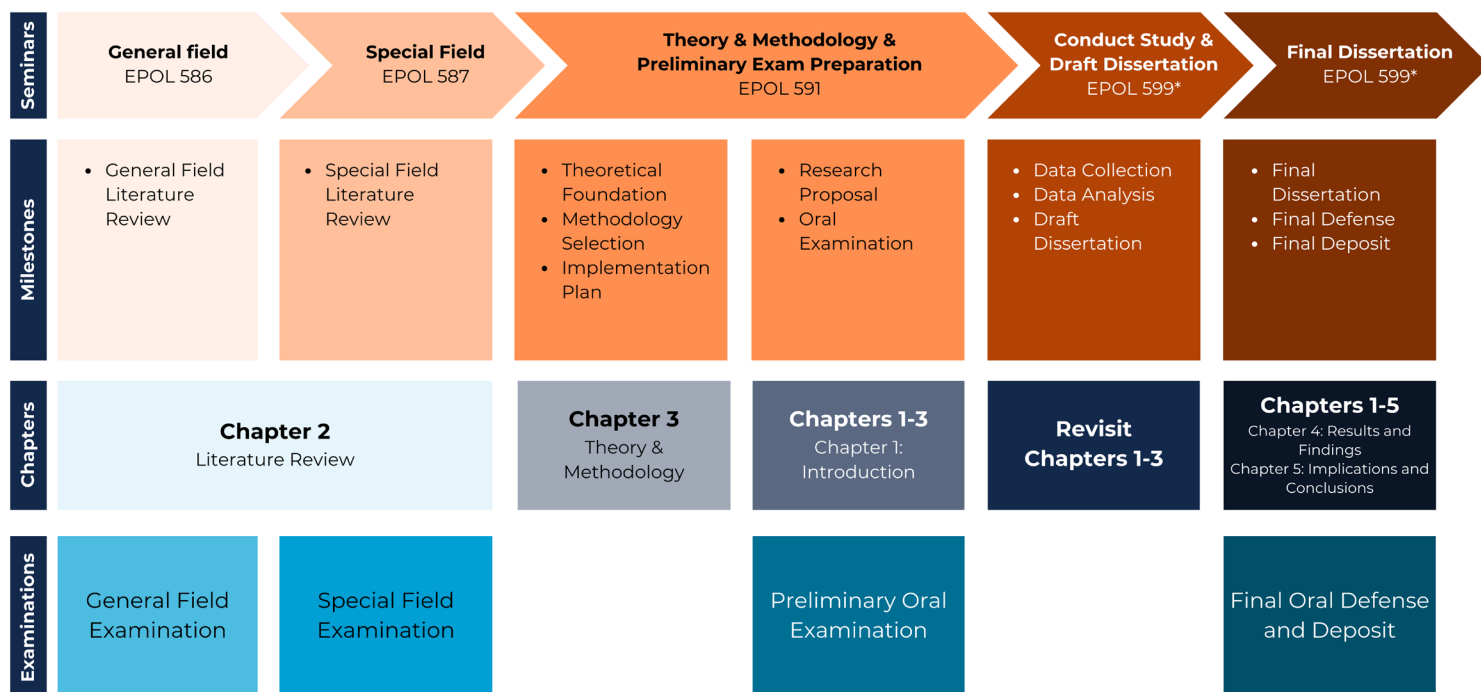


# Learning Design and Leadership Exam-Dissertation Sequence: An Iterative Approach Leading to your Final Dissertation

*The Exam-Dissertation Sequence (EDS) involves a series of **seminars** and **incremental and cumulative milestones** to help you complete your **qualifying examinations** and build towards your **research proposal**, and ultimately, your **final dissertation**.*

## Exam-Dissertation Sequence (EDS)

### Seminar, Milestones, Chapters, and Exams



\*Register for EPOL 595 (Independent Study) or EPOL 599 (Thesis Credit) in consultation with your advisor.

