that address the major ideas of the chapter and demonstrate how the chapter contributes to the overall purpose of the dissertation project. A summary should also provide a transition to the next chapter. The conclusion at the end of the last chapter should provide a summary and conclusion for the whole dissertation.
5. Use gender-inclusive language as much as possible, which is the standard for most institutions of higher learning (see previous comments in this handbook).

6. Demonstrate strong critical thinking skills by using focused arguments with adequate documentation. A dissertation project is not acceptable that simply includes a compilation of opinions, good ideas, and research results. There must be appropriate documentation for all claims, in-depth analysis and synthesis, and an overall integration of content.
7. Use first- and second-level subheadings to organize chapters. Sufficient subheadings are needed to break up long sections of chapters and to provide clarity for the reader. A consistent, logical formatting must be developed to identify first- and second-level subheadings throughout the chapters (see the BGU dissertation template for recommended subheading formats).
8. Avoid using superfluous material in your writing which does not contribute directly to the overall flow and integration of the dissertation project. Write in an objective, concise style.
9. Avoid generalizations or personal opinions without well-documented and logical conclusions drawn from peer-reviewed literature as well as your own research.
10. Avoid an arrogant style that seems to imply you have discovered the missing solutions for the issues you address. Your writing style must show respect for others who may have put forth equally valid approaches to the issues.
11. Avoid use of long block quotes without much connecting discussion and analysis. The dissertation must be primarily composed of original prose text, unified by a common purpose with appropriate documentation. When a block quote is used, a thorough commentary must follow the quotation showing how it relates to and supports the point being addressed. In addition, the dissertation should not be a series of shorter quotes following one after the other with little connecting discussion.
12. Make sure your sources are not outdated, especially when quoting statistics to support your arguments.
13. For any copyrighted figures, show permissions in the caption. In fact, all intellectual property rights must be honored.
14. Check all your work for possible inadvertent plagiarism, which not only includes directly quoted content (which must have quotation marks), but also includes use of opinions, phrases, or concepts without proper documentation. Please use Grammarly, Unicheck, or similar internet-based tools to check for possible plagiarism issues.

Grammar and Formatting Issues

1. For margins, use 1-1/2" on left, 1" on top, right, and bottom.
2. Do not justify the text, but it should be left-aligned and double-spaced.
3. For font sizes, use 12 pts. for the body and headings and 10 pts. for footnotes, table titles, figure captions, and content for data tables.
4. Use a consistent .5" indentation for the first line of all paragraphs and footnotes.

5. Block quotes should be indented .5" with no quotation marks. For additional quotations within a block quote, use regular double quotation marks ("xx"). Block quotes are double-spaced in APA7.
6. Do not put an extra space between paragraphs except possibly just before a new heading.
7. There should be only one space between sentences.
8. Avoid common punctuation and typing errors. For example, place periods and commas inside quotation marks and provide commas to set off clauses in a sentence.
9. Use trailing commas in a series. Example: The son, daughter, and mother visited the father at the parish office.
10. Use italics to emphasize words or phrases rather than bold or underlining formatting. Bold formatting may be used in subheadings and tables as needed.
11. Use numbers for lists whenever possible, unless you specifically do not want to emphasize priority of items in a list.
12. Spell out numbers one through nine, except when in conjunction with percentages (i.e. "7%" rather than "seven percent").
13. Avoid poor sentence structure. For example, avoid run-on sentences, incorrect usage of verb tenses, and wrong number agreement between verbs and singular or plural subjects.
14. In APA7, footnotes may be used for incidental information that does not fit well in the main text.
15. Be **consistent** in the use of capitalization. Here are some examples.
 - Use *biblical* or *scriptural* as adjectives and *Bible* or the *Scripture* as the proper name to the book.
 - Use of the lowercase *he*, *him*, or *his* is acceptable when referring to God, but uppercase is also acceptable depending upon your personal preference or that of your church tradition.
 - Use *the Church* when referring to the universal Church and use *church* when referring to specific church groups and denominations or in a phrase such as "the neighborhood church." (See the literature from the Society for Biblical Studies (2014) *The SBL Handbook of Style* for detailed information on formatting of biblical and theological terms.)
16. Use first person pronouns for reference to yourself as the author, which has become acceptable in academic writing rather than using "the author" or the editorial *we*.
17. Do not use the "royal we" or generalized use of *we*. The plural pronoun *we* can be used if the writer is a member of a specific group being discussed (for example, if you are a member of a leadership team) or general groups such as Christians if the group is identified (e.g. "We as Christians believe....").

18. Do not use the second person pronoun *you*, *us*, or *we* in dissertation writing. A dissertation is not to be an exhortation or a sermon, but rather, an objective discussion providing analysis, documentation, processes, evaluations, and conclusions relating to a ministry model or critical issue.
19. For Scripture references, use parenthetical notes immediately following a text rather than footnotes. For example, say "...everlasting life" (Jn 3:16 or John 3.16). Remember that the punctuation must follow the parentheses. Also, be consistent in spelling out all text references or use a consistent system of abbreviations. It is permissible to use either a colon (John 3:16) or a period (John 3.16), although the latter is preferred. Also, indicate who is being quoted in a text when possible. Here are some examples.
- Incorrect:** John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world..."
- Correct:** Jesus said, "For God so loved the world..." (John 3:16).
20. Avoid the use of the vague article *this* without an object when starting a sentence: Always include an object indicating to what you are referring to avoid confusion.
- Incorrect:** "This was used to gather the data."
- Correct:** "This approach was used to gather..."
21. Use gender-inclusive language whenever possible. Often an easy way to accomplish this task is to use a plural sentence construction. For example
- Awkward Sentence:* If a pastor desires to promote servant leadership among his/her leadership team, he or she must model the desired attitude.
- Use of the Plural:* If pastors desire to promote servant leadership among their leadership teams, they must model the desired attitude.
(If your denomination or fellowship holds to a practice of male pastors only, state this qualification the first time you use the male pronouns.)
22. Italicize all book titles throughout the document (see below for specific guidelines for items in the Reference List (APA7)).
23. Avoid one-sentence paragraphs as much as possible.
24. Format vertical lists as follows:
- Numbered or bulleted lists are acceptable.
 - Double-space all lines in the list using a .5" indentation and aligning first word of a subsequent line with the first word of the previous
 - If the list items are complete sentences, start each with a capital letter and end each item with a period.
 - If the list items are not complete sentences, start each with a lowercase letter and do not use periods.
 - List items must be parallel (either all complete sentences or all incomplete sentences)
 - If the list is from a source, provide a parenthetical reference at the end following the period.

