Ponce Health Sciences University
School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences
Clinical Psychology Programs

DISSERTATION MANUAL

Revised 10/2024

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Introduction

This manual provides specific guidelines to be followed in completing the dissertation component of the clinical psychology doctoral program (PhD or PsyD). Although the manual intends to describe the process in a sequential manner, we acknowledge that no document can address every type of problem or dilemma that may arise during the completion of a dissertation project. Nonetheless, by closely following the steps herewith described, we hope to help each student make of their dissertation process a positive and growth-enhancing experience.

The faculty also acknowledges that doctoral dissertations are usually social events that involve many persons within a support system. In addition to the student, the process may involve the dissertation committee and other faculty members, statistical and software consultants, research subjects or participants, typists, editors, among others. These individuals are involved at different stages of the process and are welcome to participate and to assist students with their dissertation project. However, all intellectual contributions and assistance with scientific processes need to be expressly recognized by the student. Ideas borrowed from other writers or other resources must always be acknowledged and properly credited following the latest APA publication guidelines. Intellectual honesty is essential to this process. Consequently, collaboration with any aforementioned party requires that the student exercise personal responsibility and professional integrity at every step.

Our program's philosophy also holds that the dissertation process is an in-depth learning experience through which the student hones many of the scholarly skills and scientific procedures learned throughout their exposure to our academic curriculum. Therefore, the members of the Dissertation Committee assume a mentoring role with the specific mandate of making this learning process as rewarding and pleasant as possible for all involved.

This manual will be modified periodically to accommodate those changes informed by the experience of faculty members and students. Honest feedback about the policies and procedures here presented from all persons involved in dissertation processes will be a crucial component in the continuous efforts towards improving the manual.

I.   Objectives

The primary objective of the dissertation process is to ensure the student becomes well-versed in their specific topic of research.

The dissertation is also intended to:
• Enhance the understanding of the student's chosen area of study.
• Provide research experience in a particular area or in developing an action program with the potential for implementation.

- Develop and offer opportunities to demonstrate analytic skills by evaluating data and conclusions within the student's study area.
- Require conducting a comprehensive literature review.
- Demonstrate the student's ability to design and carry out a distinct, original research project that contributes to the study area's theoretical, societal, or practical (clinical or methodological) aspects.
- Facilitate recognition of the fundamental role of ethics in the field of study.
- Develop project planning, time management, organization, and study implementation skills.

II.   Types of research

Students from PsyD and PhD programs are encouraged to conduct a research study within a quantitative, qualitative or mixed methodological scope. Examples of types of research are summarized in the following tables:

Quantitative studies	Qualitative studies	Mixed-methods studies

Descriptive
Correlational
Causal comparative
Intervention-type of research:
   • Experimental (controlled)
   • Quasi-experimental
   • Pre-experimental
Meta-analysis
	Basic interpretative research
	Phenomenological research
	Grounded Theory
	Field research (Ethnography)
	Systematic Literature Review
		Combines qualitative and quantitative methods
		   • Explanatory sequential
		   • Exploratory sequential
		   • Convergent or concurrent
		   • Nested

Single case studies or multiple case studies	Program development *(specific for PsyD students)*
Case studies could be conceptualized within a *quantitative or a qualitative* scope Intervention-type of research to study what treatments work best to improve outcomes	Related to potentially establish a new service or the improvement, expansion, or integration of existing services

III. PhD and PsyD Research-Related Courses

PhD	PsyD
PHS 1621 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics **PHS 1622** Psychosocial/Clinical Research Practicum I **PHS 1623** Psychosocial/Clinical Research Practicum II **PHS 1625** Test Construction **PHS 1626** Quantitative Research Methods **PHS 1721** Advanced Statistics **PHS 1722** Psychosocial/Clinical Research Practicum III/ **PHS 1723** Behavioral Neurosciences Research Pract. I **PHS 1727** Psychosocial/Clinical Research Pract. IV or **PHS 1725** Behavioral Neurosciences Research Pract.II **PHS 1726** Qualitative Research Methods **MPH 5601** Scientific Writing **MPH 7101** Seminar IRB **PHS 1821** Dissertation Proposal **PHS 1826** Doctoral Dissertation **Electives** **PHS 1824** Structural Equation Modeling **PHS 1825** Partial Least Squares based Structural Equation Modeling	**PSY 6200** Applied Research for Psychologists **PSY 6250** Test Construction **PSY 6230** Qualitative/Quantitative Methods & Descriptive Statistics **PSY 7240** Research Practicum: Data Collection & Data Analysis **PSY 7720** Program Development & Administration in Mental Health **PSY 8210** Dissertation Proposal **PSY 8260** Doctoral Dissertation

For PsyD program:

The *Applied Research for Psychologists (PSY-6200)* course provides the student with the foundation for the development of a preliminary research proposal. Students are encouraged to utilize this opportunity to engage in the initial steps leading to the preparation of the prospectus with which the formal dissertation process begins. As students advance through the sequence of research-oriented courses, they will become equipped to further elaborate on a preliminary research proposal to successfully complete a final dissertation project.

For PhD program:

The *Research Practicums* are designed to provide students with a supervised research experience with a faculty member. Starting with 2022 entering class, students and mentors make a "match" on their mutual research interests and keep working on the selected lab. The practicums will provide the student with the foundation for the development of a preliminary research proposal. Students are encouraged to utilize this opportunity to engage in the initial steps leading to the preparation of the prospectus with which the formal dissertation process begins. As students advance through the sequence of research-oriented courses they will

become equipped to further elaborate on a preliminary research proposal to successfully complete a final dissertation project.

