

## Ph.D. Dissertation Advising Agreement

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

The Dissertation choice is intensely personal and may be a topic that one has explored for some time or is an area of great interest for further exploration. Successful dissertations can range from pure research to creative artistic projects and/or social activism. The best dissertations are those that emanate out of a certain passion of the heart to explore a domain that has deep personal relevance. The dissertation should be on a subject of personal and scholarly significance, and it should be something that is also practicable and doable.

**Each dissertation must demonstrate both knowledge of the field in question and be an original contribution to that field.** The dissertation must show both a comprehensive knowledge of the philosophy and history of the domain being considered, as well as demonstrate that the student has added something original to that field. Original contributions can cover a wide range of topics and media. Dissertation studies may be focused on research, a creative project, teaching project, or other projects that clearly demonstrate the student's creative capacities.

**Demonstration of Subject/Object Synthesis.** At most universities, the requirement for papers is exclusively for objective, dispassionate analysis and research. At Wisdom University, we turn this on its head and require both a rigorous demonstration that the student understands the content of the course or thesis project, and can use footnotes, bibliographies, proper formatting, etc. as well as demonstrate an equally rigorous insight into his or her interior journey as a result of learning the content at hand. In our view, it is the capacity to combine an objective grasp of the material under consideration and also engage in the introspective work of discerning how the material is actually affecting one's inner life and soul growth that is a mark of wisdom.

## **Responsibilities of the University**

### **Dean of Students will:**

1. Give initial guidance to the Student in clarifying the questions of inquiry, and in thinking through the general direction of the dissertation.
2. Help the student in the choice of a Major Advisor, and will give written approval for the inclusion of the Major Advisor in the student's project.
3. Support the student in meeting his or her timeline.
4. When deemed appropriate or necessary by the Major Advisor and/or Student, be available for phone consultation with the Major Advisor and the candidate.

### **The Vice President for Academic Affairs will:**

1. Review and give final approval to each dissertation following a positive recommendation from the Dean of Doctoral Studies (for DMin students) or the Oral Examination Committee (for Ph.D students).
2. Sign the cover page of the approved dissertation.

### **The Dean of Doctoral Studies will:**

1. Confer with the Dean of Student as needed regarding student progress and selection of Major Advisors.
2. Convene a Candidate Review process when the student indicates readiness.
3. Be available to respond to questions regarding the dissertation.
4. Evaluate the dissertation after approval from the Major Advisor and make a recommendation for acceptance to the VPAA (DMin students), or convene an Oral Exam committee (Ph.D students), or require revisions before acceptance. Convening the Ph.D Oral Exam includes the selection of an External Examiner from outside the process.

### **Responsibilities of the Major Advisor:**

1. Be available to help the student clarify his/her question of inquiry or statement of thesis in preparation for a proposal.
2. Approve the proposal and preliminary outline as presented by the student before it is submitted to Wisdom University.
3. Support the student in meeting the timeline as outlined in the Dissertation Manual and Student Handbook.
4. Assess whether the Student has demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the subject matter and bibliographical resources of the project.
5. Review each draft in regard to content.
6. Call periodic dissertation meetings, either in person or by conference call.
7. Be available to meet by phone should problems arise.
8. Participate in the Oral Exam. (Ph.D. only).
9. Sign the title page of the completed dissertation.

## Responsibilities of the Student

### Student will:

1. Confer with the Dean of Students as to the initial questions and general outline of his/her dissertation.
2. Confer with the Dean of Students concerning the selection of a Major Advisor.
3. Approach the potential Major Advisor to discuss and request advising.
4. If the advisor is not a Wisdom University faculty member, present the credentials of the Major Advisor to the Dean of Students, including his/her curriculum vitae for final approval.
5. Complete, sign and submit the DMin or Ph.D. Major Advising Agreement form to the Registrar. Copies of this form to be retained by the student, the Major Advisor, the Dean of Students and the Dean of Doctoral Studies
6. Work under the direction of the Major Advisor in order to develop an initial proposal and preliminary outline of the project.
7. Contact the Dean of Doctoral Studies when ready to engage in a Candidate Review process. Readiness entails (1) completion of at least 3 Wisdom University courses, (2) selection of a Major Advisor, and (3) having a general idea of the field of knowledge and research question or project for the dissertation.
8. Be available for meeting with the Major Advisor. This can be done either in person or by conference call. These meetings should occur to develop a proposal and preliminary outline, and after the descriptive outline has been completed to evaluate the first draft of the dissertation.
9. Adhere to the formatting guidelines in the *Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA). If the APA style is not followed, the dissertation will not be admitted.
10. Respond conscientiously to the feedback and advice of the Major Advisor.
11. On completion of the dissertation and final approval from the Major Advisor, the student will make formal submission of the dissertation to Wisdom University. The Dean of Doctoral Studies will either recommend the student for VPAA approval and signature (DMin students) or Oral Examination (Ph.D. students), or recommend more refinement in the dissertation.
12. (For Ph.D. students only.) Once the dissertation is accepted for oral examination, the student will defend the work to the Oral Exam committee consisting of the Major Advisor, the Dean of Doctoral Studies or a delegate University representative, and an External Examiner. If the student passes the Oral Exam, s/he has met the dissertation requirements for graduation. If not the committee will submit a written explanation of what was lacking and a pathway forward. One additional attempt is allowed within a 12 month period.
13. Finally, the student must complete all the graduation requirements outlined in the Student Handbook.

**Anticipated Start Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Anticipated Completion Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Advising and Dissertation Credit Fees

Advising and Dissertation Credit Fees of \$4,760 are typically paid either as one lump sum (with a \$200 discount) or extended to periodic of up to 8 semi-annual payments over a four-year period. Please check your choice of payment option:

**Payment in Full (\$4,760 less \$200 discount for a total of \$4,560 included with form)**

**1 yr: 2 payments (\$2,380 each)**

**2 yr: 4 payments (\$1,190 each)**

**3 yr: 6 payments (1st = \$810, remaining at \$790)**

**4 yr: 8 payments (1st = \$770, remaining at \$570 each)**

Student Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Major Advisor Name: (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Wisdom University Administrative Use

Date Form Received \_\_\_\_\_ Approved \_\_\_\_\_

\$ _____	Dt: _____	\$ _____	Dt: _____
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