- Each list item should be a maximum of one sentence in length. Otherwise, use regular paragraphs rather than a list.

APA7 Documentation Samples

Please check the APA 7th Edition Manual. BGU also provides a document that contains samples of the required formatting for various reference types. This document can be found in the BGU online library and is called “APA7 Referencing Samples.”

Secondary Sources and Other General Information on Research Writing

This section includes some general comments on common issues related to research writing. Determining the appropriate use of *primary sources* and *secondary sources* is one major concern related to research writing. Secondary sources (i.e. non-primary sources) include books, articles, reviews, abstracts, reports, encyclopedias, and other sources that discuss primary sources (original writings or other creative communications developed by someone). Secondary sources often summarize the original writings of various authors; they also include direct quotations and specific opinions of one author included in the writings of another author. There are specific documentation formats used in the dissertation when referring to direct quotes or specific opinions of authors cited in the works of other authors (see documentation examples in sections above). As much as possible, the dissertation should use the primary source writings of authors. However, secondary sources are helpful for summarizing research in a specific field of study and understanding concepts used in that field; they are also possibly needed when access to a primary source is limited.

BGU discourages the use of Wiki-related websites since they are not academically peer reviewed. BGU also discourages the use of artificial intelligence programs like ChatGPT or Jasper to create original academic documents since those sources cannot be properly cited, thus posing the issue of plagiarism. Furthermore, the information provided by such sources is often not academically reliable and may not reflect the original and critical thinking processes of the author.

Finally, students need to ensure that the privacy of the subjects of their research is protected. AI-related sources are not private nor encrypted, thus open to the whole world. Once something has been uploaded to one of these sites, that information becomes public knowledge to the whole world. Private or institutional proprietary data should thus not be shared over Wiki- or AI-related sites.

On the other hand, Wiki- and AI-related tools may be used to provide certain information that students may need to critically evaluate a particular topic or subject. See for instance the following article from the American Psychological Association.

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2023/06/chatgpt-learning-tool>

In terms of reliability of content, all Internet-based articles need to be used with caution. Students will often try to “prove” almost any particular point of view by citing various Internet-based articles. There are, of course, excellent websites sponsored by recognized schools

and organizations. When using information from a web-based source that is not well known, it is advisable to provide some background of the sponsoring group in the text of the dissertation to inform the reader on the level of reliability of content being cited. The use of peer-reviewed sources is highly recommended. Also, there should be a good representation of empirical research articles being cited to support content in the dissertation. There should also be a good representation of sources written within the student's cultural context.

A dissertation must also not become so focused on one point of view, especially regarding controversial topics, that other perspectives are not considered. Although the dissertation will represent the specific point of view of the author, there must be evidence that the student is aware of other diverse opinions. In dissertations, students should discuss various points of view on a subject and then provide conclusions based on their own critical thinking. For example, it is not acceptable to document a particular point of view by quoting one person who wrote one article in an academic journal. Students in doctoral level programs are expected to have a firm grasp on the various perspectives in their particular fields of study and be able to accurately articulate why they have selected their particular points of view using supporting documentation such as expert opinions, statistics, and other representative data. This approach generally involves using academic articles drawn from hardcopy journals and/or various online databases such as Google Scholar, ProQuest, EBSCO databases, and other databases listed in the BGU online library.

APPENDICES

Appendix A Information for Dissertation Proposal

A standard PhD Proposal includes:

Title Page

Abstract

The abstract for this proposal should be able to include the topic, aims of the study, the participants involved in the mentioned research, the methodologies to be used, and the timeframe. It is typically concluded using a statement which explains the overall relevance of the research, and why it is necessary. Abstract for Ph.D. proposals use future tense, as you outline the things that you intend to do.

This part will also serve as a brief summary to your paper. It should be 250-300 words. The abstract may start by describing the knowledge domain in which your research takes place, as well as the key issues involved which may offer opportunities for the technological or scientific innovations that you are planning to explore. The research statement is then presented, the proposed methods for research, the results expected to achieve, as well as any anticipated implications that the results will make regarding the advancement within the knowledge domain.

Keywords

This portion of your paper includes an alphabetically ordered list which includes the most common words or expressions that you would be using in a search engine in order to look for a research proposal that is similar to your work.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction (at least 20 pages)

The Introduction chapter should include the following sections.

In some paper proposals, a background is also presented aside from the introduction, and they are separate. In other papers, both serve the same purpose and are being combined. Both sections outline the reason why you have selected the topic.

The introduction part provides an overview of the dissertation project being proposed to carry out. It provides an explanation on the dissertation project background, briefly focusing on the primary issues within the knowledge domain, giving clarification to the reason why the issues presented are worth the attention. Afterwards, present the research statement concisely, possibly taking the form of a research question, hypothesis, goal statement, or a dissertation project statement.

A lot of research proposal authors prefer postponing writing their introduction until the entire document is completed. This makes sense, given the fact that writing has the tendency to introduce a lot of changes in the initially sketched plans by the writer, which means that it is only

during that time that the whole document is completed that the writer gets a clearer view on how the introduction can be instructed in a compelling way.

Statement of the Problem

Insert your problem statement here showing the issue your dissertation project addresses. Provide a concise statement that describes a specific need with parenthetical documentation to support your assertions. The problem statement should start with a paragraph summarizing the problem. Then give a few examples of research that document the existence of the problem. End with a paragraph describing the significance/uniqueness of this research considering other previous dissertations and studies.

Make sure you maintain the subheading styles as shown. You can change the wording in a subheading in the chapters while maintaining the formatting of the DP template by highlighting a subheading and then typing your new wording (the subheading formatting will then be maintained). For paragraphs under each subheading, highlight the sample paragraphs shown and then start typing your text. Also notice the text is double-spaced.

Context of the Problem

Who are the people to be affected by this dissertation? Include issues such as their history, worldview, values, beliefs, demography, etc. What is the dissertation project location, prominent features of the area, and infrastructures as related to the problem? What is the current situation as related to the problem? Who are the stakeholders (beneficiaries as well as people who may be instrumental in implementing the findings of the research with you) and primary audience for this dissertation project?

