Course Description: In LEAD 8308, the student prepares a manuscript-length paper reflecting original research on a significant topic related to the student's area of emphasis and the field of leadership studies. The paper includes a preliminary review of the literature and a research design created by the student that can be used to conduct a study. The topic will be selected by the student in agreement with the advisor. Upon completion, the paper will be presented to the advisor for approval.

Specifically in the Interdisciplinary PhD in Leadership program, LEAD 8308 works as the dissertation proposal and must undergo dissertation committee review and approval through an oral defense. The qualifying paper and the dissertation proposal are one and the same.

Course Overview: To begin the process, students should identify through direct communication with dissertation advisors and dissertation committee members. The role of the dissertation chair or advisor is the same and terms are interchangeable. Throughout LEAD 8308, they will work directly with their dissertation advisors on a schedule agreed upon by the two. Continuous discussion with the dissertation advisor should take place so progress toward the defendable qualifying paper can be achieved. The advisor must approve the qualifying paper before the student may distribute copies to the committee members.

After the dissertation advisor approves the qualifying paper, students will provide the qualifying paper to the dissertation committee members at least two weeks (10 working days) before the date of the qualifying paper defense. This is a closed meeting, attended by the student and the committee only. This defense serves as a defense and review of the dissertation proposal. If students are unable to complete the draft or receive approval from the committee, they must reenroll in LEAD 8308 (LEAD 8108, 8208) until they are able to do so. The course may be taken for varying credit.

- Students select dissertation committee members and advisor/chair.
- In consultation with the advisor/chair, the student conceptualizes and composes the qualifying paper.
• Once given approval from the advisor/chair, the student may contact other committee members, circulate hard and electronic copies, and arrange for a qualifying paper/proposal defense.
• Qualifying papers/proposals must have committee approval before the class is completed.

The Qualifying Paper/Proposal Defense: At the defense, students should discuss and defend topic selection, review of pertinent literature, research methodology and design, theoretical frameworks, and other procedural details. It is very common that the committee will discuss required revisions and changes to the proposal. If the changes are minor, the advisor may make a contract between the student and the doctoral committee outlining the required changes. Options include: (a) the student will be granted permission to conduct the research on the condition that the required changes will be made by the time of the final defense; (b) the student will make revisions and share with advisor/chair who will then determine if satisfactory progress has been made, and the student may advance to dissertation work; (c) the committee elects to see all changes before approval will be given for the student to advance to dissertation work, or (d) if changes are major, the committee may require another full proposal defense. In any case, it is the student’s responsibility to make the necessary changes and, if required, resubmit the revised proposal to the committee, again providing two weeks for review. If major revisions are required, the student may have to re-enroll in LEAD 8308 (8108, 8208) credit hours until the proposal can be approved by the full committee. The student may only distribute revised proposals to their committee members with the permission of the dissertation advisor/chair.

The committee must approve the proposal before IRB application and data collection.

Copies of the approved proposal are to be distributed to the program director, the advisor/chair, and the student. Other committee members may request a revised copy as well. Any modifications to the proposal after the submission of the approved proposal require the approval of the student’s committee. It is the student’s responsibility that the proposal/dissertation meets Graduate School guidelines found at http://uca.edu/graduateschool/thesisdissertation.
Proposal Components: Granted, no two proposals are alike. Some advisors want students to generate strong drafts of the dissertation’s first three chapters. Others want a 30-50 page paper. In essence, though, all proposals are expected to contain the following components:

1. Introduction
   Provide a background to the issue. Use the literature to present how the topic has a leadership connection with enhancing human and/or community capabilities.

2. Pertinent Literature Review
   The review of literature should focus on what is known about the specific parameters/subjects of the investigated issue.

3. Orienting Theoretical Framework(s)/Conceptual Lens

4. Statement of the problem
   What do we know from the literature about the topic?
   What do we not know or what is the exception?
   What is it that you are wondering and want to know?

5. Purpose of the Study and Research questions/Hypotheses/Both

6. Significance of the study
   In terms of research, theory, and practice, how does the author hope the study will generate new knowledge?

7. Methodology/Procedures—spend a great deal of attention here.
   Methodological approach
   Research Design
   Sample and Recruitment procedures,
   Data collection methods,
   Instruments
   Analysis Procedures

8. Definition of terms (optional—but often very helpful)
9. Limitations and Delimitations of the study (optional)
10. Summary
11. References
12. Appendices (e.g., instruments, other protocols)

Timeline: Students should strive to complete the qualifying paper in one semester. Students should keep in mind when grades are due for the semester and that committee members need two weeks (10 working days) to read the proposal before the student can defend. (Fall/Spring semesters = 16 weeks, Summer semester = 13 weeks) Students may want to use the following grid as a template for planning their
proposal/defense—and should do so with their chair/advisor.

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**Tips from the Experienced:**
- Plan your semester backwards from your anticipated proposal date. Find out when grades are due for the semester and make certain you have time to distribute and defend your proposal.
- Find a chair/co-chair with expertise in your methodology. This can help with planning when collecting and analyzing data.
- It is helpful to have a full committee meeting BEFORE your QP defense to make certain you have included all the elements your committee would like to see.
- Plan your proposal date with your committee, i.e., check their schedules to make certain they are available on your anticipated proposal date.
- Schedule regular meetings with your chair/advisor to discuss progress on the proposal.
- You are responsible for scheduling a room for your proposal. Find out whom you need to contact to schedule a room in a particular building.
- The student is responsible for completing all required paperwork, i.e., Committee Appointment form, Petition for Candidacy. Have these ready for signatures—at the end of the successful defense, so you won’t have to round up members again.
- Keep in mind, your chair is only paid for one semester of QP and one semester of dissertation. Other members are not paid for being on your committee. The time and efforts of all committee members are valuable. Work diligently so as not to drag out the process and wear down committee members.

**Candidacy:** Candidacy indicates that the student has completed all coursework of the PhD program and has received approval from the dissertation committee to enroll in
dissertation hours. When students complete a successful qualifying paper defense and all members sign approval, they are then considered “doctoral candidate.”

To move into candidacy and to indicate the committee’s approval of the qualifying paper/dissertation proposal, the student must acquire all committee members’ signatures, including the program director’s signature, on the Petition for Candidacy form, an indication of the paper’s approval and the dissertation committee membership. If the proposal is approved, the student must then file the Petition for Candidacy and Program of Study forms to the Graduate School. The petition must include the positive recommendations of the candidate’s major research professor and the program director. The Petition for Candidacy form may be found here: http://uca.edu/graduateschool/petition-for-candidacy-program-of-study/

Checklist

☐ Committee Appointment form signed and returned to the Graduate School (http://uca.edu/graduateschool/files/2011/07/NOTICE-OF-APPOINTMENT-OF-DISSERTATION-COMMITTEE.pdf)

☐ Petition for Candidacy completed and returned to the Graduate School (http://uca.edu/graduateschool/petition-for-candidacy-program-of-study/)

☐ Met with Program Director to set up dissertation hours for the following Semester!

Academic Policies

Academic Integrity
The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university’s Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student’s acceptance of this university policy.

Special Assistance
The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, please contact the UCA Office of Disability Support Services at 450-3135. Please make the instructor aware of any learning differences, difficulties, or other special challenges in advance of the relevant assignment(s) so that he/she may assist you.