*Note that the timing of seminar registration and qualifying exams are not aligned; qualifying exams occur after successful completion of the relevant milestone(s), which typically will take longer than a single term registration.*

*Key features of the approach we take in this sequence include:*

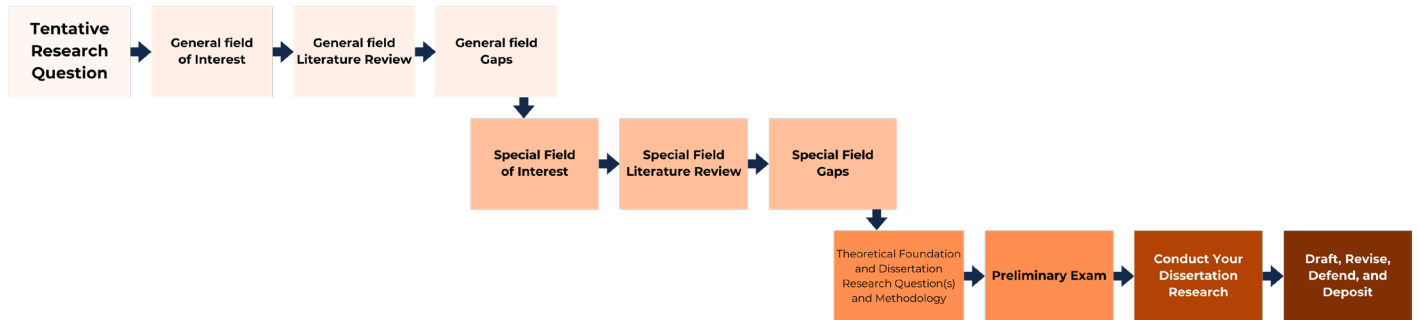
- **Systemic Peer-to-Peer Learning:** Semi-formally in online discussions, presentations, and group advising sessions; and formally in peer reviewed milestones as the draft of the exams, research proposal, and dissertation evolve.
- **Flexible Pacing:** While you register for a specific term, you complete the milestones and examinations at your own pace. It is common to need more time than the seminar registration period in order to complete the exams.
- **Advisor Support:** Weekly synchronous advising sessions with the program instructors and peers. Individual advising sessions are available upon request.
- **Incremental and Iterative Review Cycles:** Scaffolded steps and multiple review cycles enable you to celebrate your success throughout your journey and feel confident to proceed to the next step.

***A Journey of Discovery***

# Learning Design and Leadership Exam-Dissertation Sequence: An Iterative Approach Leading to your Final Dissertation

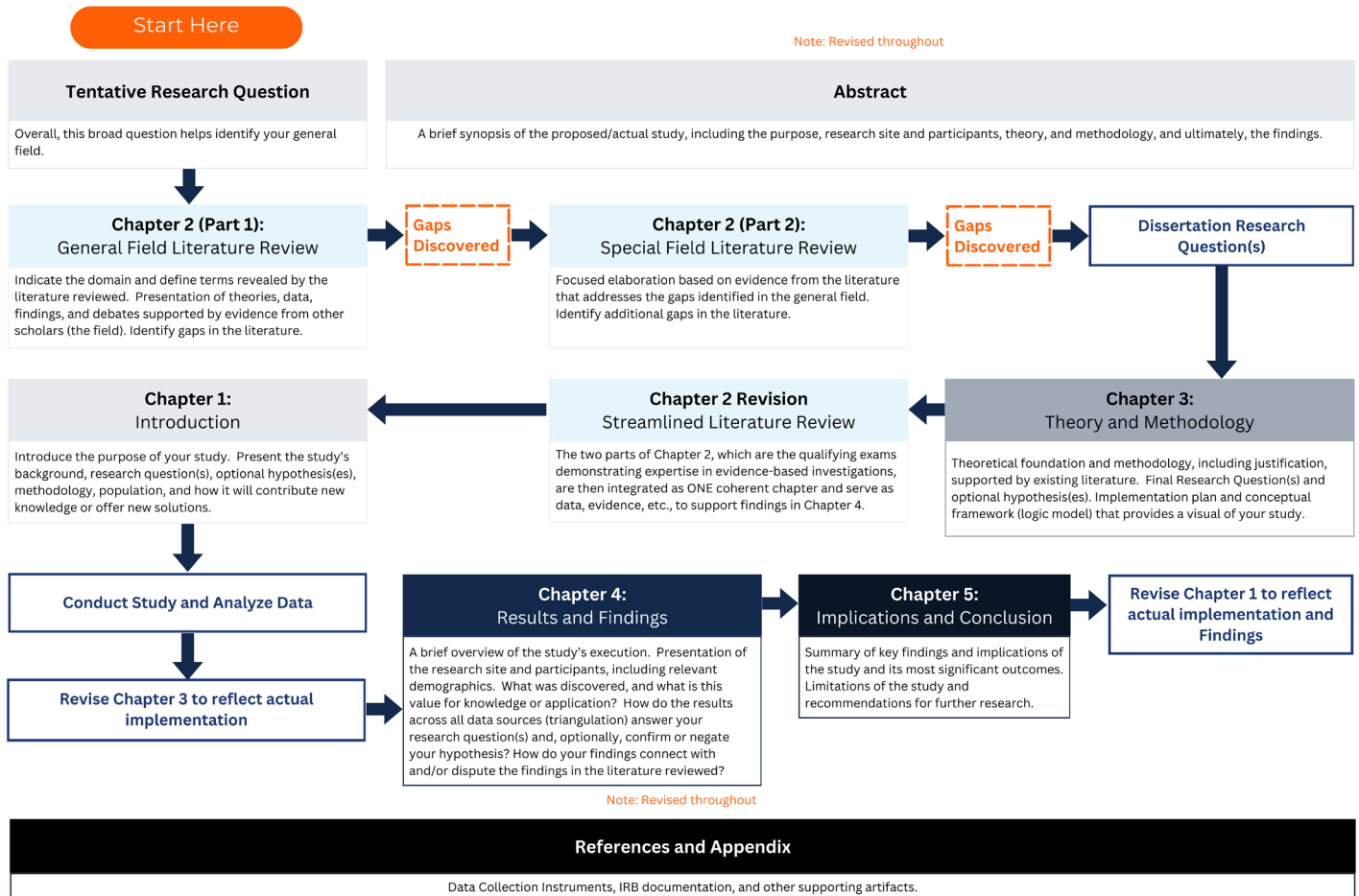
While we ask you to identify a tentative research question at the start of the EDS, this is solely to help you identify your general field. You select your official research question during Chapter 3. Investigating your general and special fields is an opportunity to go on a journey of discovery to see what the existing literature says and not what you know or want to prove or solve.