Statement of the Purpose

Intent

Summarize what you wanted to accomplish through this research to explore the problem and to begin to find solutions. What have been your objectives and your desired outcomes?

Theoretical or Conceptual Frameworks

A major goal of your dissertation should be to apply *theoretical/conceptual frameworks* (a set of constructs, concepts, and practitioner approaches) to a narrowly defined problem.

Research Questions

Indicate the primary research question you are seeking to answer through your empirical research. Then list three to seven supporting research questions. They need to be well connected to the research approach chosen (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods). These questions could address issues such as listed below:

- The existence, extent, and interpretation of the defined problem based on the perspectives of the people involved.
- How constructs, concepts, and practitioner approaches (the theoretical framework) can be applied to the problem at hand (you address the various components of this framework in the literature review chapter).
- Possible beginning solutions to the problem as suggested by the literature review and related life experience.
- Theological issues related to the problem (which you explored through your analysis of biblical principles and the writings of authors who have explored these principles related to your dissertation project).

Innovative Significance of the Dissertation

Provide a brief description of what you consider will be the innovative significance of the dissertation project for organizations, communities, cultures, etc. Also, briefly describe how you anticipate the dissertation demonstrating innovative urban leadership principles such as one or more of the eight perspectives taught at BGU. You will be able to develop this section more fully in the actual dissertation.

Researcher Assumptions and Worldview

You approach every situation with a basic set of assumptions and even biases based on your experiences and worldview. The goal is not necessarily to eliminate your bias, but to indicate how you anticipate any of these issues affecting your work on the dissertation project.

Delimitations and Limitations

Your dissertation project cannot address every conceivable angle or approach to your problem statement. The term *delimitation* refers to your purposeful limiting of your dissertation project to a narrow range of issues. You may be focusing on only a specific range of factors related to the problem statement. Also discuss any *limitations* you foresee such as limited sample size, inaccessible data, uncontrolled variables, etc. Limitations may be difficult to foresee at the proposal stage, but try to anticipate issues beforehand as much as possible.

Summary

Develop one paragraph summarizing the main ideas in this chapter and conclude with a sentence that provides for the reader a transition to the next chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The Literature Review serves as a cluster which presents very important aims of the study. For one, it shows that you have created a solid knowledge in the field wherein the research takes place, showing your familiarity with the primary theoretical issues at hand, and that you have identified critically, and assessed the key theoretical and empirical literature used.

On the other hand, this portion also shows that you have established a coherent and innovative view in synthesizing and integrating the primary aspects in the field, so that you can now finally put into perspective the new directions that you are planning to explore. This part should also provide credit to the authors who are laying the groundwork for the research. By doing so, in the following chapter, the research objects are clarified further, so that the reader can recognize beyond doubt that when you attempt doing something which has not been done previously, and that your research will most likely be a significant contribution to the specific literature used.

The Literature Review is typically the most extensive portion of a research proposal. It will be expected to be developed over a number of paragraphs and subparagraphs. It needs to be accompanied by a number of well-prepared references, all of which should be listed towards the end of your proposal. Ideally, as with other authoritative books, papers, book chapters, and other professional texts produced within the knowledge domain that you are working on should be mentioned in your proposal. It is also important to follow the appropriate referencing syntax appropriately.

As of January 1, 2021, BGU follows APA 7th ed. convention for documentation of sources.

You should focus on two types of literature: 1) sources that provide strong content related to components of your theoretical framework; 2) journal articles that describe empirical research studies related to your topic. You should focus on the most current sources available in terms of

research articles and books, although you may also include foundational sources that may be of an earlier date. Also, whenever possible, there should be **a good representation of literature from authors who are within the context and culture of your dissertation project**. The chapter should be organized using subheadings that relate to various theories and principles which might include categories such as community development models, organizational assessment approaches, leadership approaches, business models, sociological and psychological perspectives, transformational leadership principles, theological principles, and any other categories of information that are foundational to the dissertation. These broad concepts comprise the *theoretical or conceptual frameworks* of the dissertation.

The chapter should begin with an introductory paragraph that summarizes the various categories of conceptual information to be addressed. The chapter subheadings should relate to one or more of your research questions because your literature research is meant to answer conceptual aspects addressed by these questions. Each section should include discussion related to various authors and how their content provided useful information for your research. You should consult a variety of experts related to the various topics, summarizing how they address the issues and how they may have differing opinions.

The literature review subsections are not to be a series of book reports. Each section under a subtopic should be written as a brief essay addressing how the various authors address a specific subtopic related to the problem statement. The chapter should conclude with a paragraph that summarizes the main issues addressed in the chapter. Then close with a sentence that provides for the reader a transition to the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Dissertation Design and Research Methodology

Begin this chapter with a paragraph that summarizes the research needed. This paragraph should summarize your purpose, indicate your main research question (supporting questions will be addressed under the Data-gathering and Analysis section shown below), and briefly relate your research approach to answering the main research question.

Research Design

This section clarifies the objective of research for your dissertation, considering it as a background of your description of the literature review, and describing the methods you are planning to use in order to deal with the main research challenges involved. The clarification of your research objective should be solidly founded on the Literature Review and relate your work to other studies performed by others.

Research Method

Identify and define the primary research method you will use in the research phase of the dissertation (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods). Using relevant sources on research methodologies, define this method, compare it to other methods, indicate the customary uses of your method as compared to other methods, and describe why the method you have selected best fits your dissertation project and the data you need to obtain.

Ethical Considerations

This section should include a discussion of any ethical considerations for the dissertation project. Will the dissertation project involve what are known as *vulnerable populations* such as minors, pregnant women, people with mental and/or physical challenges, socially or economically handicapped people, or prison inmates? Will the interviews and/or surveys involve *sensitive information* such as financial status information, religious beliefs, political beliefs, and/or family issues? Will the dissertation proposal need to be reviewed by the BGU Institutional

Review Board (IRB) based on the kinds of ethical issues mentioned above or in other IRB literature? Requirements for an IRB review are provided in more detail in the Institutional Review Board Policy and Procedures Manual, available on the BGU website and online library.

Evaluation

Describe the methods you plan to use to evaluate the validity of the data gathered such as triangulation.

Biases

Describe what biases you may have and how you are dealing with them.

Anticipated Schedule

Use Table 3 to indicate your anticipated timetable for the dissertation process.

