

# Supporting Doctoral Candidates in Non-Full-Time Residency, Non-Cohort Ed.D.

## Programs via Student-Led Organization and Social Media



So Happy Together....

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# Tennessee State University Department of Teaching & Learning Doctoral Student Organization



The Ed.D. program in Curriculum & Instruction at Tennessee State University is composed almost entirely of students who are employed in the profession, but not at the university. The Doctoral Student Organization in the Department of Teaching & Learning originated out of two perceived deficits in the program:

1. That there is an inherent benefit to residential doctoral programs where the largest part of the student cadre is employed on campus and able to take advantage of social and professional modeling and dissemination of information, which is lacking at TSU, and
2. There is a need for the student body to have greater and more intentional scholarly development.

In 2011, a Doctoral Program Coordinator was designated for the first time. Professor John Mark Hunter was chosen to serve in this role. Both of the above points were addressed by an intentional effort from the Doctoral Program Coordinator with support from the faculty, to initiate a DSO that could

- serve as a conduit for information from the program to the participants on topic of advising, testing, and the other mechanical essentials of a graduate program;
- provide an esprit within the cadre of students which might deliver some of the benefits of a residential program;
- establish intentional professional relationships between faculty members and students that extended beyond the classroom;
- and give the student body an opportunity to come together to know one another, share travails, collaborate, and create a community of practice.

Two essential principles have guided the Teaching & Learning DSO formation and practice – it is **student led and student governed**, and there is authoritative faculty and university input available to the organization from the Doctoral Program Coordinator, other faculty members, and the university professional staff. Much of the idea of the DSO came out of Professor John Mark Hunter's experience with the Professional Seminar during his time in the C&I doctoral program at Virginia Tech.

## **The Problem**

In non-full-time residency, non-cohort doctoral programs, it can be challenging for students to navigate their way through the process from program entry through a successful dissertation defense. ABD doctoral candidates stumble upon uncharted waters as they begin the dissertation writing process as it is likely the first time in their educational career where these students find themselves as the sole student enrolled in a class with no due dates. Feelings of uneasiness and isolation cause some students to fall behind, become disillusioned, and/or drop out of the program. Academic advising alone is not always enough. Students benefit from additional support systems.



## **How the Department of Teaching & Learning at Tennessee State University Addressed the Issue**

Doctoral candidates, with the support of faculty members, have formed a student-led group to help provide support for doctoral candidates as they navigate through the Ed.D. program in Curriculum & Instruction at Tennessee State University. TSU's Teaching & Learning Doctoral Student Organization is a student-led group that uses monthly on-campus meetings, YouTube, and Facebook as means for communication and support. As part of the support system, faculty members are invited as guest speakers along many others such as recent graduates and representatives from the TSU Institutional Review Board.



