

Group Non-Traditional Dissertation: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly

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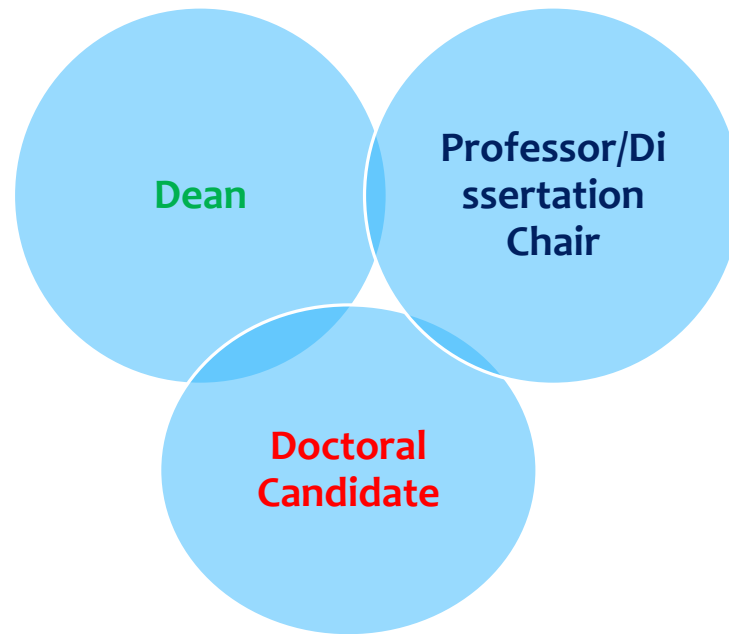
Lynn University



Non Traditional Dissertation

“Change is inevitable,
Growth is optional”

(Anonymous)



Dean Perspective

Embrace CPED
Principles

Empower Professors

Support students
doing non-traditional
dissertations.

Support students
doing group
dissertations.

Network with the
community to bring in
problems of practice.

Professor Perspective

Research is collaborative.

Group must determine the pattern of collaboration.

Team needs a project manager.

The project must have substance and be available to the public.

The project needs to involve action.

Pattern of Collaboration

- * **Case Studies**
- * **Problem of Practice**
- * **One site, but different research questions**
- * **Problem can be derived from local community**



Project Manager

- * Need rules/roles
- * Students, not professors, should run the sessions.
- * Deciding how to hold people accountable for their work.
- * Every session needs an assignment.



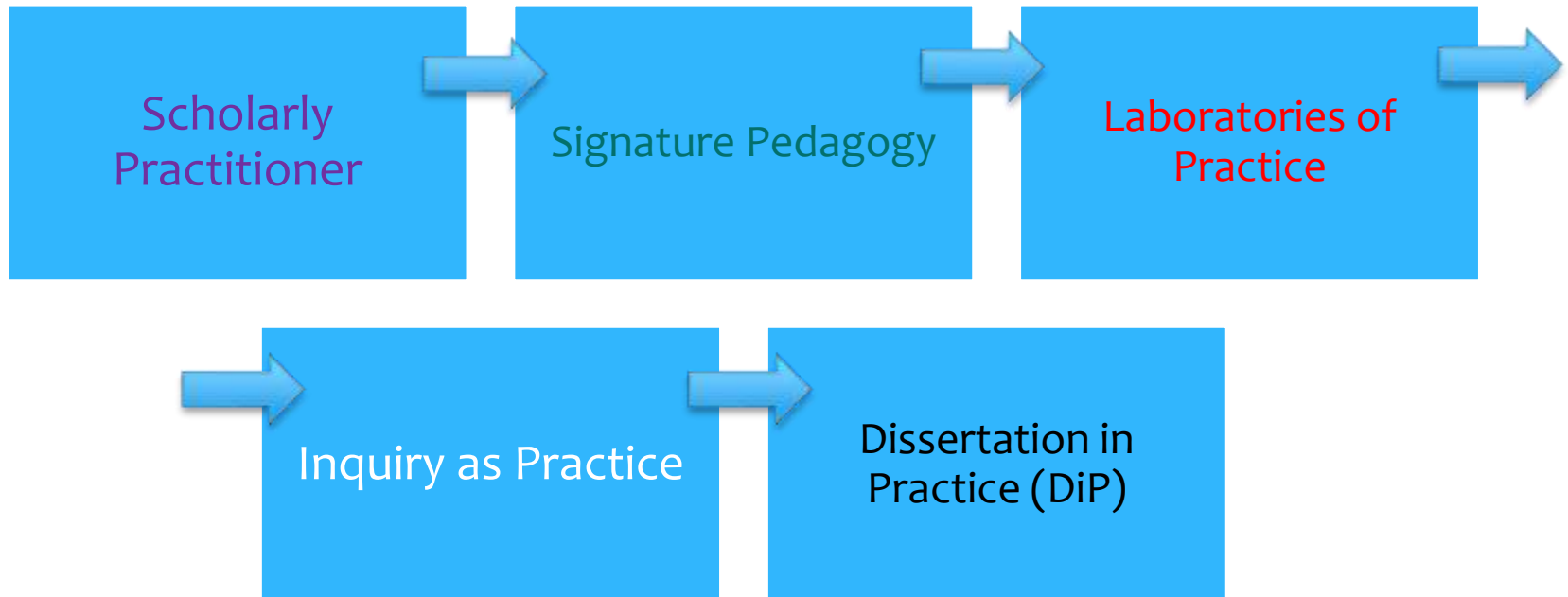
Substance



- * Needs to be grounded in research.
- * Triangulation imperative.
- * Data needs to be public.
- * Qualitative research.
- * “Unlike traditional research, it is assumed to be useful and lead to action, not just to read a document that no one will truly read. How will it be used at the site?” (Frank L. Smith)

Doctoral Candidate Perspective

Needs to follow CPED Framework



Project Management

- * Determine norms
- * Determine roles
- * Hold each member accountable
- * Pay special attention to the process
- * Utilize technology



Substance

- * Frequent discussion of the process
- * Grounded in theory and application
- * Afford leadership opportunities for each member of the team
- * Establish and maintain trust



An Example of a Group Non Traditional Dissertation



DiP Design Model	Methodology	Theoretical Approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Three Article Dissertation (Comprehensive Lit Review and two individual/group articles on respective topics)- Executive Summary- iBook	Constructing research-based iBook (CPED, 21 st Century Skills, Curriculum and Instruction, Cultural Responsive Leadership, etc) and completing lit. review. Conducting individual/group research and completing articles	Fullan (2006) Change Theory Browne (2012) Culturally Courageous Leadership Davis (2002) Culturally Responsive Leadership Clifton (2004) Positive Leadership

Pros/Cons

- * Prepares candidates to face problems of practice in a group fashion
- * Power of the team is greater than the sum of the parts
- * Communication
- * Participating in a non-traditional group dissertation allowed the cohort to delve deeper into our topics & provide a thorough analysis of each & every component regarding 21st century educational leadership
- * Individual personalities, it can be challenged to get the voice in an organized manner that flows
- * Each member needs to remember the norms throughout the process.
- * Challenging to set up collaboration time in between classes, but we all must make sacrifices in order to produce a product that we all will feel comfortable and confident about.

Thoughts

- * **What are you doing at your home institution to promote non-traditional DiPs?**
- * **How do you think that you can encourage doctoral candidates to participate in group dissertations?**
- * **What are some barriers do you see to this model?**
- * **How can these barriers be solved?**
- * **What support systems should be put in place to encourage group DiPs?**

References

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