Table 3

Anticipated Schedule to Complete Dissertation

Work to Be Accomplished	Due Date
Turn in Dissertation Proposal to Dissertation Supervisor	
Revise proposal based on supervisor recommendations.	
Submit proposal to the Academic Cabinet for approval.	
Submit first draft of Chapter 1 to Dissertation Supervisor.	
Submit first draft of Chapter 2 to Dissertation Supervisor.	
Submit first draft of entire dissertation to Dissertation Supervisor and Dissertation Committee.	
Submit final draft to Dissertation Supervisor and Dissertation Committee.	
Submit final draft to Director of Dissertations	
Set a Dissertation Defense date (schedule with the Registrar).	
Participate in graduation!	

Summary

Provide a paragraph that summarizes the chapter and the proposal.

Chapter 4: Current Work and Initial Results

This chapter will provide a concise and brief outline of the study you have conducted so far, as well as the progress that you have already made towards the dissertation project aims. You need to concentrate on the portions which specifically contribute towards the goals of your dissertation project. Avoiding those detailed explanations should also be taken into mind. If you have already completed some preliminary results (or pilot study), this is the portion where these should be highlighted in a well-structured manner which actually helps in supporting the rest of your proposal.

Chapter 5: Work Plan and Initial Results

Not all completed research proposals easily lend themselves to the creation of accurately made work plans. In certain cases, especially when the work fits the wider plans of a research group that is steadily progressing, it is highly possible to create a detailed description of what your researcher is planning to do.

In these specific cases, if it is desirable and possible, to establish certain timelines and milestones, as well as a Gant Diagram. The plan needs to anticipate the potential problems which would likely be found, describing the methods to be followed when it comes to solving them. It should also provide an anticipation to the journals and conferences with which the work is expected to be completed along the way, as well as the schedule to be anticipated.

In other scenarios, when the topic that you are planning to research is elusive and exploratory, or when your research approach emphasizes that every step should be based on the currently unanticipated results of the previous steps, it may turn out to be impossible to complete a detailed plan. However, even in these cases, it is highly advisable to create a section which will present the Goals for Publications, giving a rough estimate of the schedule for the produced publications. Despite its contingency, the list may perform great things when it comes to ensuring that you stay motivated, focused and beneficial even under pressure.

Regardless of the nature of your work plan, whether it is sketchy or a comprehensive study, it should put into perspective all the implications which are involved for the success in your work, emphasizing on the mind of the reader, the belief that your approach is oriented solidly towards the results, that the topic is relevant and timely, and that the outcome of this research will significantly contribute towards the enhancement of the field.

Conclusion

The conclusion should briefly present the objectives for your research, recapping the methods for research that you are planning to follow, and briefly clarifying in just a few rods, what you are expecting to find out, the reason why it is scientifically important to find it out, and your basis of expected evaluation on the validity of the results.

Reference List and Potential Sources (APA7)

PhD students are to format their dissertation using the APA7 style. In APA7 formatting, a Reference List shows only sources actually cited in the proposal. Therefore, for the proposal you need to also add a List of Potential Sources which will include other sources you plan to use to develop the dissertation. The APA7 Reference List can be automatically generated using the Zotero or a similar software. For the proposal, you should include at least 50 sources you plan to use to develop your dissertation project.

Appendices

Please include all relevant appendices (forms, protocols, etc.)

Appendix B

Information for Standard Five-Chapter Dissertation Format

This appendix shows a standard format for a five-chapter dissertation. The dissertation should be 200-300 pages within the body text, which does not count the front matter, the reference list/bibliography, and the appendix.

Title Page

Copyright page (includes copyright and primary biblical text that is referenced in dissertation.)

Signature page (provided by BGU)

Dedication page (if applicable)

Epigraph (a pertinent quote or Scripture, if applicable)

Table of Contents (required and can be generated by Word and then formatted according to APA7 standards).

List of figures or illustrations (if applicable)

List of tables (if applicable)

Preface and acknowledgements (if applicable)

List of abbreviations (if the dissertation includes many organizational or technical abbreviations)

Glossary (To be included only if the dissertation contains many technical terms. Typically words and terms used in a particular way in the dissertation should be included in a Definitions section, which is described below regarding chapter 1 content.)

Abstract (brief summary of the dissertation, including the scope, limitations, and summary of conclusions in a paragraph of 300 words or less).

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Introduction chapter should contain the same sections as previously indicated for the proposal; however, future tense verbs are used in the proposal and **past or present tense verbs** are used in the actual dissertation.

- ***Statement of the Problem:***

The Problem Statement section describes a problem or opportunity related to your work context. Supporting documentation must be included in defining the problem statement. The Problem Statement section should include the following components.

1. Provide an *introductory sentence* that summarizes the problem in a way that captures the interest of the reader. Then continue the paragraph, giving some brief background regarding the issue along with at least two references that provide evidence that the issue is indeed a recognized problem.

2. Summarize *categories of past studies* that have addressed this issue. The idea here is not to list many studies, but to indicate broad categories of relevant studies with one or two examples for each category.
3. Summarize the *significance of your dissertation project* in view of other studies and efforts related to the problem. Indicate how your approach may be unique or different from past approaches. One way your dissertation project may be unique could be that you are applying specific innovative transformational principles to your particular context in ways not tried before.

- ***Context of the Problem***

In the context section, you describe the people affected by your dissertation project. Typical content for this section includes the following:

Historical and demographic background

Address issues such as the geographic location of the problem, demographic/ethnographic descriptions of the people, historical factors that have contributed to the problem, and possibly previous attempts to address the problem. This data should not be general in nature but should be directly relevant and connected to the problem you seek to solve.

Worldview

People acquire a particular worldview as a result of the culture in which they live and their life experiences. Worldview may affect issues such as how you phrase questions in interviews and surveys or other forms of data-collection. To the best of your ability, describe the typical worldview of people who will be affected by your dissertation project. In addition to your own observations, find studies that may provide insights on the worldview of the people related to your dissertation project.

Current situation

Describe *the* situation as it exists today. Who are the people being affected? How are they being affected? What factors are contributing to the ongoing existence of this issue? What has been done about the issue to date, and what groups, if any, are currently trying to address the issue? How are you personally involved?

