C-20: PhD IN NURSING PROGRAM  
MULTIPLE ARTICLE DISSERTATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

POLICY: The Multiple Article Dissertation must include a minimum of three under-review, in-press, or published articles reporting on research or scholarship undertaken as a doctoral student at UNLV (prior research, scholarship, creative activity, articles or publications may not be used in a UNLV dissertation). The culminating experience demonstrates the student’s mastery of their research, scholarship, creative abilities, and written and oral communication skills in the chosen discipline. The final document is intended to benefit the student and contribute to the academic discipline or profession. This policy is supplemental to the UNLV Graduate College policies and is specific to the School of Nursing PhD in Nursing Program. Students in the School of Nursing PhD in Nursing Program must adhere to both the Graduate College policies and the School of Nursing policies.

RATIONALE: The purpose of the dissertation is to demonstrate research competence as a culminating product of the graduate program. The Multiple Article Dissertation option provides PhD students an alternative to the Traditional Dissertation for their final culminating experience. In addition, it provides students with a structured opportunity to disseminate publications earlier in their professional careers.

Working under the supervision of the Dissertation Advisory Committee, the student must produce three original, rigorous, scholarly manuscripts to graduate. The Multiple Article Dissertation option is complete when the student:
1. Articulates a theoretical framework extending or advancing knowledge or contributing to human/reality understanding of the selected phenomenon of study;
2. Completes an investigation of a research question relating to some aspect of nursing science;
3. Writes and defends a scholarly dissertation including three manuscripts publishable in peer-reviewed journals.

PROCEDURE:

I. Multiple Article Dissertation Format
   A. The manuscript option format must follow the UNLV Graduate College requirements and instructions for preparation and submission of Doctoral Dissertation (available on the Graduate College website: [http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=17&navoid=2923#Final_Research_Creative_Documents](http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=17&navoid=2923#Final_Research_Creative_Documents)).
   B. With the guidance of the Advisory Committee Chair and Members, students will develop a plan and timeline for completion of the manuscripts for the Multiple Article Dissertation option.
C. Changes to the dissertation option (Traditional vs. Multiple Article) must be discussed and approved by the student’s Advisory Committee Chair and Committee Members.

II. Abstract
A. The written dissertation will include an abstract describing the full dissertation and be no more than 350 words (not counting title and author’s name)
B. The abstract structure will be determined by the doctoral dissertation committee

III. Chapter 1: Introduction
A. The Introduction sets the stage for the three manuscripts to follow (see below) and will include an updated literature review that builds on the review developed as part of the Comprehensive Examination.
B. The Introduction Chapter should include:
   i. rationale for the research;
   ii. discussion of gaps in the literature addressed by the research;
   iii. identification of the aims of the overall dissertation project; and,
   iv. description of the proposed manuscripts and explanation of how they are linked to the dissertation topic.

IV. Chapters 2, 3, & 4
A. The student will prepare three full manuscripts and submit for publication to one or more peer-reviewed journals. The student and her/his committee will agree on the nature and topics of the three manuscripts, but all must be clearly linked to the aims established for the dissertation.
B. Article chapters must be included in the appropriate Graduate College format, consistent with the Introduction and Conclusion chapters. Students may not simply “add in” a journal article reprint to serve as a dissertation chapter.
C. At least one manuscript must be data-driven, report the results of the student’s dissertation study, and identify the student as first author. Additional manuscripts may focus on an integrative review of the literature pertinent to the program of study, instrument development, methodological issues, conceptual analysis or theory application related to the study, or clinical application of the findings to practice.
D. The student should strive to submit for publication two of the three manuscripts well before the time of the student’s Dissertation Defense. All committee members must approve each manuscript prior to any journal submission.

V. Chapter 5: Conclusion
A. This format must also include a concluding chapter that puts the multiple manuscripts in a broader context and explains their significance to the field, as well as offer suggestions for future research.
B. This concluding chapter should provide an overall discussion of:
   i. the study undertaken;
   ii. an integrative summary of findings, strengths, and limitations; and,
   iii. implications for research, education, or practice.

VI. Authorship
A. For coauthored chapters in multiple article dissertations, the student must have made a substantial and documented contribution to the work in order to include it in the dissertation. In practice, this may be acknowledged by the student being the lead author on a manuscript. If not the first author on an article, the student should have made substantial contributions to the research design, execution of the study, analyses, and/or write-up and these must be documented, as well as reviewed and
approved by the student’s committee. Quantifying the requirements of “substantial” can be challenging, with best practices in leading peer-reviewed journals (such as PLOS ONE, Nature) offering guidelines for determining sufficient contribution for journal publication authorship, and in turn for inclusion in a dissertation. A student’s contribution in coauthored chapters should be noted and clearly explained either in the general Introduction or in Introductions to respective coauthored chapters.

B. The Dissertation Advisory Committee must approve the articles for inclusion in the dissertation compendium. The manuscripts must be part of the work the student performed while attending the UNLV School of Nursing PhD Program, be related to the topic of the dissertation, and contribute to a unified work.

C. According to the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, the Authorship credit should be based on 1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and 3) final approval of the version to be published. All authors should meet these conditions. Since the relative contributions of co-authors may change over the course of a project and across manuscripts, the student can revisit this as appropriate prior to actual manuscript submission. All authors must review and approve the manuscript prior to submission.

D. For Multiple Article Dissertation chapters that are published or in press, the student must secure the appropriate copyright from the publisher to include the chapter contents in the dissertation. These must be included in an appropriate Appendix per Graduate College formatting guidelines.

Approved by Academic Affairs: 6/15/17
Approved by Faculty Organization: 6/26/17
Approved by Dean: 6/26/17