IV. Dissertation Committee selection

Composition
The Dissertation Committee (DC) will have a minimum of two members identified as a *Dissertation Advisor* (**DA***)* and a *Dissertation Reader* (**DR).**

Roles and responsibilities of the DC members
The general role of all DC members is to assist each student in producing a scholarly and scientifically sound product. A successful dissertation is meant to be a contribution to science and to society while also serve as a training process where the student hones their professional skills and improves theoretical data base. Therefore, each member is committed to facilitate the dissertation process through their sound and thoughtful advice and is invested in encouraging the student to stay motivated through the learning process inherent to the exercise. A list of the program's faculty and research interests is available in Appendix A.

Dissertation Advisor
The Dissertation Advisor (DA) is the person with the primary responsibility to guide the student through the dissertation process, providing mentoring regarding the topic, assisting the student with questions regarding the process, and assigning the student task to be completed in an autodidactic manner. Students register for the dissertation courses under the name of the DA, who posts the final grade obtained at the end of the study period. The DA is usually knowledgeable in the field that provides the theoretical background for the dissertation or is skilled in the methodological approach needed to address the specific topic of the project. The DA is the one who most closely works with the student in all process phases. The DA should be a faculty member of PHSU. However, a DA from another accredited institution may be permitted if specialized expertise is required or for availability reasons. For PhD students, it is expected that starting with the 2022 entering class, their research mentor assumes the DA role.

The Program Director must authorize the recruitment and acceptance of an external DA. In such cases, the DR will be responsible for overseeing administrative duties of the process, such as those presented in points 1 and 4 below. The Program Director will receive the certification of completion of the dissertation process and post the student's final grade.

In addition to mentoring and overseeing all aspects of the dissertation process, the DA also performs the following duties:

1. Verify that all forms related to the Dissertation Process are completed and filed in the student's departmental record.
2. Approve all relevant aspects of the process, especially of the prospectus, authorization to engage in data gathering by the Internal Review Board (IRB), final

      approval of presentation and certification of completion of the dissertation requirement.

3. Chair all relevant meetings, especially the Dissertation Presentation (Defense) meeting.
4. Certify, together with the Dissertation Reader, that the dissertation process has been officially concluded and that all requirements have been fully satisfied.

The selection of the DA is made official only after the corresponding form is completed and filed in the student's record. The DA Selection Form may be found in the Appendix B of this manual.

Dissertation Reader

The Dissertation Reader (DR) will collaborate with the DA in assisting the student with the dissertation project. This will include:

1. Reading all portions of the manuscript as they become available to provide feedback and suggestions regarding the content and the scientific procedures conducted during the study.
2. Participation in all formal meetings.
3. Providing input regarding the methodology to be selected for the project.
4. Approval of all relevant aspects of the process, especially of the prospectus, and the final approval of presentation and certification of completion of the dissertation requirement.

The selection of the DR is made official only after the corresponding form is completed and filed in the student's record. The DR Selection Form may be found in Appendix B.

DC and student relationship

A relational mentorship style is considered the ideal approach for the work that a dissertation process entails. Students and their Dissertation Committee members will make every effort to develop an honest, trusting, and empathic interaction.

- *Committee changes*: Students are encouraged to remain continuously enrolled throughout the dissertation terms and with the same DC until the dissertation is completed. However, unexpected events could occur in the dissertation process that prompt a student to replace a committee member.
- If a change in the student's DC occurs *after* the proposal defense presentation (adding or changing the DR for example) they must consult the change with the DA and complete the *Request to Change a Committee Member* form (Appendix B).
- If the student wishes to change the DA, this must be consulted with the program director first. After the student has identified and contacted a new DA, they are required to complete the *Request to Change a Committee Member* form (Appendix B).
- If the DA or DR resigns to their position in the program, or as a part of the DC, the student will select another committee member. After reaching an agreement with the

new committee member, the student will file a new DA or DR selection form with the program director's approval. The change is not considered official until this approval is completed.

IV. Dissertation Process

1. **Research topic selection**	• Research topic selection starts with enrollment in the doctoral program, if not before. By proceeding through coursework and participating in workshops during the **first year,** students are expected to define a specific area of the field they are most interested in, the research questions they'd like to answer, and how the research will be conducted. • It is important to engage in discussions with research professors, faculty members, or investigators that may guide topic delimitation. • The program also encourages the student to get involved in research conducted by the faculty members that may potentially inform the topic selection. Starting with the 2022 incoming class, PhD students are expected to choose their dissertation topic based on their mentor's research area. • Conducting a preliminary literature review and assisting academic conferences during the first year are also encouraged for this purpose. • During the second and third year, students must have identified and recruited a DC for their dissertation. They have the option of recruiting a third member to form part of the committee if this addition is approved by the DC and the program director. After the selection of members, the corresponding form will be completed, and a date will be identified to conduct the *Prospectus Approval Meeting (Appendix B: Form 4).*
2. **Registration in PSY 8210/PHS 1821, Doctoral Dissertation Proposal**	After completing the required basic research courses, the student may register in PSY 8230/PHS 1823- Doctoral Dissertation Proposal and present the proposal during a formal meeting. Upon acceptance of the dissertation prospectus, the committee members will sign the Dissertation Prospectus Meeting Form (Appendix B). Students may register in the proposal course up to 2 times. The Dissertation Advisor, in consultation with the Dissertation Reader, will evaluate the student's performance for the semester, using the Passed (P), Not passed (NP), or In Progress (IP) grading system. Under justifiable circumstances, the program director may consider an additional registration.

3. **Registration in PSY 8260/PHS 1826, Doctoral Dissertation**	Students are required to be registered in the Doctoral Dissertation Course to continue working on their dissertation. They may register up to 4 semesters in this course. Students who have fulfilled all requirements for the doctoral degree, except their dissertation, will be considered full-time students while registered in Doctoral Dissertation. This registration is allowed for up to 4 semesters. The Dissertation Advisor, in consultation with the Dissertation Reader will evaluate the student's performance for the semester, using the Passed (P), Not passed (NP), or In Progress (IP) grading system

4. **Prospectus (Proposal) writing**	• During the third year, students should have started the document that will provide the basis for writing the first chapter of the dissertation project.
	