- ***Statement of Purpose:***

The purpose statement describes how you have addressed the problem or opportunity in terms of research methods and implementation of an intervention strategy. All dissertation projects should have the goal of doing the required research and program development to begin the process of positive transformation in the lives of people and their environments. Begin this section with a paragraph summarizing what you have done through your dissertation project in the way of research. As previously discussed, you have the option of using an alternative approach for your dissertation such as writing a book, developing a publishable curriculum or training manual, using a visual arts approach or other multimedia forms, or some other creative approach to address your topic. However, a strong research component will still be required. This type of alternative approach fulfills the requirement for a transformational strategy.

- ***Research questions***

Indicate the primary research question you are seeking to answer through your empirical research. Then list three to seven supporting research questions. They need to be well

connected to the research approach chosen (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods). These questions could address issues such as listed below:

- The existence, extent, and interpretation of the defined problem based on the perspectives of the people involved
- How constructs, concepts, and practitioner approaches (the theoretical framework) can be applied to the problem at hand (you address the various components of this framework in the literature review chapter)
- Possible beginning solutions to the problem as suggested by the literature review and related life experience.
- Theological issues related to the problem (which you explored through your analysis of biblical principles and the writings of authors who have explored these principles related to your dissertation project).

- ***Innovative significance of the dissertation project***

Provide a description of what you consider will be the innovative significance of the dissertation project for organizations, communities, cultures, etc. Also, describe how you anticipate the dissertation project demonstrating innovative urban leadership principles such as one or more of the eight transformational leadership perspectives taught at BGU.

- ***Researcher Assumptions and Worldview***

You approach every situation with a basic set of assumptions and even biases based on your experiences and worldview. The goal is not necessarily to eliminate your bias, but to indicate how you think any of these issues may have affected your work on the dissertation project.

- ***Definitions of Key Words and Terms:***

Include keywords and terms that you may have used in a particular manner. Do not describe words used in everyday language that you can assume your reader knows. Focus on terms you used in a specific manner within your title, problem statement, or throughout the dissertation project. Use regular paragraphs to format this section with defined words in italics.

- ***Stakeholders and Audience:***

Describe those people or organizations that have a vested interest in this dissertation project, including those who are benefitting and possibly those who contributed content, expertise, access to information, and other resources. Also describe the intended readers of your dissertation such as members of a specific neighborhood community, business or other organizational colleagues, members of a local/regional/national church, members of a specific demographic community, or other groups.

- ***Delimitations and Limitations:***

Your dissertation cannot address every conceivable angle or approach to your problem statement. The term delimitation refers to your purposeful limiting of your dissertation to a narrow range of issues. You may have focused on only a specific range of factors related to the problem statement. Also discuss any *limitations* you encountered such as limited sample size, inaccessible data, uncontrolled variables, etc.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter is organized using subheadings based on various concepts and principles related to the dissertation project such as community development models, organizational assessment approaches, leadership approaches, business models, sociological and psychological perspectives, transformational leadership principles, theological principles, and any other categories of information that are foundational to the dissertation project. These broad concepts comprise the *theoretical and conceptual frameworks* of the dissertation project. There should be a good representation of literature from authors who are within the context and culture of your dissertation. The literature review should include at least 50 sources.

All BGU dissertations must include one or more sections in the literature review chapter related to biblical themes related to your dissertation. These sections in your literature review chapter need to include a careful study of biblical themes and texts related to your dissertation with your own theological reflection and that of other authors who have written on the topic. You must include sound analysis from other recognized authors in addition to your own analysis. Show relationships between the biblical texts and your dissertation.

The literature review chapter should begin with an introductory paragraph that summarizes the various categories of conceptual information addressed. Then organize the chapter using subheadings representing the various categories of conceptual information derived from relevant literature. These subheadings should relate to one or more of your research questions because your literature research is meant to answer conceptual aspects addressed by these questions. Each section should include discussion related to various authors and how their content provides useful information for your dissertation project. You should consult a variety of experts related to the various topics, summarizing how they address the issues and how they may have differing opinions. The literature review chapter is written in a manner that involves having the literature sources ‘dialogue’ with each other through comparing and contrasting the various pieces of literature and bringing forth the most relevant and meaningful literature findings for your own research context.

The literature review will also reflect on the biblical foundations of the research.

The literature review subsections are not to be a series of book reports. Each section under a subtopic should be written as a brief essay addressing how the various authors address a specific subtopic related to the problem statement. The chapter should conclude with a paragraph that summarizes the main issues addressed in the chapter. Then close with a sentence that transitions the reader to the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Dissertation Design and Research Methodology

This chapter describes in detail the various components of your research approach and should include the following sections.

- **Introductory Paragraph:** Summarize the purpose for your dissertation project and indicate the main research question and how your research addressed that question. You will then discuss each of the supporting questions specifically in the data-gathering section.

- **Research Design:** Describe the research design used for the dissertation project (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods approach); provide a convincing rationale for why you used this design and why your approach is the most appropriate research approach for your dissertation project and why the other approaches are not appropriate.
- **Sampling Methods:** Describe the method(s) used to select the participants for your dissertation project and indicate why your selection adequately represents the population of people served by your dissertation project for the kind of data you needed.
- **Data-Collection and Analysis:** identify the specific research tools you used to gather relevant data for the research problem. Copies of surveys and interview questions can be inserted in an appendix with appropriate references in the text. Show how your research tools helped you to find answers to the research questions related to empirical research as you listed them in the introductory chapter.
- **Ethical Considerations:** describe precautions you took to protect the privacy of people who will participate in your dissertation project. Describe use of consent forms. Also indicate any vulnerable populations that were involved in your dissertation project, including minors under age 18, people with mental or physical handicaps, pregnant women, or prisoners. Also indicate any sensitive topics that were addressed. Please review the current BGU Institutional Review Board Policy and Procedures Manual for details on vulnerable populations and sensitive research topics.
- **Evaluation:** describe the methods you used to evaluate the validity of your research approach and the effectiveness of your transformational strategy in beginning to address the problem or opportunity defined in your dissertation project. The actual results of your evaluation should be described in chapter 4.

Chapter 4. Results and Discussion

The previously discussed Chapter 3 provides a description of the research design, sampling methods, data-gathering methods, and intervention strategy. Chapter 4 uses components such as tables, graphs, and charts to display the results of the data-gathering process. The chapter includes your analysis of the results of the research and transformational strategy. The collected data for the dissertation project is meant to support and prepare for the intervention strategy implemented. When appropriate, display the collected data using standard methods such as tables and graphs; then analyze the meaning of the collected data. For example, it is often helpful to display responses to a survey or interview question using a table or graph followed by an analysis and application of the results.

