



Professional Relationships and Expectations in Graduate School –

aka Conflict management
before the conflict

Peter K. Dorhout

Jodie R. Hanzlik

Student/Advisor Relationship – Intellectual Partnerships

- ❖ Two aspects to faculty supervision
 - Creativity – most critical
 - Stimulate and excite students in the field
 - Select appropriate problems
 - Provide a steady stream of ideas, critiques
 - Making appropriate progress towards the degree
 - Maintain a steady presence in the student's life
 - Develop networks in the discipline

Elements of the Partnership

❖ Students & Faculty

- Career Development
- Gainful Employment
- Elements
 - Intellectual growth
 - Curiosity
 - Passion for research
 - Time and \$
 - Time to degree
 - Likelihood of completion
- Degree is not the ultimate goal – it's a career
 - Unique relationship with advisor – not like UG

❖ Success relies on guidance/familiarity of elements

Communication is Vital



When you talk, you repeat what you already know; when you listen, you often learn something.

- - Jared Sparks

The Framework of the Program – Student Handbook

- ❖ Framework provides a shared understanding of the critical elements for success in the program
 - Structure and time in formal coursework
 - Assessing coursework in relation to the program – the core competencies
 - Requirements for rotations/selecting a mentor
 - Expectations for financial support
 - Expectations for Responsible Conduct of Research training
 - Clear description of exam(s) to candidacy – critical thinking
 - Timetable for submitting written work such as original proposals
 - Timetable and expectations for oral presentations
 - Expected timeline for degree and its components above

Do the hurdles meet expectations?



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Qualities of a Thesis/Dissertation

Q: What are the quality standards? A: *HIGH!*

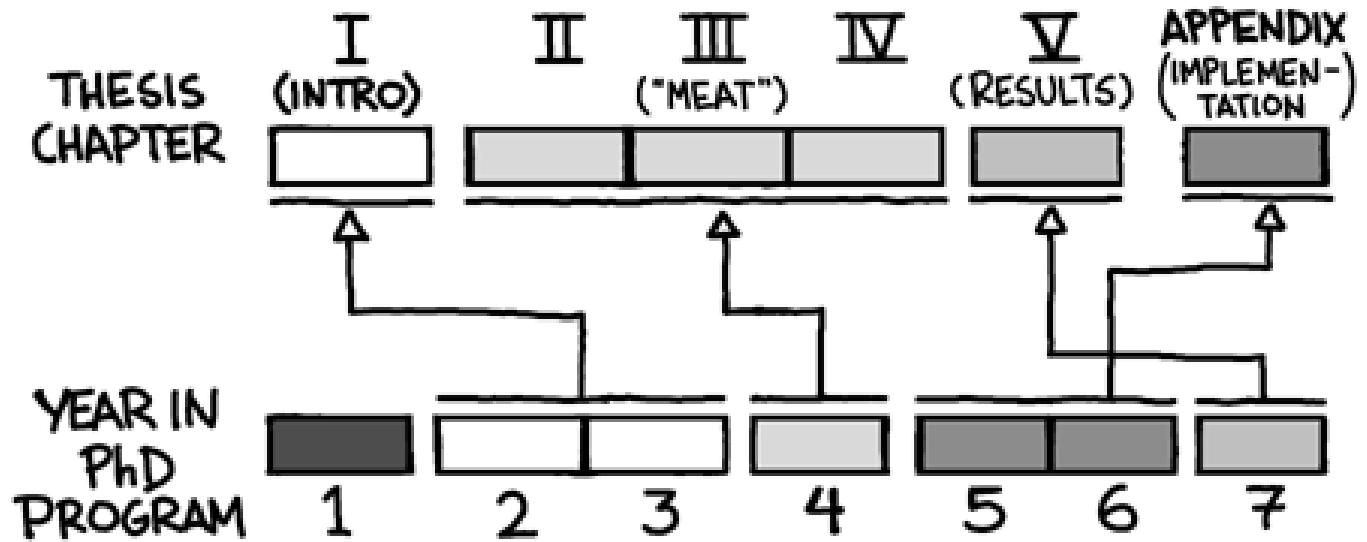
Q: How long should my thesis be? A: *Long enough to cover the topic.*

Q: How exhaustive should my lit review be? A: *Exhaustive!*

- ❖ Purpose of the thesis in the discipline
- ❖ Nature/significance of an Original Contribution
 - Identifying what is the student's contribution v. team
 - Journals format thesis, copyright, intellectual property
- ❖ Components of the thesis
 - Introduction, body of the work, literature review
- ❖ Quality of the thesis
 - Examples of quality products, departmental/faculty expectations, preparing the electronic Thesis/Dissertation

Thesis expectations....

PILED HIGHER
AND DEEPER
PHD YEARS
To
THESIS
CHAPTERS
CONVERSION
CHART



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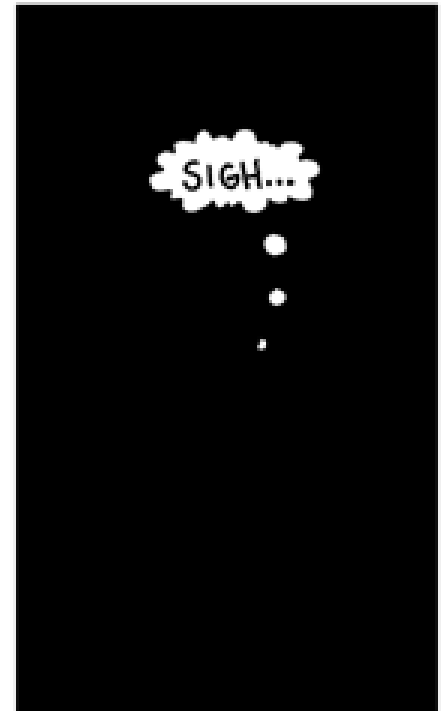
Critical Challenges to Success

❖ Time is the Enemy

- Inexperienced students & time management
- Perfectionism (student and faculty)
- Distractions (student and faculty)
- Faculty funding
- Poor relationship

❖ Early Research is Key

- REU or UG research experiences – incoming students
- Develop research habits early (lab/research/practicum courses)
- Reading literature – critical reading and thinking
- Independent research – opportunities to fail and recover
- Attending departmental seminars – communication skills
- Boot camp for graduate school



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Critical Challenges to Success

❖ Perfectionism

- Early timetables
- Setting and understanding expectations
- Avoiding the “just one more experiment” trap

❖ Faculty

- Establish and enforce timelines early
- Write up what has been achieved
- Identifying what are the next steps/holes in data
- Regular reports feed annual reports to funding agencies
- Encourage weekly updates and oral reporting

Critical Challenges to Success

❖ Distraction and Diversion

- Students or faculty “hooked” on a new technique or idea
- Tangents into “interesting observations”
- Advisor needs to tie these together for students sometimes

❖ Faculty Funding and Accessibility

- Funding is fluid in research – share the understanding of how funding works.
- A “half-time” appointment doesn’t mean you only need to work 20 hours a week on the project.
- Understanding departmental policies on funding for students
- Communication is critical
 - Rotations provide a “honeymoon” period
 - Understanding expectations is critical to relationship

Different stages of the relationship...

YOUR ADVISOR IS ON VACATION. HOW TO REACT:

YEAR 1 GRAD:



YEAR 3 GRAD:



YEAR 5 GRAD:



YEAR 7 GRAD:



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