	• **Chapter I Introduction** of most dissertations includes the following required information:
	    o Title
	    o Introduction
	    o Statement of the Problem and Relevance
	    o Purpose of the Study
	    o Theoretical Perspective
	    o Previous Research studies (i.e., literature review)
	    o Hypothesis or Research Questions or Research Objectives
	
	• After completing Chapter I, the student is also expected to decide on the general type of methodology to be utilized (see Types of Research). To complete the process, the student will be assisted by the DA or by the research course professor.
	
	• **Chapter II: Method** of most dissertations includes the following required information:
	    o Type of research design
	    o Participants – sample characteristics
	    o Recruitment procedures
	    o Instruments/Measures
	    o General Procedures
	    o Data analysis procedure
	
	• The major components of Chapter I, the method outline (which will become a part of Chapter II), and a list of references constitute the core of the Dissertation Prospectus.

5. **Prospectus Approval Meeting**	• During the meeting the student will present the Prospectus to the DC. • A general recommendation is to prepare a 10-15 slides Power Point presentation to be presented orally within a 20–30-minute timeframe. This presentation must also include which publication option (Traditional Dissertation Structure or Publication Structure, see below) the student proposes for their dissertation. • After the presentation, the DC members will discuss the information presented in terms of content and research methodology to decide whether the prospectus is sufficient for the student to continue with the dissertation project. • If the committee does not approve the prospectus, a new date will be selected for the second presentation. • The DC will present to the student the specific areas in need of improvement to satisfy the requirements of the program with regards to this component of the dissertation process. • If the Prospectus is found to be developed to a satisfactory level, the DC will sign the corresponding form certifying such decision. ***Our programs require students to have their dissertation prospectus approved before applying for internship.***
6. **Approval of Prospectus by Institutional Review Board (IRB)**	• Approval of the Prospectus also allows students and their DA to submit the required forms of the proposal to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for their review and authorization. • The IRB will inform the DA about the result of their evaluation and provide their recommendations. • If approved by the IRB, the student will be allowed to begin data collection. • Data Collection is expressly forbidden in the absence of IRB approval. • It is important to note that the DA must appear as the Principal Investigator (PI) in IRB documentation.
7. **Documentation of Meetings**	• All meetings related to the dissertation process and all recommendations agreed upon in these meetings must be documented by the student and signed by all participants.
8. **Data Collection and Analysis**	• Upon authorization by the IRB, the student will begin the data collection process. • During this process, students will consult regularly with their Dissertation Advisor. • Minor modifications to the methodology need to be documented and approved by the DA prior to implementation. • Specific and more significant modifications to the methodology that had initially been approved will need to be reassessed to

	determine if a subsequent consultation with the IRB needs to occur.
9. Approval of Final Draft & Public Presentation of Dissertation	• Prior to setting a date for the presentation of the final dissertation draft, the student must get preliminary approval of the complete document from each committee member. • The form denominated "*Authorization to Schedule Dissertation Presentation*" (Appendix B: Form 6) will be completed by the DC and the student to obtain confirmation of the date when the presentation will be made. This will allow the program's office to schedule the use of a room and to reserve the necessary audiovisual and physical resources needed to facilitate the meeting. • The content of the presentation of the dissertation needs to be discussed and approved by the dissertation committee or with the DA prior to the date of the defense. • Oral defense of the dissertation must be in person. • General public is welcome to attend the dissertation defense. Nevertheless, some rules apply. The audience will be asked to turn off their cellular telephones to prevent unnecessary distractions. No food or beverages are allowed during or after presentations. Children under 12 years will not be allowed during the presentation. • The defense will include a relevant summary of the research process and findings. • The student will have **40 minutes** to present their dissertation project. This will be followed first by the committee's questions, and then the audience will be allowed to ask the student questions about their dissertation project. • After the Q&A section, the DC will retire to deliberate on whether the student's dissertation project is or not approved. • The corresponding form (Appendix B: Form 7) certifying the committee's decision must then be filled in and signed by all DC members and the student. The form will be delivered to the Registrar's Office where the official notation of the outcome of the meeting will be added to the student's record. • A dissertation may receive one of the following three ratings from the DC: Approved, Approved with Conditions or Not Approved. If the DC cannot come to an agreement, the Program Director will attempt to solve the disagreement. The Program Director may also assign another faculty member to address the issue.
10. Publication of Dissertation	• A traditional dissertation document (**option 1, below**) or an **accepted** publication manuscript in a peer-reviewed journal

	(**option 2, below**) are the allowed options (see below, Dissertation Structure).
	• The program also encourages our students to present the results of their studies in a professional convention or meeting such as the Ponce Health Sciences University Scientific Conference and the Convention of the Puerto Rico Psychology Association.
	• When the student chooses a dissertation topic and elaborates a dissertation problem, he or she becomes the main investigator and the DC members the co- investigators. However, when the student works on a project that has been initiated by a DC member or becomes part of a professor's research or publication effort already in progress, the student becomes the co-investigator. The student and the DC members are encouraged to decide on this issue before initiating the more advanced components of the process.

V.   Dissertation Structure

The dissertation process for our Clinical Psychology Programs (PsyD/PhD) may result in the publication of the dissertation in a traditional *Dissertation Structure* (Option 1) or a *Scientific Publication Structure* (Option 2). Both options are described below.

Option 1: Traditional Dissertation Structure

Format
The format and style of presentation of all dissertation projects will follow the most recent version of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. No other format will be accepted. Styles guide resources may be found in the following link: http://www.apastyle.org.