- **Describe the results** for each of the data-gathering methods you used with detailed analysis of the results as they relate to your problem statement, purpose statement, and research questions.
- **Evaluation of the results.** Analyze the validity of your data using methods such as triangulation and references to literature.
- **Interpretation of Results:** Describe how effectively you think the dissertation project addressed the problem and purpose statements.
- **Validity of the Dissertation Project Results:** Assess the validity of your dissertation project results and their consequence on the interpretation of the results.

- At the end of the chapter, provide a summary of the chapter, summarize any ‘surprises’ you found during your analysis, and provide a transition into the next chapter.

Chapter 5. Recommendations and conclusions

Chapter 5 is where you draw conclusions and implications for the dissertation project. You also indicate why you think things happened as they did. Include the following sections.

- ***Significance and Implications:*** In this section, begin by discussing your insights and lessons learned through the dissertation project. Indicate anything that surprised you, and what you would do differently next time. Discuss theological insights you may have gained through the dissertation project. Discuss what you discovered about effective communication strategies and how you may be able to use these methods in your future work. Discuss how your dissertation project can be replicable and transferable to other contexts. Discuss the involvement of your Personal Learning Community and how you felt about working with such a team.
- ***Recommendations and Future Action Steps:*** Discuss your recommendations based on what you have learned through this dissertation project. Also indicate future action steps needed to continue the work begun through this dissertation project
- ***Summary:*** Provide one or more paragraphs that draw conclusions and summarize your thoughts about the whole dissertation.

Reference List or Bibliography

In APA7 format, a Reference List is used to show sources actually cited in the dissertation. You need to include at least 60 sources if not more. You may also include an additional section entitled Other Sources Consulted if desired.

Appendices (if applicable)

This section includes items that do not easily fit into the main body of the dissertation such as long data tables, interview transcripts, full curricula, sample publications, surveys or interview questions used, and other similar material.

Vita (optional)

Due to confidentiality concerns, you may not wish to include this page and it is not required.

Appendix C.

Information on the Portfolio Dissertation Format

A portfolio approach to a dissertation will allow the display of research done in creative ways that differ from the traditional dissertation approach. A portfolio is a collection of items, often called *artifacts* in portfolio descriptions, that are brought together to demonstrate a person's knowledge, skills, professional experience, and other factors. For example, portfolios are used in the business sector to demonstrate a potential employee's experience and skills when being considered for hire in an organization. For the purposes of an alternative dissertation using a portfolio approach, the artifacts are collected, analyzed, and integrated as related to a specific theme or problem being addressed.

In order to ensure the academic requirements of doctoral-level research, the first 3 chapters of the standard dissertation need to be developed in writing which include introduction, literature review, and research methodology as related to selecting and analyzing the various components of the portfolio. Instead of the traditional chapters 4 and 5, the portfolio approach will include creative media forms to address an issue in a real-world setting. These media forms can include, but are not limited to:

1. writing a book and having it accepted by a publisher;
2. creating a video where findings and possible ways to approach an issue are displayed and discussed;
3. creating a piece of visual art that is discussed and has a strong impact assessment piece in writing or an electronic format;
4. creating a website where all the findings of the research are displayed, discussed and where new areas of developments are described;
5. developing and accessing curricula and academic programs; etc.

There is no limit to what you can propose if your physical or virtual portfolio fulfills doctoral-level standards.

To meet the requirements of doctoral-level work, Chapter 3 of an alternative dissertation using the portfolio must include the following:

1. rationales for the portfolio selections,
2. how the portfolio demonstrates the dissertation project's professional conceptual framework,
3. procedures used for the development of the portfolio items,
4. integration around the defined problem for the dissertation,
5. description of research methods utilized in relation to the portfolio items,
6. critical reflection on what has been learned by development of the portfolio items and,
7. discussion on how the portfolio items have been used to produce transformation.

A portfolio dissertation project will also include a list of bibliographic sources used for the dissertation. This item may be located at the end of chapter 3 or at the end of the dissertation before any appendices. The portfolio approach is new for BGU, so flexibility and recalibration are to be expected from all involved. However, all the required outcomes for a piece of doctoral-level research need to be evidenced.

Appendix D.

Evaluation Criteria for Dissertation Proposal

Table 4

Evaluation Criteria for Dissertation Proposal

Introduction Chapter	Excellent	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Inadequate
<i>Statement of the Problem</i> is clear, realistic, insightful, and well documented. The section • starts with a concise statement of the issue, • indicates samples of studies related to the problem, and • indicates significance of this particular dissertation project in view of previous similar studies or dissertations. <i>Context of Problem</i> is clear and relevant, which describes • the people (history, worldview, values, beliefs, demography, etc.); • other local contextual facts that shed light on the problem addressed (location, geography, infrastructures, etc.); and • the primary stakeholders related to this dissertation project and the intended audience for the dissertation project report. The chapter begins with an introductory paragraph and concludes with a summary paragraph. <i>Statement of Purpose</i> is clear with • introductory statement of dissertation project intent; • relevant, comprehensive research questions that relate to understanding the existence of the current problem and possible solutions, conceptual components that need to be researched to effectively address the problem, and theological issues related to the problem and solutions; and • a brief paragraph summarizing a transformational strategy being considered; however, it is expected that the strategy will emerge out of the research. The <i>Innovative Significance</i> section provides discussion on • how the dissertation project improves innovatively people's lives, communities, organizations and other cultural matters and • how the dissertation project will demonstrate transformational leadership perspectives taught at BGU. The <i>Assumptions and Worldview</i> section provides • discussion of the author's assumptions and worldview that can affect dissertation project and • possible biases the author may tend to hold that need to be honestly stated. The <i>Definitions</i> section includes key words and terms that are relevant to the dissertation.					

Delimitations and Limitations of the dissertation project have been carefully considered including

- possibly selecting only some aspects of a problem,
- limited sample size, barriers to collecting data, limited funding, site issues, etc.

Chapter ends with a conclusion section that include a *summary and transition sentence* towards next chapter.

