

Guidelines: Manuscript Option for DNP Scholarly Project

DNP students have the option, with the approval of the committee, for having the Scholarly project submitted in the form of a manuscript ready for submission at the time of the final defense. The following are general guidelines that can be used in this process:

1. There should be a discussion with the student and Chair, ideally before the proposal defense, as to the format for the final product. If the Chair approves the idea of doing a manuscript, the committee can then agree at the time of the proposal defense. The use of writing editors should be encouraged when appropriate. A list of editing services is found here [LINK].
2. The purpose of the proposal defense is for the committee to first determine that the student has adequate knowledge of and familiarity with the literature to support the proposed project. This is done through evaluation of the strength of the written background and significance section as well as the literature review. Secondly, the committee approves the project plan. Consequently, most committees require well developed “chapters”, typically found in a formal thesis proposal, background & significance, literature review and methods. It is unusual that this can be done in the format used in a manuscript. The committee should discuss and decide on the appropriate journal.
3. Using the guidelines from the journal, the student needs to narrow down the content in the proposal to meet journal requirements. This process can be difficult for the novice (and experienced) writer. It is suggested that the student work with the Chair to start this process while collecting data. There are basically two approaches. The first is to edit down the proposal, keeping the key elements. The second approach is to have the student start writing as they would in beginning to prepare a manuscript, highlighting the key aspects of the background, significance and literature review. Once the student collects and analyzes the data the results and discussion sections of the manuscript can be written following journal guidelines.
4. The student is required to have one manuscript at the time of the final defense. However, frequently it is possible to identify the potential for more than one manuscript. It is suggested that once the data have been collected and analyzed, that the committee meet to discuss the results and determine the focus of the manuscript to be submitted for the final defense.

The expectation is that the manuscript submitted to the committee is “ready for submission” with the assumption that the committee will likely request additional editing. Authorship order should be determined by the committee, with the student as first author.