## **Teaching & Learning DSO Activities**

**FACULTY-HOSTED POT LUCK**

**QUALIFYING EXAM**

**PREPARATION WORKSHOP**

**COMPREHENSIVE EXAM**

**PREPARATION WORKSHOP**

**IRB PROCESS GUEST**

**SPEAKER**

**SOCIAL EVENTS**

**QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

**WORKSHOP**

**QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH**

**WORKSHOP**

**DISSERTATION COMMITTEE**

**SELECTION ROUNDTABLE**

**STATISTICS WORKSHOP**

**LIT REVIEW WORKSHOP**



# Teaching & Learning DSO Media and Technology

## WEBSITE

T&L TSU Doctoral Student Organization  
Links Resources Calendar

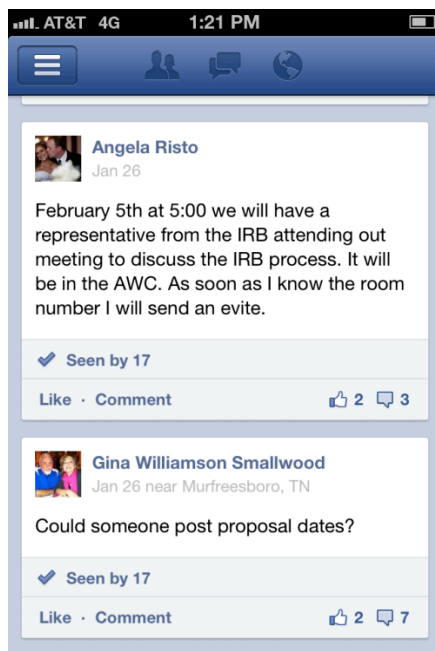


Email us for information

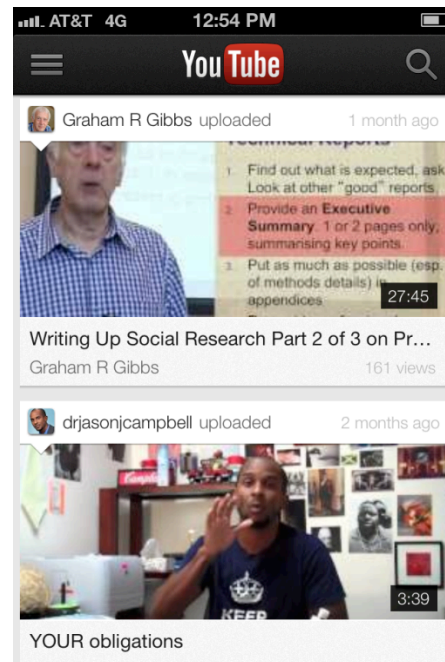
## PORTAPORTAL



## FACEBOOK



## YOUTUBE CHANNEL



## **Supporting Doctoral Candidates in Non-Full-Time Residency, Non-Cohort Ed.D. Programs via Student-Led Organization and Social Media**

### **Tips for Writing the Dissertation—For Students**

- Find or create a support group that will keep you accountable. Draw support from other doctoral candidates, professors, colleagues, family and friends.
- Build yourself up with positive self talk. Create Daily Dissertation Affirmations.
- Set Daily Goals
- Touch your dissertation every day!
- Document your progress. Blog about your dissertation. Use Facebook or Twitter to inform friends about your progress. Take photos; keep a journal or a chart.
- Regular Scheduled Writing Time  
Create a time during your day/ week that is sacred time set aside for your research. Do not allow anything to interfere with this sacred study time. Remember that your writing time may not look like another person's writing time. Find what works for you.
- Schedule occasional vacations away from your dissertation even if it is just time to watch a favorite movie or television program. Your dendrites need a chance to breathe.
- Bring something tangible to every meeting you have with your dissertation chair person.
- Be sure that you have a strong Chapter 1. This will set the pace for your entire dissertation experience.
- Consider writing your Chapter 2 first as this will help you in writing your rationale for Chapter 1.

### **Tips for Writing the Dissertation—For Advisors**

- Encourage students who have recently defended their dissertations to mentor early stage doctoral candidates.
- Provide times for doctoral candidates of all stages to network with each other. If on site times are difficult, try to facilitate an online discussion space.
- Be available to answer questions and calm fears. Solo scholarship can be terrifying for some students.
- Make sure requirements are clearly outlined and available to the students. A checklist or a flowchart would make an excellent resource.
- Provide samples of excellent dissertations for students to use as guides. Draw from qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods studies.

## Dissertation Planning Matrix (McAtee's Matrix)

### Chapter 1:

The problem addressed in this study is \_\_\_\_\_.

The purpose of this study is to \_\_\_\_\_.

\*This study is significant to \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

\*\*Through this study, I want to find out...

1. \_\_\_\_\_.

2. \_\_\_\_\_.

3. \_\_\_\_\_.

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### Chapter 2:

Establish the aforementioned problem through a broad review of related literature. Start with an outline organized by concepts and themes, not by research studies reviewed. There is no place for opinions or biases in this chapter. Just the facts.

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### Chapter 3:

This chapter is where you explain your plan for conducting your study. Use the following chart to organize your research ideas and help you determine whether the design will be quantitative, qualitative, or mixed.

Research Question	***Data Source	Plan for Data Collection	Plan for Data Analysis

\*You are encouraged to have more than one statement of significance. \*\*These are your research questions. 3 questions is just an average. You can have more or less if appropriate.\*\*\*You can have more than one data source per research question.