Literature Review: Conceptual Framework		Excellent	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Inadequate
1.	<i>Introductory paragraph</i> clearly summarizes the theoretical frameworks of the dissertation project. assessment strategies, and biblical foundations.					
2.	Chapter is <i>organized thematically</i> with relevant literature discussed in dialogue with each other in each section, rather than a “book report” style.					
3.	Chapter includes good representation of literature <i>generated from authors within the student’s context</i> . The sections show appropriate integration of relevant conceptual models, principles from various disciplines, and relevant biblical principles.					
4.	Chapter includes a discussion on the biblical foundations of the research.					
5.	Chapter ends with <i>conclusions paragraph</i> that clearly summarizes how the various biblical and conceptual components relate to dissertation project along with a transition into the next chapter.					
Research Methodology & Transformational Strategies		Excellent	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Inadequate
1.	Chapter begins with appropriate introductory paragraph, introducing readers to the research and transformational strategies to be addressed.					
2.	<i>Research methods</i> • are clearly defined using definitions from respected sources in research methodology showing how methods differ and • include discussion of why the selected methods are best suited to answering the research questions for the dissertation project.					
3.	<i>The sampling methods section includes the following:</i> • clear description of how the sample will be selected with rationales indicated, • clear description of how the anticipated sample is appropriate for answering the research questions with adequate representation of the population to be studied based on research method being used, and • clarification as to how the anticipated approximate number of participants is indicated with demographic information included such as age range, gender, socio-economic factors, educational backgrounds, etc.					
4.	<i>Data-gathering strategies</i> are clearly identified with purposes and rationales for each. Several data-gathering strategies should be included to increase the validity of the research.					

5. The *Ethical Issues* section includes information on any vulnerable population involved, sensitive information, and use of consent forms when required.
6. A brief description of *evaluation methods* is included which will be designed to ensure the validity of collected data using triangulation whenever possible. Evaluation methods will also be developed to determine the effectiveness of the transformational strategy. However, at the proposal stage, the evaluation methods will not be fully developed and will emerge out the research when completed.
7. An *anticipated schedule* is included showing a timetable for progressing through the dissertation process.

The chapter ends with a summary paragraph and provides the reader with a transition to the next chapter.

Mechanics of Writing	Excellent	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Inadequate
• Chapters are logically organized using relevant subheadings, introductory and summary statements, and a professional writing format. APA 7th edition is used. • There is evidence of critical thinking with logical academic arguments that include claims, reasons, reliable documentation, and discussion of opposing claims utilizing culturally relevant sources from expert scholars and practitioners. • At least one-third of the documentation is provided from sources generated within the students' context. • The writing uses correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling with well-organized sentences that clearly communicate intended meaning. • There is appropriate documentation throughout the dissertation using reliable sources with no plagiarism. • Chapters are logically organized using relevant subheadings, introductory and summary statements, and a professional writing format. APA 7th edition was used. • There is evidence of critical thinking with logical academic arguments that include claims, reasons, reliable documentation, and discussion of opposing claims utilizing culturally relevant sources from expert scholars and practitioners. • At least one-third of the documentation is provided from sources generated within the students' context. • The writing uses correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling with well-organized sentences that clearly communicate intended meaning. • There is appropriate documentation throughout the dissertation using reliable sources with no plagiarism. • Footnote numbering starts over in each new chapter. In APA7, footnotes may be used for incidental information that does not fit well in the main text.					
Research Standards	Excellent	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Inadequate

- Safeguards are evident for ethical protection of human subjects.
- Overall focus of the proposed dissertation demonstrates the culmination and results of the student's educational process at BGU with practical, culturally relevant implementation of holistic, transformational leadership principles.

Appendix E. Evaluation Criteria for the Dissertation

Table 5

Evaluation Criteria for the Dissertation

Abstract	Excellent	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Inadequate
There is a concise summary of - dissertation project's purpose, - transformational intervention approach, and - findings. (300 words maximum).					
Introduction Chapter	Excellent	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Inadequate
<i>Statement of the Problem</i> is clear, realistic, insightful, and well documented. The section - starts with a concise statement of the issue, - indicates samples of studies related to the problem, and - indicates significance of this particular dissertation project in view of previous similar studies or dissertations. <i>Context of Problem</i> is clear and relevant, which describes - the people (history, worldview, values, beliefs, demography, etc.), - other local contextual facts that shed light on the problem addressed (location, geography, infrastructures, etc.), and - the primary stakeholders related to this dissertation and the intended audience for the dissertation. The chapter begins with an introductory paragraph and concludes with a summary paragraph. <i>Statement of Purpose</i> is clear with - introductory statement of dissertation intent;					

- relevant, comprehensive research questions that relate to understanding the existence of the current problem and possible solutions, conceptual components that need to be researched to effectively address the problem, and theological issues related to the problem and solutions; and
- summary of a transformational strategy implemented.

The *Transformational Significance* section provides discussion on

- how the dissertation improves people's lives, communities, organizations and other cultural matters and
- how the dissertation demonstrates transformational leadership perspectives taught at BGU.

The *Assumptions and Worldview* section provides

- discussion of the author's preconceived assumptions and worldview that possibly affected dissertation and
- possible biases of the author that need to be honestly stated.

- The *Definitions* section includes key words and terms that are relevant to the dissertation.

Delimitations and Limitations of the dissertation are described including

- possibly selecting only some aspects of a problem, and
- limited sample size, barriers to collecting data, limited funding, site issues, etc.

Chapter ends with a conclusion section that include a *summary and transition sentence* towards next chapter.

Literature Review: Conceptual Framework	Excellent	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Inadequate
• <i>Introductory paragraph</i> clearly summarizes the conceptual framework of the dissertation, including relevant topics such as community development approaches,					

business models, organizational assessment strategies, and biblical foundations.

- Chapter is *organized thematically* with relevant literature discussed in each section, rather than a “book report” style.
- Chapter includes good representation of literature *generated from authors within the student’s context*. The sections show good integration of relevant conceptual models, principles from various disciplines, and relevant biblical principles.
- Chapter ends with *conclusions paragraph* that clearly summarizes how the various biblical and conceptual components relate to dissertation project along with a transition into the next chapter.

Research Methodology	Excellent	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Inadequate
1. Chapter begins with good introductory paragraph introducing reader to the main research question and the transformational strategies addressed.					
2. <i>Research method(s)</i> are					
a. clearly defined using definitions from respected sources in research methodology showing how methods differ and					
b. there is discussion of why the selected methods are best suited to answering the research questions for the dissertation project.					
3. <i>Sampling methods</i> :					
a. are clearly described with rationale indicated,					
b. are appropriate for answering the research questions with adequate representation of the population studied based on research method being used, and					
c. the number of participants is indicated with demographic information included such as age range, gender, socio-economic factors, educational backgrounds, etc.					
4. <i>Data-gathering strategies</i> are clearly identified with purposes and rationales for each. Several data-gathering					

strategies should be included to increase the validity of the research.