## Exam-Dissertation Sequence: A Journey of Discovery



While we ask you to focus on one step at a time, the following demonstrates how your manuscript will come together.

## Chapter Development



# Learning Design and Leadership Exam-Dissertation Sequence: An Iterative Approach Leading to your Final Dissertation

## 5-Chapter Dissertation Model – by Methodology

Across the three main kinds of methodology, this is how the five-chapter dissertation plays out

Dissertation Type	Qualitative Methods	Quantitative Methods	Interpretive Methods
<b>Chapter 1:</b> <b>Introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Background</li> <li>- Motivation and Purpose of the Study</li> <li>- Problem Statement, Significance and Research Questions</li> <li>- Brief chapter overview</li> </ul>	<i>Qualitative aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why you have chosen qualitative methods</li> <li>- Brief summary in the chapter overview of how you will implement these methods</li> </ul> <i>Interpretive aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why these questions are worth answering</li> <li>- How the answers will likely be relevant</li> <li>- Reasons for your selection of qualitative methods</li> </ul>	<i>Quantitative aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why you have chosen quantitative methods</li> <li>- Brief summary in the chapter overview of how you will implement these methods</li> </ul> <i>Interpretive aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why these questions are worth answering</li> <li>- How the answers will likely be relevant</li> <li>- Reasons for your selection of quantitative methods</li> </ul>	<i>Interpretive aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What you wish to interpret, why it needs fresh re-interpretation</li> <li>- Why you have chosen interpretive methods</li> <li>- Brief summary in the chapter overview of how you will implement these methods</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 2:</b> <b>Literature Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- General Field Overview (with subheads for general themes in this area of the discipline)</li> <li>- Key dilemmas and enduring challenges in the general field</li> <li>- Special Field (with subheads for particular themes in the narrower area of your thesis topic)</li> <li>- Gaps in the literature</li> </ul>	<i>Qualitative aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Methodological alternatives and tendencies in this area of the discipline</li> <li>- Empirical studies, qualitative compared to quantitative in the special field</li> </ul> <i>Interpretive aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The interpretive frame of reference of general field within the discipline</li> <li>- Empirical results and their interpretation in the special field</li> </ul>	<i>Quantitative aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Methodological alternatives and tendencies in this area of the discipline</li> <li>- Empirical studies, qualitative compared to quantitative in the special field</li> </ul> <i>Interpretive aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The interpretive frame of reference of general field within the discipline</li> <li>- Empirical results and their interpretation in the special field</li> </ul>	<i>Interpretive aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The general field: its interpretive frame of reference</li> <li>- The special field: the interpretations now applied and why they need to be revisited</li> </ul> <i>Other Methods:</i> Are the general or special field also addressed qualitative or quantitative methods? How can these results support your interpretive endeavor?
<b>Chapter 3:</b> <b>Theory and Methods</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Definitions of Concepts</li> <li>- Theoretical Model</li> <li>- Study's Logic Model</li> <li>- Methods Approach: Justification and Limitations</li> <li>- Research Planning: sample, recruitment</li> <li>- Research Ethics (described here, documents in appendix)</li> <li>- Research Instruments (described here, documents in the appendix)</li> <li>- Data analysis processes</li> </ul>	<i>Qualitative aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why you have selected a particular qualitative approach</li> <li>- Your hypotheses: what you expect to discover</li> <li>- Your implementation plan</li> </ul> <i>Interpretive aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Key concepts and explanatory framework</li> <li>- The epistemological presuppositions behind the qualitative methods you intend to use, and your plan to apply these methods</li> </ul>	<i>Quantitative aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why you have selected a particular quantitative approach</li> <li>- Your hypotheses: what you expect to