Item	Check
Spacing: Double-space	☐
Centered-below Romans and Arabic numerals (for dissertations)	☐
1.25" left indentation	☐
Fonts: Times New Roman (12 pts), Arial (11 pts), Calibri (11 pts),	☐
In-text author citations (for more than 3 authors- Johnson et al., 2019)	☐
APA Headings	☐
APA style tables (single spaced)	☐

APA style figures (single spaced)	☐
References	☐

References used

It has become a widespread practice to use internet-based references in elaborating academic projects. Dissertation projects may include information obtained through the internet. However, the number of references from this source may not exceed 10% of all references. This rule intends to ensure that the work presented is mostly based on referred journals, reputable books, and professional primary sources.

Authorship

Any publication done on the dissertation will carry the following authorship information:
a. The student's name in first place
b. The DA´s name in second place
c. The DR´s name in third place

Authorship in secondary analysis

A student's original hypothesis must drive secondary data analysis. The DA must ensure the *originality of the student approach and scientific rigor* for an existing project dataset analysis. **Important note:** the primary author is the person whose research questions and hypotheses served as the basis for the project presented in the Dissertation.

PsyD program

In the case of Dissertations geared towards the design of Programs, the ownership of the project is to be determined at the beginning of the process. The student together with the DA and the Program Director will stipulate in a document, the agreements reached about who is the Principal Investigator and who holds ownership of the project. Conjoint ownership of a Program is possible with the consent of the PHSU's President and Dean. Therefore, the program might declare the property of the student or of Ponce Health Sciences University, depending upon the expected contribution of the parties involved to the conceptualization and development of the project.

Document organization

Parts	Required	Check
Title/Cover page (not numbered)	Yes	☐
Authorship statement (ii)	Yes	☐
Dissertation Approval letter (iii)	Yes	☐
Dedication (iv)	No	☐
Acknowledgement (v)	No	☐
Table of Contents (vi)	Yes	☐
List of Tables (vii)	If applicable	☐
List of Figures (viii)	If applicable	☐

List of Illustrations (ix)	If applicable	☐
Abstract – this is the last page numbered with small roman numerals (350 words) (x)	Yes	☐

Chapter 1 Introduction		
Parts	**Required**	**Check**
Statement of the problem	Yes	☐
Purpose and Justification	Yes	☐
Theoretical perspective	Yes	☐
Previous Research studies (i.e., literature review)	Yes	☐
Research questions or objectives	Yes	☐
Hypotheses	if applicable	☐

Chapter 2 Method		
Parts	**Required**	**Check**
Introductory paragraph describing the type of research design	Yes	☐
Participants, sample characteristics, demographics results	Yes	☐
Instruments	Yes	☐
Procedures	Yes	☐
Data analysis procedure	Yes	☐

Chapter 3 Results or Findings		
Parts	**Required**	**Check**
Introductory paragraph	Yes	☐
Aim 1	Yes	☐
Aim 2	Yes	☐
Aim 3	Yes	☐

Chapter 4 Discussion		
Parts	Required	**Check**
Introductory paragraph	Yes	☐
Comparison of results to current knowledge or related scientific literature	Yes	☐
Significance of the study and future implications	Yes	☐
Limitations of the study	Yes	☐
Recommendations	Yes	☐
References	Yes	☐
Appendix IRB Approval Letter	Yes	☐
Appendix Instruments	Yes	☐
Appendix Letters of support*	No	☐

Option 2: Publication Structure

A minimum of one article, in English or Spanish language, and **accepted** in a peer-reviewed journal is required. When the DC and the student discuss and select this option, a timetable that includes the review process from the journal must be considered. It is essential to point out that a journal publication process may take *at least three months*. As the publication process time can vary according to journal, it is recommended to look up the estimated publication time for the desired journal for publication. The DC and the student must contemplate if this option suits their timeframe goals for graduation. If opting for the Publication Structure, the student may include in their defense presentation any past publications achieved before enrolling in the doctoral dissertation course while coursing the doctoral program.

Suggested Journals

A free, peer-reviewed journal with a continuous revision process and approved by the DC is recommended for time purposes. Journals usually have a particular style and format for submission that needs to be considered. It is encouraged that the student and the DA carefully revise the Journal's criteria for submission before the article submission. To identify details of this information, refer to the journal's website "For Author" section. We also recommend exploring the scope of the journal to ensure the study is an adequate fit for the journal. Here is a list of a few journals' suggestions for publications:

Journal	Link
Revista Iberoamericana de Psicología	https://reviberopsicologia.ibero.edu.co/
Revista Caribeña de Psicología	https://revistacaribenadepsicologia.com/index.php/rcp
Revista Salud y Conducta Humana (periodic revision)	http://rsych.com/

Revista Puertorriqueña de Psicología	https://www.repsasppr.net/index.php/reps
Revista Interamericana de Psicología	https://sipsych.org/rip/
Midwest Social Sciences Journal	https://www.iass1.org/midwest-social-sciences-journal
APA Journals	https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals

Format
The format and style of most journals follow the guidelines of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association: https://apastyle.apa.org/ . However, some journals may require other style of citation (e.g., AMA, MLA, Chicago).

