

TIME FRAME and Step by Step Guide to the Azrieli Dissertation Process

The following sequence of steps/tasks/requirements describe the process necessary to complete an Azrieli Doctoral Degree. Some steps are optional, or can be completed out of sequence. In addition to providing the steps, potential courses of action are offered in italics.

While working on the dissertation, students must be registered for Doctoral Seminar II every Fall and Spring until the dissertation is completed and defended.

STEPS OR ELEMENTS THAT ARE REQUIRED ARE HEADED BY A LINE IN ALL CAPS AND ARE NUMBERED OR LETTERED. THOSE STEPS MUST BE COMPLETED IN SEQUENCE.

PHASE I – TOPIC SELECTION, CONCEPTUALIZATION AND PRELIMINARY SCHOLARSHIP

This can be accomplished at any time after completing the first year of the program. It is highly recommended that students not wait beyond the middle of the second year of the program to first consider dissertation topics and complete preparatory work.

- Consider a Topic or Area of Inquiry
 - May be outgrowth of area of study in a course or from one of the doctoral bibliographies you read for a capstone
 - *Save references and papers from classes – consider choosing related paper topics for several courses to facilitate deeper knowledge in an area of study*
 - May be in conjunction with existing faculty or other research projects/data bases
 - *consider agencies and programs that may have data on topics of interest to you*
 - May be outgrowth of prior Azrieli dissertations
 - *Review Azrieli dissertations, consider reading several that interest you. All are available on the YU Library website.*
- Conduct preliminary and brief literature search and review
 - Ideally, through scholarship in an area, and review of what has already been done in the field, you will uncover a logical and important question to address
 - *Arrange with YU library for tutorial on “refworks”, on-line searching and other tools useful for lit review*
 - *Familiarize yourself with doctoral bibliographies available on Canvas, read several of the bibliographies*
- Have preliminary discussions/meetings with faculty who share interest in area of study
- If you are having difficulty at this stage and would like to brainstorm ideas, move from ideas to a more specific but do-able projects, feel free to reach out to Dean Novick who will arrange to meet with you to explore.

PHASE II – FIND A COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON AND COMMITTEE

BEFORE YOU ASSEMBLE A COMMITTEE YOU MUST:

- A. Obtain the approval of the doctoral program director
- B. Check that you have no incomplete grades
- C. Have completed at least 1/2 of your coursework (26 credits)

PHASE III – PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

BEFORE YOU BEGIN A PROPOSAL:

- A. Have a chairperson in place, who is an Azrieli faculty member
- B. Chairs and committees will be selected with input from the student, but at the discretion of the director. There is a form you must complete (available online) to formally select your committee.

Before you begin a proposal you should:

- A. Have a fairly well conceived notion of what you want to study and some idea of the methodology or project design
- B. Ideally, be able to cite pertinent previous work, such as prior dissertations or published articles/books

Time line for proposal completion

1. COMPOSE LITERATURE REVIEW

- a. For purposes of the proposal – literature review does not need to be totally completed but must be sufficient for committee to approve your project, and for CCI submission
- b. The process of writing the literature review often entails writing subsections and doing multiple rewrites. It is strongly recommended that students and chairs discuss the style of working that will be most efficient – i.e. should they schedule regular meetings? Will the chair want to review brief segments, or large sections?
- c. Unless otherwise decided in advance by the committee, the chairperson will act as both gatekeeper and primary mentor through the entire dissertation process. As such, all work should be submitted first to the chairperson and only forwarded to the committee when the work is relatively polished. The chair may request that a committee member review preliminary work because it is in their area of expertise.
- d. Develop research questions

2. CONSULT WITH METHODOLOGIST

(who may be a member of committee or an outsider) to draft methods and results section for the proposal

- a. Engage a statistician, if needed, to complete power analysis, if appropriate. IRB requires a power analysis for quantitative research

3. COMPLETE PROPOSAL AND SHARE WITH COMMITTEE

A complete proposal includes a literature review, methods section, power analysis when appropriate, and references.