discover</li> <li>- Your implementation plan</li> </ul> <i>Interpretive aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Key concepts and explanatory framework</li> <li>- The epistemological presuppositions behind the quantitative methods you intend to use, and your plan to apply these methods</li> </ul>	<i>Interpretive aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Key concepts and explanatory framework</li> <li>- The epistemological presuppositions behind the interpretive methods you intend to use (e.g. philosophy, semiotics, cultural theory), and your plan to apply these methods</li> <li>- Your plan of action for tackling this interpretive project</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 4:</b> <b>Results and Findings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Divide findings into sections and subsections with thematic headings and subheadings</li> </ul>	<i>Qualitative aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quotes, paraphrases, images, videos</li> </ul> <i>Interpretive aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Empirical narrative: qualitative data systematically organized around your interpretive frame</li> </ul>	<i>Quantitative aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- datasets, data visualizations</li> </ul> <i>Interpretive aspects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Empirical narrative: quantitative data systematically organized around your interpretive frame</li> </ul>	<i>Interpretive aspects:</i> Theoretical narrative: systematically laying out your revised interpretation
<b>Chapter 5:</b> <b>Implications and Conclusions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reflection on the Intellectual Journey</li> <li>- Summary of Findings</li> <li>- Implications: Recommendations for Action and Future Research</li> </ul>	<i>Interpretive aspects:</i> What does this all mean (concluding interpretations)? Where do we go next (more qualitative empirical work)?	<i>Interpretive aspects:</i> What does this all mean (concluding interpretations)? Where do we go next (more quantitative empirical work)?	<i>Interpretive aspects:</i> What does this all mean (concluding interpretations)? Where do we go next (more interpretive work)?

## Chapter Summary



# Learning Design and Leadership Exam-Dissertation Sequence: An Iterative Approach Leading to your Final Dissertation

**Chapter 1: Introduction.** Outlines what the thesis is about. It includes the background of the study, motivations, research questions/hypotheses, and how it will make a contribution to new knowledge or offer new solutions.

**Chapter 2: Literature Review.** This chapter consists of two parts, addressing the literature from the perspectives of the general and special field.

*The General Field Literature Review* is an account and presentation of key literature that is relevant to the research question/hypothesis. Its focus is the general framework within which scholars have addressed these questions that is broad domain of scholarship. It also reveals and discusses any gaps in the literature.

*The Special Field Literature Review* then addresses the gaps revealed by the general field literature review and any finely focused research and re-thinking that may be relevant to the study's research goals/project. This chapter also includes an explanation about how the research goal/project addresses the important gap revealed in the scholarly literature or an important area of practical need that need investigation

*The two parts of chapter 2 that are the qualifying exams demonstrating expertise in evidence-based investigations are then integrated as **ONE** coherent chapter and serve as data, evidence etc, to support findings in chapter 4.*

**Chapter 3: Theory and Methods.** The first part of this chapter offers definitions of the key concepts, and the explanatory framework/theory that connects these concepts for the area that the research project is exploring or testing. The second part presents and justifies the method/s chosen to test the study's research question/hypotheses, including an analysis of critiques and limitations of these methods. It describes the techniques and instruments/tools to be used to collect and analyze data, referring to the instruments themselves (in the Appendix).

**Chapter 4: Results and Findings.** Presents the results of the study/research project – what was discovered and what value does this have for knowledge or application?

**Chapter 5: Implications and Conclusions.** Discusses key results and implications of the study, given key research question/s and its most significant outcomes. Presents models of action and recommend research agendas for the future.

## References

**Appendix** includes data collection instruments, IRB materials, including consent letters, and other supporting artifacts.