Document organization
Usually, journal articles have a word count limitation from 7,000 to 10,000 words (this corresponds to a 20-30 pages double space document). A general outline for most journal articles goes as follows:

   a. Abstract
   b. Key words
   c. Introduction
   d. Methods
   e. Results
   f. Discussion
   g. Conclusion
   h. Acknowledgments
   i. Contributions
   j. Funding

VI. Graduation requirements

Option 1: Dissertation document	• All dissertations final manuscripts must be submitted to PHSU library in a CD before applying for graduation. The following information should appear in the CD label:
	   ○ PHSU School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences
	   ○ PsyD or PhD Clinical Psychology Program
	   ○ Author's name
	   ○ Date of dissertation approval (month & year)

Option 2: Journal Publication	• The letter of acceptance from the Journal and the final version of the article must be submitted to PHSU library in a CD before applying for graduation. The following information should appear in the CD label: 　○ PHSU School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences 　○ PsyD or PhD Clinical Psychology Program 　○ Author's name 　○ Date of approval (month & year)

VII. Appedix

a. Faculty Research Interests
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    d. Copy Rights
    e. Registry and Approval of Doctoral Dissertation
    f. Authorship Certification
    g. Dissertation Checklist

Appendix A

Faculty Research Interests

PhD Faculty

Yaritza López Robledo, PhD., Associate Professor, Dean of School of Behavior and Brain Sciences
Psychotic and Personality Disorders, Forensic Psychology and expertise

Claudia Mántaras, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
Child and Adolescents Psychotherapy, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cognitive evaluation

Stephanie Vega, PsyD, Associate Professor, Associate Dean of Student Affairs
Cognitive and Projective Assessment

Karla Martínez, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Clinical Psychology Program Director
Neurodegenerative Disorders, Alzheimer's, Neuroscience, Addictions,

Nydia Ortiz, Ph.D., Professor
Family Therapy and Systemic Interventions, Narrative Therapies, Addictions, Supervision.

Alíxida Ramos, Ph.D., Associate Professor- HER Lab
Transgender Health, Health Disparities and Cancer prevention.

Axel Ramos, Ph.D., Associate Professor- Health Psychology Training and Research Core
Clinical Health Psychology, Community based participatory research.

Bárbara Barros, PsyD., Assistant Professor – BRAVE Lab
Women's Health Psychology, Perinatal Psychology, Endometriosis, Health Disparities and Public Policy

Caleb Esteban, Ph.D., Associate Professor- The Queer Lab
LGBT, Gender, Sexuality, Diversity, Minorities

Cristina Peña, Ph.D., Assistant Professor- Health Equity Advancement Lab
Cancer, Depression and Emotional Regulation Intervention

Eida Castro, Psy.D., MSc, Associate Professor- Psych-Oncology Research Lab
Outreach/Community Research, Felt Stigma, Cancer

Eliut Rivera, Ph.D., Associate Professor- HER Lab
Stigma, Serious Mental Illness, Health Psychology and Biomarkers

Ernesto Rosario, PhD., Professor
Test constructions, Research, Statistics

Giselle Cordero, Ph.D.., Assistant Professor- CLT lab

Cognitive functioning, neurodevelopmental disorders, mental health, gastrointestinal disorders

Ismael Castillo, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Neurofeedback, EEG

Ivette Mirles, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Health Psychology, Behavioral Medicine and Psychopharmacology

Julio Jiménez, M.D., Professor- Health Psychology Training and Research Core
Psychoneuroimmunology, HIV/AIDS, Behavioral Medicine, Psychopharmacology,
Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy.

Liliana Hernández, PsyD., Assistant Professor
Health Psychology, Social Psychology (Child Abuse prevention), Assessment

Luis Diaz Medero, PhD, Assistant Professor- Contextual and Behavioral Psychology Lab
Contextualism, Behaviorism, Trauma, Borderline Personality Disorder

Mario Bermonti, Ph.D., Assistant Professor- CLT Lab
Statistics, Technology, cognitive functioning, cardiometabolic health, chronic health conditions, data
science &programming

Mary Rodriguez, Psy.D., MSc, Professor- Pediatric Research Center Lab
Diabetes, Obesity, Assessment, and Epigenetics

Norka Polanco, Ph.D., Associate Professor- LabES-Suicide and Stigma Lab
DBT, Borderline Personality Disorder, Evidence Based Psychological Practices and Suicide

Normarie Torres Blasco, Ph.D., Assistant Professor- HIPE Lab
End of life care, advanced cancer patients and caregivers

Orlando M. Pagán Torres, PhD., Assistant Professor
Religion, Spirituality, Positive Psychology

PsyD Faculty

Giselle M. Medina Vélez, Psy.D., Professor, Program Director
Pediatrics Psychology, Integrated Health Care, Development, Child and Adolescents Psychotherapy

Nydia Ortiz, Ph.D., Professor
Family Therapy and Systemic Interventions, Narrative Therapies, Addictions, Primary Care Psychology,
Supervision

Julio Jiménez, M.D., Professor
Psychoneuroimmunology, HIV/AIDS, Behavioral Medicine, Psychopharmacology, Psychoanalytic
Psychotherapy

Ernesto Rosario, Ph.D., Professor

Test Construction, Research, Statistics

María Garrido, Psy.D., Professor
Personality Assessment with MMPI-2/A/RF, Cognitive and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Consultation in Legal Systems

Nydia M. Cappas, Psy.D., Professor
Primary Care Psychology, Psychology of Gender, Diversity, Administration in Mental Health

Javier Hernández, Psy.D., Associate Professor
Clinical Neuropsychology, Health Psychology Inpatient Settings, Neuropsychological Rehabilitation

Walter Rodríguez, Psy.D., Assistant Professor
Cognitive Psychology, Neuropsychological Assessment and Rehabilitation

Hiradith Menéndez, Psy.D., Associate Professor
Mood and Anxiety Disorders, Psychotherapy, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy

Viviana Hoyos, Psy.D, Associate Professor
Primary Care Psychology, Projective Assessment, Behavior Modification

Efrain Ríos, Psy.D. Assistant Professor
Behavior and Genetics, Neurodevelopmental correlates of Psychoanalytic Theory, Neuroscience of Learning

Eunice Alvarado, Psy.D., Associate Professor
Cognitive Assessment, Forensic Psychology

Marielly González, Psy.D., Assistant Professor
Psychological Assessment, Psychotherapy

Oxalis Jusino, Psy.D., Assistant Professor
Psychoeducational Assessment, Projective Personality Assessment

Stephanie Vega, Psy.D., Associate Professor, Associate Dean for Student Affairs
Cognitive and Projective Assessment