*Complete guidelines are available at our website under [Student Resources](#).
<https://www.yu.edu/sites/default/files/inline-files/Dissertation%20Writing%20Guide.pdf>*

DEFEND PROPOSAL TO COMMITTEE

- a. Proposal defense must be scheduled a minimum of 2 weeks in advance, and at discretion of committee chair
- b. Doctoral program office must be notified of defense date
- c. Student will present a brief synopsis (5 minutes) of project, and respond to comments of the committee
- d. As a result of the defense, all parties should be in agreement as to the nature, breadth and procedure for project, and all parties must complete and sign the [Proposal Defense Form](#) located at our Azrieli Student Resources website <https://www.yu.edu/azrieli/student-resources>.

SUBMIT PROPOSAL TO IRB

Students must have completed the on-line course on Human Subjects Investigation

Students can receive assistance with on-line submission

PHASE IV – RESEARCH STUDY – DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

BEFORE INITIATING *ANY* RESEARCH, STUDENTS MUST:

- A. Have successfully defended the proposal to their committee
- B. Obtain approval (or exemption) from IRB
- C. Ensure they will be using only approved IRB consent and data collection forms and procedures

PHASE V – DISSERTATION WRITING

TO COMPLETE THE DISSERTATION PROCESS STUDENTS MUST:

- A. Write results and discussion sections and rewrite/update methods section
 - Students may elect to consult with a statistician for assistance. (Some financial support for statistical and other dissertation costs may be available through the Dean.)
- B. Make necessary adjustments in literature review, adding an abstract and acknowledgements
- C. Check references for APA formatting
- D. Receive approval of document from chair

- E. *After chair's approval*, document can be sent to the committee
- Based on arrangement with chair and committee, committee may be sent sections separately (i.e. results, then discussion, etc) or when the document is fully assembled
 - Students and faculty should make every attempt to respond quickly to drafts and comments. Students can expect that work that they submit will be reviewed within a month.
- F. When informed by chair that document is acceptable for defense, the student should contact the doctoral program director
- G. Student may suggest 2 outside readers, however readers are invited and appointed by the Program Director.

PHASE VI – FINAL DEFENSE, FINAL EDIT/FORMATTING, GRADUATION

Students need to file a [Graduation Application](#) with the Azrieli Academic Administrator at any time before their final defense.

TO PREPARE FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE DISSERTATION, STUDENTS MUST:

- A. Determine defense date
- a. Students may defend in person or via zoom
 - b. Student and chair are responsible for determining a date and time acceptable to the entire committee. Once a date is determined, outside readers are invited.
Ideally, the defense should be scheduled one month in advance. Participation via Zoom is possible for committee members and readers.
- B. With approval of the chair, and in conjunction with the director of the doctoral program, select outside readers and forward final copy of dissertation to the readers.
- a. Every defense must have (minimally) two outside readers, both of whom should be doctorates themselves, unless an exception is granted by the director.
 - b. One of the outside readers can come from the field of practice (i.e. a school administrator, school psychologist) and one should hold an academic, university or research position
 - c. Students will be informed when the outside readers have agreed to participate, and will be responsible for forwarding copies of their final paper to those readers.
- C. Complete oral defense, which includes:
- a. Brief (10 minute) student presentation of the dissertation, usually focusing on the results obtained.
 - b. Committee members, outside readers, the dean and program director, and chairperson make comments, pose questions, and offer recommendations for changes, to which the student will be given the opportunity to reply.
 - c. The committee will deliberate the following options:

- i. Reject dissertation
 - ii. Accept with major revisions
 - iii. Accept with minor revisions
 - iv. Accept with no changes
- D. The student is responsible thereafter to implement the changes recommended/required at defense.

It is the student's responsibility to note the comments/concerns/recommendations at the defense, and work with chairperson after the defense to make necessary changes.

(Generally, the committee agrees to have all further edits and changes reviewed and approved by the chairperson alone.)

- E. The student must assure proper formatting of dissertation and submit final copies to the appropriate university official after receiving approval from the Chair.
 - a. The student is responsible for contacting the Office of the Registrar to ascertain current university regulations re: format of final dissertation (i.e. margins, number of hard copies to be submitted), and to submit dissertation and graduation paperwork to the appropriate university offices.
 - b. Graduation/Degree Conferral dates are: May 30, September. 30, January 30. The final version must be filed and uploaded by the conferral date to meet that graduation date.
 - c. The student should inform the director of the doctoral program when final materials have been submitted.
- F. MAZAL TOV! ON TO COMMENCEMENT!