Online Dissertation Resources for Students


This online article is an excellent resource for students wondering how to get started on their dissertations. Dr. Davis addresses key issues, from choosing the right topic and selecting research strategies to working effectively with advisors and giving seminar presentations. The article also encourages Ph.D. students working on their dissertations to decrease their course loads and teaching assignments whenever financially feasible.


Dr. Jain identifies 15 tips for completing the dissertation within one year: (1) Create a backwards planning timeline, (2) Stay in regular touch with your advisor, (3) Keep your other commitments to a minimum, (4) Frequently assess the scope of your topic, (5) Get more support than you need, (6) Realize the dissertation is not a test of your intelligence, (7) Use the smallest possible unit to get you started, (8) Allow this to be as easy as possible, (9) Don’t play the comparison game, (10) Understand that others may not “get it”, (11) More of everything is not always better, (12) Realize that each advisor will have different standards for an acceptable dissertation, (13) Think of this like a marathon, not a wind sprint, (14) Build the dissertation into your day as much as possible, and (15) If you get stuck for more than one month where you’ve not worked on the dissertation at all, take BIG action.

The website also provides an article called 7 S’s to Spell PhD, which are: (1) Self, (2) Strengths, (3) Structure, (4) Support, (5) Seeing, (6) Stick-to-it-iveness, and (7) Separation. Guidelines for self-care in the dissertation process include strategies for building enjoyable activities into the dissertation process, finding down time, and appropriate use of technology.


This website provides links to a variety of other resources, including steps to becoming a more effective writer, tips for avoiding plagiarism, links to online research forums, and answers to commonly asked questions from other dissertation writers.


This article, posted on Chronicle Careers, focuses on the one-year plan to complete a dissertation and acquire a non-academic position after graduation. The author suggests creating a one-year calendar that clearly displays dates and deadlines related to the dissertation and job search. For example, important dissertation deadlines include: submission dates for chapters, revisions, final drafts, and electronic copies of the final product. The one-year timeline may also include dates related to the non-academic job search, such as completing a self-assessment, researching appropriate careers and networking, submitting applications and interviewing.

This website provides a discussion and support group for students working on dissertations and theses. There are several links on the front page, including a variety of forums where users may post messages related to their research or other interests. Chat rooms, photo albums, a private contract generator for goal completion, and user directories are also available.


This online article, produced by the UNC Writing Center, is a thorough guide for students working to complete their dissertations. The article explores common obstacles doctoral students face, such as choosing a topic and advisor, while also addressing problems related to exhaustion, money, and time management. The article also addresses specific strategies for creating an environment conducive to writing, such as choosing specific times each day and separating work space from recreational space. Furthermore, the article goes on to remind students that internal stressors, such as competition and procrastination, need to be managed regularly throughout this process. Finally, the article provides a comprehensive list of suggested books and websites (with short summaries of each) on dissertation writing and graduate school.