Joan Colón, Psy.D., Assistant Professor, Clinical Practice Coordinator (Ponce)
Psychological Assessment, Psychotherapy, Health Psychology

Rafael Oliveras, Psy.D., Assistant Professor
Pediatrics Neuropsychology, Genetics, Autism

Paulette Soto, Psy.D., Assistant Professor
Psychological Assessment, Social Psychology, Sexual Abuse, Child Maltreatment

Luis K. Hernández, Psy.D., Assistant Professor
Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, Psychological Assessment, Forensic Psychology

Bárbara Barros, Psy.D., Assistant Professor
Women's Health Psychology, Perinatal Psychology, Endometriosis, Health Disparities and Public Policy

Javier Piazza, Psy.D., Assistant Professor
Family Therapy, Supervision and Consultation and Addictions

Laura Deliz, Psy.D., Assistant Professor
Neurodevelopmental disorders

Johana Estrada Rodríguez, Psy.D., Assistant Professor, PsyD program Coordinator, San Juan Center
Psychological Assessment, Health Psychology, Psychotherapy

Yassira Cedano, Psy.D., Assistant Professor, Clinical Practice Coordinator - San Juan Center

Psychological Assessment

Glorimar Velázquez, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Psychological Assessment, Neurodevelopmental Pediatrics Psychology, Psychotherapy

Deborah Vera, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Trauma, Violence, Ethics, Mood and Anxiety Disorders, Supervision and Crisis Intervention

Marilis González Lorenzo, Psy.D., Assistant Professor
Psychotherapy, Development, Mood and Anxiety Disorders, Psychooncology, History

Adam Rosario Rodríguez, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Statistics, Qualitative & Quantitative Research, CyberPsychology, Artificial Intelligence, Positive Psychology

Luzelix Ruiz Lugo, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Women's Health Psychology, Chronic Psychopathology, Forensic-Correctional Psychology, Addictions

Laura Trinidad Olivero, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Neuroscience, Neuropsychological Assessment, Health Psychology, Forensic Psychology

Luis Caraballo Feliciano, Psy.D., Assistant Professor
Health Psychology, Administration in Mental Health

Axel Rivera Reyes, Psy.D., Assistant Professor
Family Therapy, Trauma, Telehealth

STL PsyD Faculty Interests

Frank Barrios, PhD, Professor
Behavioral & Cognitive Therapy, Health Psychology

Ellen Glover-Orr, PhD
Abused children and their families

David Evans, PhD
Personality, Cognition, Neuroscience, Addictions

Dan Welch, PhD
Event Related Potentials (ERPS), Computer based interfaces)

Lisa Elwood, PhD
Trauma, PTSD, OCD, CBT

Kristin Velazquez-Kenefick, PsyD
Childhood sexual abuse, PTSD, Trauma, Family Psychology

Appendix B- Dissertation Forms

Form 1- Selection of Dissertation Advisor
Form 2- Selection of Dissertation Reader
Form 3- Report on Meetings
Form 4- Prospectus Presentation Meeting
Form 5- Request to Change a Committee Member
Form 6- Authorization to Schedule a Dissertation Presentation
Form 7- Final Evaluation of Dissertation Process and Public Presentation

PONCE HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMS

SELECTION OF DISSERTATION ADVISOR

FORM #1

Student_____   Date: _____

 Dissertation Title: _____

_____

Dissertation Advisor Selected: _____

Special Conditions (if applicable)

_____
_____
_____

I, _____, have agreed to serve as Dissertation
Advisor for the dissertation committee of the above-mentioned student.

_____   _____
Signature of Dissertation Advisor   Date

Approved:

_____   _____
Program Director   Date

PONCE HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMS

SELECTION OF DISSERTATION READER

FORM #2

Student _____   Date _____

Dissertation Title _____

_____

Dissertation Reader Selected

_____

Special Conditions (if applicable)

_____
_____
_____

I, _____, have agreed to serve as Dissertation
Reader for the dissertation committee of the above-mentioned student.

_____   Date_____
Signature of Dissertation Reader

_____   Date_____
Name and Signature of Dissertation Advisor

Approved:

_____
Program Director

**PONCE HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMS**

DISSERTATION PROCESS – REPORT ON MEETINGS

FORM #3

Student: _____ Date: _____

Dissertation Title: _____

_____

The undersigned members of the Dissertation Committee have met with the above-named student to discuss issues related to the dissertation process. According to the norms set forth in the Dissertation Manual of the Ph.D. Clinical Psychology Program the agreements or conclusions reached between the DC member (s) and the student are herewith documented.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

_____

_____

_____

AGREEMENTS:

_____

_____

_____

NEXT MEETING: _____

_____   Date _____

Name and Signature of Dissertation Advisor or Reader

PONCE HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMS

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL OUTCOME FORM AND EVALUATION RUBRIC

FORM #4

Instructions: This should be completed by the Dissertation Committee during or immediately following the proposal meeting. A signed copy should be shared with the Program Director and the Administrative Assistant promptly.

Student:
Dissertation Advisor:
Date of Proposal Meeting:
Date of Form Completion:
Title of Dissertation:

Competency Evaluation	Exceeds Expectations for Competency (3)	Meets Expectations for Competency (2)	Does not Meet Expectations for Competency (1)	Score
Review of the Literature	The review of the literature demonstrates an integrated and high-level mastery of relevant scholarly work and provides a strong and specific foundation for the research conducted. The review reflects current evidence and includes both current and foundational citations. The review is well organized and exhibits an integrated understanding of the relevant literature.	The literature review is sound and balanced, but not exhaustive. Includes both current and foundational citations but may benefit from inclusion of additional sources. The review is organized and follows a logical progression.	The review is missing key pieces of relevant research or includes literature unrelated to the proposed dissertation. Constructs may not be clearly defined. The citations are dated and do not adequately reflect current evidence. The review may be biased towards a particular perspective. The review is disorganized.	
Study Rationale and Conceptualization	Research aims are clearly defined. Provides a compelling rationale for the hypotheses to be tested or aims of the project. Project has potential to contribute to the field. If relevant, hypotheses are well-grounded in the literature and testable.	Research aims are defined but may be somewhat vague. The implications of proposed study are addressed but in need of development. The conceptualization of the proposed study is relatively clear.	Research aims are missing or ill-defined. No rationale is offered, or implications of proposed study are unclear. There is no clear conceptualization or justification offered for the proposed study.	