5. The *Ethical Issues* section includes information on any vulnerable populations involved, sensitive information, and use of consent forms when required.

The chapter ends with a summary paragraph and provides the reader with a transition to the next chapter.

Findings and Discussion Chapter	Excellent	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Inadequate
<i>Results of data collection</i> are clearly demonstrated using methods such as tables, charts, and graphs to clearly display findings with in-depth analysis. <i>Results of the transformational strategy</i> are clearly described in detail showing how the research contributed to development of the strategy and how the strategy has contributed to transformation. <i>Results of evaluation methods</i> include discussion of • methods used for evaluation, • validity of data collected with triangulation, and • interpretation, discussion, and possible applications of findings • summary of validity and trustworthiness of the dissertation. The chapter begins with an introductory paragraph and ends with a paragraph summarizing the findings and discussions in a generalized way. The paragraph ends with a sentence that provides the reader with a transition into next chapter.					
Discussion and Conclusions	Excellent	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Inadequate
The <i>discussion</i> chapter includes: • significance and implications such as ○ personal/professional/cultural insights ○ theological insights ○ effective communication ○ strategies discovered					

- replicability of the dissertation project
- role of the student's PLC, and
- recommendations and specific future action steps and research.

The chapter begin with an introductory paragraph and ends with a concluding statement summarizing the dissertation project.

Mechanics of Writing	Excellent	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Inadequate
● Chapters are logically organized using relevant subheadings, introductory and summary statements, and a professional writing format. APA 7th ed. is used. ● There is evidence of critical thinking with logical academic arguments that include claims, reasons, reliable documentation, and discussion of opposing claims utilizing culturally relevant sources from expert scholars and practitioners. ● At least one-third of the documentation is provided from sources generated within the students' context. ● The writing uses correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling with well-organized sentences that clearly communicate intended meaning. ● There is appropriate documentation throughout the dissertation using reliable sources with no plagiarism. ● Footnote numbering starts over in each new chapter. In APA7, footnotes may be used for incidental information that does not fit well in the main text.					
Professional Practitioner Standards	Excellent	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Inadequate
● Discussion of data demonstrates ethical protection of human subjects. ● Overall focus of the dissertation demonstrates the culmination and results of the student's educational process at BGU with practical, culturally relevant implementation of					

holistic, transformational leadership principles.

Appendix F. Evaluation Criteria for the Oral Review

BAKKE GRADUATE UNIVERSITY DISSERTATION DEFENSE EVALUATION

Goal of the Oral Review:

1. To provide the student with the opportunity to make a presentation that summarizes the highlights of the dissertation;
2. To provide a final consultation where the student can interact with practitioners, research experts, and his/her Personal Learning Community (PLC); and
3. To celebrate the student's graduation.

Date & Time of Dissertation Defense

Zoom Link:

Candidate:

Dissertation Title:

Please be aware that the BGU Rep will lead and facilitate the Oral Review session.

Dissertation Defense Committee

Dissertation Supervisor:

Dissertation Committee Member 1:

Dissertation Committee Member 2:

Dissertation Committee Member 3:

BGU Representative:

Dissertation Defense Guests

Personal Learning Community:

Dissertation Defense Session

1. Clear, concise presentation with good use of Power Point slides (30 minutes maximum)	
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2. Clear, concise, and appropriately documented responses to discussion questions.	
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Dissertation Document

1. Document is well organized with relevant content and doctoral level writing	
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2. The problem, purpose, and research questions statements are clear and concise with relevant context shown	
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3. The biblical foundations are relevant to the purposes of the dissertation.	
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4. The dissertation effectively integrates frameworks based on various disciplines in well-organized literature sections or chapters related to the research questions. .	
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5. Research method(s) and data-gathering strategies are defined with appropriate rationales.	
6. Results of the research are clearly displayed with detailed analysis and applications.	
7. The transformational strategies are relevant to the problem being addressed.	
8. The dissertation has a clear focus on innovative leadership.	
9. In the Discussion chapter or sections, there are good descriptions of conclusions, implications, congoing effective communication strategies, theological significance, recommendations for future research, personal insights, and other principles learned from the dissertation project.	
10. The dissertation includes a relevant reference list with a good representation of sources generated within the student's cultural context.	
11. The dissertation is thoroughly embedded in the student's context.	
12. The dissertation provides relevant recommendations for addressing the problem based on the gathered data and tested transformational strategies.	
13. Clear future steps to continue to address the problem innovatively are presented.	
14. The dissertation outcomes show potential as a replicable model for future work.	
15. Is there evidence of personal transformation that has occurred as a result of the dissertation?	

Dissertation Defense & Dissertation Grade

	Pass: The dissertation and Dissertation Defense meet the BGU standards with possible minor revisions and/or additions needed.
	Conditional Pass: Significant changes are required in substance and/or style. Revisions must be reviewed and approved by the Dissertation Supervisor and signed off by the Dissertation Committee prior to graduation. Upon completion of satisfactory revisions, the grade will become a Pass.
	Fail: Competence in either the dissertation preparation or the Dissertation Defense was unacceptable. The candidate may, with the written permission of the Dissertation Committee, work with the Dissertation Supervisor to determine the appropriate corrective actions. As the dissertation currently exists, the Dissertation Committee cannot recommend graduation.

Publishing Decision

	This dissertation may be published after the student signs the Release Form. (Note: Dissertations that contain sensitive material or are not of a high enough academic standard should not be approved for publication.)
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Comments:

Signatures of Voting Members Confirming Final Recommendation

Dissertation Supervisor _____

Dissertation Committee	_____
Member	_____
Dissertation Committee	_____
Member	_____
Dissertation Committee	_____
Member and/or BGU Rep	_____
Academic Dean	_____

Note: It is the responsibility of the *Dissertation Supervisor* to complete the Dissertation Defense Evaluation Form, which will be *filed in the student's permanent file at the Registrar's office*. Upon approval of the Dissertation Committee, the Registrar will review and approve the final draft to make sure the Candidate has completed all revisions based on recommendations from the BGU Technical Reader.