

Dear DPA Students: the below guide is designed to help provide you with assistance and important information as you progress toward producing a prospectus, all the way through the final stages of the dissertation process. Please make sure to review it often throughout your dissertation journey. Remember that you must ultimately fulfill the recommendations of your committee, as well as the requirements of both the Public Administration program and Graduate School. The Public Administration faculty at VSU hope that this will be a fulfilling and productive stage of your doctoral degree.

Important notes:

1) DPA students defend both their prospectus and completed dissertation. The prospectus may be defended online or in person using an online platform hosted by the University, while the actual dissertation project is defended only in person on VSU main campus after approval has been granted by all members of the committee.

2) The prospectus is developed during the semester when the student is enrolled in the Capstone Seminar (PADM 9990) in consultation with the instructor of the course. It is a 30-35 page project proposal containing the following information:

- An introduction of the primary topic and theme that will comprise the dissertation
 - The research hypotheses and/or questions of focus for the dissertation
 - The relationship of the project to the existing literature and theory in the field
 - The basic research approach and methodological design of the dissertation
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4) The final dissertation project is a major academic undertaking. Producing a high quality project will take a considerable amount of time. A dissertation