Methodology	Methods and analytical approach are sufficiently rigorous, well-justified, and appropriate for the project. Description indicates an understanding of the methods, is clear, and includes appropriate psychometric information.	The methodology is basic and, while appropriate, could be more thoroughly developed. The description is enough for the committee to understand and support the project.	The methodology is ill-defined and/or incongruent with the aims of the proposed study.	
Writing	Demonstrates clarity, coherence, logic, and flow in the presentation of content. Strong transitional segues are used to structure the document. Minimal to no errors in syntax, punctuation, and spelling. Negligible number of typographical errors. Follows APA format and consistent with Dissertation Manual guidelines.	The proposal mostly demonstrates coherence, logic, and flow in the presentation of content. Minimal number of syntax, punctuation, and spelling errors. Minimal number of typographical errors; Follows APA format and Dissertation Manual guidelines but may have some errors.	The proposal lacks coherence, logic, and flow in the presentation of content. Numerous errors of syntax, punctuation, and spelling. Excessive typographical errors. Numerous APA format errors. Does not adhere to Dissertation Manual guidelines.	
Presentation	The student is professional and demonstrates competence throughout the meeting. The student is able to describe the study in a manner consistent with a presentation in a professional setting. Student is able to answer questions in a way that demonstrates familiarity with the body of literature and evidence-based thinking.	The student is generally professional in the meeting, but may appear anxious or low in confidence. Student's presentation may be more consistent with a strong classroom presentation rather than a professional conference presentation. Student is largely able to explain the project and answer questions, but may struggle with some pieces. Student appears to understand project, but may at times have trouble communicating it.	The student's presentation fails to demonstrate that they understand the project and/or the relevant body of literature. Student is frequently unable to answer questions, including ones central or specific to the study.	

Proposal Ratings: Scores of Exceeds Expectations for Competency at the proposal indicate that the document is considered strong and will likely need minimal revisions prior to the defense (except for updating as appropriate). Submission of work at a similar level is likely to be acceptable at the defense.

Scores of Meets Expectation for Competency are considered acceptable at the time of proposal. However, the committee may provide feedback on changes that should be made prior to the defense. Submission of the document at the same level of work may not be considered acceptable at the defense.

Scores of Does not Meet Expectations for Competency indicate that the current work is not at a level that is acceptable. The committee will provide feedback on the next steps. This may range

from revisions that need to be made for the current work to at an acceptable level to rejection of the project. Committee will indicate in the meeting outcome form.

The Dissertation Committee met on the date listed above to evaluate the Dissertation Prospectus/Presentation Meeting presented by the above-mentioned student. After reading the document, listening to the presentation, and discussing the project presented by the student, the ratings above were provided. To approve, students are expected to obtain a minimum score of 2 in each of the areas evaluated.

❒ Approved

❒ Approved with Conditions

❒ Not Approved

Summary of Comments from the meeting and plans for next steps, if applicable. If revisions are required, please indicate who will review and approve the changes made (e.g., Advisor only or full committee):

_____   _____
Dissertation Advisor Name   Dissertation Advisor Signature
(Required)   (Required)

_____   _____
Dissertation Reader Name   Dissertation Reader 1 Signature
(Required)   (Required)

_____   _____
Dissertation Reader 2 Name   Dissertation Reader 2 Signature
(Optional)   (Optional)

_____
Program Director Signature

PONCE HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMS

REQUEST TO CHANGE A DISSERTATION MEMBER

FORM #5

Student _____   Date _____

Dissertation Title _____

_____

CHANGE REQUESTED AND REASON

_____

_____

DISCUSSED WITH (Mark at least one) :

- ☐ Academic Advisor

- ☐ Dissertation Advisor

- ☐ Dissertation Reader

Approved:

_____
Program Director

PONCE HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMS

AUTHORIZATION TO SCHEDULE DISSERTATION PRESENTATION

FORM #6

Student: _____   Date: _____

Dissertation Title: _____

_____

_____

The Dissertation Committee has authorized the above-named student to schedule a Dissertation Presentation meeting. One week before the scheduled presentation, this form should be presented to the Dissertation Advisor containing all the signatures of all the persons directly or indirectly involved with the meeting.

Date of presentation: _____

Room assigned: _____

Audiovisual equipment needed: _____

Schedule authorized by:

_____   _____
      Dissertation Advisor   Dissertation Reader

_____
      Program Director

PONCE HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMS

FINAL EVALUATION OF DISSERTATION PROCESS AND PUBLIC PRESENTATION

FORM #7

Student: _____   Date: _____

Dissertation Title:
_____
_____
_____

The members of the Dissertation Committee have met with the above named student to hear and to evaluate the "Public Presentation of Dissertation" according to the norms set forth in the Dissertation Manual of the Ph.D. Clinical Psychology Program. Based upon the quality of the work submitted and the presentation made today the Dissertation Committee finds:

☐ The dissertation submitted, and the presentation done on the final draft are
not consonant with the norms of the program and/or the agreements reached by the candidate with the Dissertation Committee. **Not Approved**

☐ The dissertation submitted, and the presentation done on the final draft are
consonant with the standards of the program and with the expectations of the Dissertation Committee however, modifications need to be done before final approval is granted.
Approved on Condition.

