Preparing a Presentation for Your Dissertation Defense: Guidelines

Build the Presentation:
- Use the presentation from your proposal defense as a start
- Edit down your proposal presentation
- Summarize Chapters 1-3
- Focus on Chapters 4-5

Check ... and double check:
- Timing: The presentation should be no longer than 30 minutes
- Practice multiple times
- Practice, practice

Format:
- **DO!**
  - Select a conservative slide layout that appears professional
  - Use an easy to read font
  - Use figures and tables
- **DO NOT!**
  - Do not add slide transitions, animation or sounds that are distracting
  - Do not crowd slides with excessive text

Oral Presentation:
- Create notes in your presentation of the points you want to cover in your oral presentation of each slide.
- Except for things like the research questions, **do not just read** the slides.
- Your oral presentation should explain or expand on what is on the slides.

Title page:
- Start with a title page that uses the title of the dissertation

Researcher’s Background:
What qualifies you to do this research?
- Credentials
- Experience Etc. BE VERY BRIEF!

Topic Background:
- Why this topic?
- History
- Is there a gap in the research this research addresses?

**You can use more than one slide to address each of the categories.**
Problem statement:
  ▶ Your problem statement should clearly and explicitly state the reasons you are doing your study.

The purpose of this study is to.............

Importance of the research:
  ▶ How might your research impact the field of study?
  ▶ How could it impact your work as a professional?
  ▶ What else is significant?

Theoretical Foundation:
  ▶ Include a slide on the philosophical orientation of your dissertation
  ▶ For example: critical theory or social constructivism
  ▶ Briefly explain why the philosophy relates to your research.

Conceptual Framework:
  ▶ Start by introducing the major categories of literature used in your proposal.
  ▶ Give enough information to make it clear that you have a deep understanding of the literature, but this is only an overview.
  ▶ Properly cite authors and years.

Research questions:
  ▶ Number questions for easy reference during discussions with the committee members.

Methodology:
  ▶ Define which major category of research you used for your dissertation.
  ▶ Why is that appropriate to your research questions?
  ▶ Cite methodology literature in support of your choice of methodology.

Specifics on methodology:
  ▶ Participants—number, how selected, IRB considerations, demographics
  ▶ Reliability and validity
  ▶ Methods of data collection
  ▶ Data analysis
  ▶ Limitations
You may need multiple slides for these categories

Findings:
  ▶ Use the organizational structure from your Chapter 4.
Present enough detail to be convincing, but not so much that you get “lost in the weeds!”
Use tables from your dissertation.
Call attention to significant findings.
Address how the findings relate to the research questions.

**You will need multiple slides for this section.**

Conclusions:
- What did you learn?
- How are the findings related to the conceptual framework from the literature?
- Discuss strengths, weaknesses, and limitations of your work.

Implications:
- For future scholarship/research
- For practitioners
- Other?

Recommendations:
- For changes in theoretical constructs
- For public policy
- For changes in educational practice

References:
- List only those cited in the presentation.
- One slide should be enough
  - (Everything else is already included in your dissertation!)

Thank you:
- Thank the members of the committee.