☐ The dissertation submitted, and the presentation done on the final draft **are
consonant** with the standards of the program and with the agreements reached between the student and the Dissertation Committee. **Approved**.

Additional Comments. _____

_____

_____

_____   _____
Dissertation Advisor   Dissertation Reader

_____
Program Director

APPENDIX C

Dissertation Cover (for Traditional Dissertation Structure)

DISSERTATION TITLE ALL IN CAPITAL LETTERS AND CENTRALIZED

AUTHOR'S NAME AND LAST NAMES

PONCE HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF BEHAVIORAL AND BRAIN SCIENCES

Date of approval (MONTH & YEAR)

APPENDIX E

Suggested Guidelines for Traditional Dissertation Structure

Quantitative Method Design Format

Chapter I: Introduction Statement of the
        Problem
        Purpose & Justification of the Study
        Theoretical Perspective
        Previous Research Studies (i.e., literature review) Hypothesis

Chapter II: Method
        Type of research design
        Participants – sample characteristics
        Instruments/Measures
        Procedures
        Data analysis procedure

Chapter III: Results

Chapter IV: Discussion
        Discussion of each hypothesis
        Significance of the study and future implications
        Limitations of the study
        Recommendations

Qualitative Method Design Format

Chapter I: Introduction Statement of the
      Problem
      Purpose & Justification of the Study
      Theoretical Perspective
      Previous Research Studies (i.e., literature review)
      Research questions or objectives

Chapter II: Method
      Qualitative Research Strategy
      Reflexivity/Role of the Researcher
      Participants/Elements
      Data Collection Procedures
      Data Analysis Procedures

Chapter III: Results or Findings

Chapter IV: Discussion
      Discussion of each research question or objective
         Significance of the study and future implications
      Limitations of the study
      Recommendations

Mixed Methods Design Format

Chapter I: Introduction Statement of the
      Problem
      Purpose & Justification of the Study
      Theoretical Perspective
          Previous Research Studies (i.e., literature review)
      Research questions or objectives

Chapter II: Method
      Type of mixed method research design
      Rationale for Mixing Methods
      Reflexivity/role of the Researcher
      Participants
      Instruments/Measures
      Procedures
      Data analysis procedure

Chapter III: Results

Chapter IV: Discussion
      Discussion of each research question or objective
      Significance of the study and future implications
      Limitations of the Study
      Recommendations

Program Development Format

Chapter I: Introduction
        Statement of the Problem and Relevance
        Conceptual Framework
        Literature Review
        Definition of Terms

Chapter II: Method
        Needs Assessment:
      Participants – sample characteristics
      Instruments/Measures
      Procedures
      Data analysis procedure

Chapter III: Results

Chapter IV: Program Design
        Purpose of the Program
        Vision and Mission of the Program
        Objectives of the Program
        Participants of the Program
            Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
              Geographic Area
        Social Benefit
        Proposed Method of Program Evaluation
            Clinical and administrative
        Contribution and Future Implications

Case Study Format

I. Introduction
- Statement of the Problem and Relevance
- Purpose of the Study
- Case Study Questions or Aims
- Definition of Terms
- Literature Review about the Case Problem
- Theoretical Perspective of the Study

II. Method
- Design (Case Study Type)
- Source of Information (Participant, files, archives, etc.)
- Data Collection Strategies (Observation, Interviews, Field Notes, etc.)
- Recording Strategies (Audio, video, photos, transcripts, etc.)
- Role of the Researcher
- Ethical Issues
- Unit of Analysis (Categories)

III. Findings

IV. Discussion
- Significance of the Study
- Theoretical and Practical Implications
- Study Strengths and Limitations

APPENDIX F

First Page Template

Dissertation's Title

Student's Name

Doctoral Dissertation presented to the faculty of the Psychology Department of Ponce

Health Sciences University as a partial requisite for the Doctoral degree in Clinical

Psychology

Month Year

APPENDIX G

Copy Rights Page

Copy Rights

APPENDIX H

Registry and Approval of Doctoral Dissertation

Clinical Psychology Program

Registry and Approval of Doctoral Dissertation

Student's Name

Submitted to the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences of the Ponce Health Sciences University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctoral degree (Psy.D/PhD) in Clinical Psychology.

Dissertation's Title

Evaluation of content and presentation   _____ Approved.

_____   _____
Name, Ph.D./Psy.D., Dissertation Advisor   Date

_____   _____
Name, Ph.D./Psy.D., Dissertation Reader   Date

_____   _____
Name, Ph.D./Psy.D., Program Director   Date

_____   _____
Name, Dean of SBBS   Date

APPENDIX I

Authorship Certification

Authorship Certification

I, ***YOUR NAME***, hereby certify that this doctoral dissertation titled: ***DISSERTATION'S***

TITLE, which I present as a partial requisite to obtain the doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology

(Psy.D.) from the Ponce Health Sciences University is the product of my research work. I also

certify that this work is original and unpublished.

_____
Readable signature of the student

APPENDIX J

Dissertation Checklist

Complete these steps before submitting the dissertation to the Graduate School for approval:

☐ Check the spelling on the title page.

☐ Have you listed your degree properly?

☐ Is the approval form signed by your dissertation chair, all committee members, and your department head or school director/COT dean?

☐ Does the abstract have no more than 350 words?

☐ Is there a 1.25" left-hand margin and at least 1" margins on the right, top, and bottom of each page? It can be 1" if you will not have the document bound as a book.

☐ Have you run a spell and grammar check?

☐ Are the levels of headings, correct?

☐ Do all headings and page numbers in the table of contents match those in the text exactly?

☐ Are all sources listed in the references list (or works cited) mentioned in the text?

☐ Are all citations in the text listed in the reference list (or works cited)? Double check alphabetization.

☐ If the dissertation involved research using human or animal subjects, did you include a copy of your IRB approval letter?

☐ Did you receive authorization for use of published material that is not covered under fair use?