Greetings from the Executive Director

Laura Knight Lynn, PhD
Executive Director

Dear Colleagues,

We are excited to bring you this issue of re: Research. This issue includes information on specific efforts to support doctoral student progress, as well as some technical updates and reminders about our support services and opportunities for scholarly research and publication.

Important news is included about the updated dissertation classroom and term plan, and how we are supporting accelerated capstone progress through the IRB Precheck option. Other articles report on MyDR, office hours, and the new look for our journals.

As I reflect on our center and how its grown and evolved over 11 years, I cannot help but appreciate the importance of partnership. Some of our most successful efforts have come through true partnerships with faculty members and program leaders. Many of the improvements and strategies for our support of doctoral research have come from best practices, data, and feedback from our faculty. We appreciate the thoughtful way many of you work with your students and then translate those successes into ideas and suggestions for improvement.

Two specific efforts to support student success that result from these partnerships are a term plan that better supports student planning and meetings for setting expectations on committees.

To facilitate more conversation, we currently have an initiative underway to get more of our faculty voices involved to review new tools and initiatives and to share ideas and suggestions. To best support substantive student progress and quality, we need to hear from everyone that has something to share and something to say. Stay tuned for this asynchronous option for engagement on doctoral efforts.

While mentoring our students’ research is a high priority, supporting our community of scholarship and research is also important. As we have seen in many of our funded faculty work, faculty have tested ideas and investigated ways to improve teaching and learning. With this goal in mind, we hope you will consider translating some of your ideas and questions into research and

Visit the Center for Research Quality website
applying for the upcoming opportunities outlined by Drs. Molly Lauck and Kristina Harris. We would love to see more faculty contribute to their field and jump-start their research agendas. If you have questions on how to start your research agenda or get support for it, do not hesitate to reach out to us at CRQ@mail.waldenu.edu.

Thank you for taking the time to review this issue and all of the important updates. We appreciate your work and I look forward to partnering with more of you as we continue to enhance how we support our students’ research.

Best,
Laura

Research Grants: Apply Now!

Molly Lauck, PhD
Director, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

Kristina Harris, DBA
Associate Director

Fall is the time to submit your research proposals to Walden’s internal research grant programs. Following are a couple of research grant programs that you might want to consider:

**Research & Applications for Social Change Grant**

Walden realizes that the scholars and practitioners within the university community may be engaged in social change activities or have a desire to develop research and applied projects that directly relate to social change. The Research and Applications for Social Change (RASC) grant was established to enable members of the Walden community to make a significant and meaningful change in academic and social communities, both locally and globally.

The grant will be awarded to the applicants who submit outstanding proposals that reflect the university’s mission to foster social change through research and the education of scholar-practitioners, as well as Walden’s determination to uniquely affect positive social change worldwide. The grant program is open to Walden faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external candidates.

The RASC grant program will accept two types of proposals:

- **Social Change Research-based Proposals; and**
- **Applications in Social Change Project Proposals.**
Applicants must choose which type of proposal they will submit as each applicant is limited to one application.

Grant funding will be scaffolded to prioritize transdisciplinary, collaborative approaches to research and applications of social change projects. Investigators should read the RFP closely to determine the grant level that better aligns with the structure of their proposed research and/or project. RASC grant ceilings for research-based and applied project proposals vary from $2,500 - $17,500.

**RASC Grant Program Timeline**

- **November 1, 2018**: Application deadline.
- **December 1, 2018**: Grant recipients announced.

**Presidential Research Fellowship: Application Deadline Extended!**

The Presidential Research Fellowship program offers two grant programs to support research:

- [The Don E. Ackerman Research Fellowship in Educational Leadership](#)
- [The Research Fellowship in Distance Education](#)

Faculty, staff, and students are eligible to apply for these fellowships, although students intending to use the fellowship funds to support their doctoral capstone research should be nearing the point of defending their research proposal when they apply. While only research proposals that are determined to be of exceptional scholarly merit will be funded, in an effort to recognize newly emerging scholars, proposals submitted by students will be considered for funding from a separate pool.

Researchers are encouraged to request only the amount of funds needed to conduct their proposed research activities, rather than the maximum amount available. The number of fellowships awarded in each funding level will be determined by the quality and size of the applicant pool as well as the availability of program funds.

**Faculty/Staff Research Proposals**

- **$8,000** funding ceiling for collaborative or individual investigator authored research proposals.

  **Note:** Students may be included in a research team, but the team must be led by faculty or staff members.

**Student Research Proposals**

- **$1,000** funding ceiling for research conducted by an individual student.

  Research proposed by students must be based upon their doctoral capstone research.

  Up to two fellowships may be awarded, depending upon availability of program funds.
Applicants are encouraged to identify the one fellowship that better aligns with their research goals and apply to that fellowship only, rather than submitting proposals to both fellowship opportunities.

**REVISED: Presidential Fellowship Program Timeline**

- (previously 10/1) **NOW December 3, 2018**: Application deadline
- (previously 10/30) **NOW December 28, 2018**: Fellowship recipients announced.

Please contact grants@mail.waldenu.edu with questions about any of these grant programs. We are here to help so don’t hesitate to reach out for assistance!

**Updated Dissertation Course and Doctoral Term Plan**

**Deborah Inman, EdD**
Director, Office of Research Quality Management

**Michelle Brown, EdD**
Associate Director, Progress and Completion Initiatives

In response to student and faculty suggestions and after an examination of doctoral student capstone milestones, the dissertation course and term plan were updated to improve doctoral student progress and program completion. *

**Key Changes and Updates**

The updated course is organized by capstone milestones (prospectus, proposal, and dissertation), rather than modules, and resources are provided for each milestone. For pre-prospectus stage students (e.g., KAM students), students should use the links to their needed resources under Course Information. Students in one of the dissertation-writing stages should use the links and associated resources for the milestone in which they are working.

The new course is focused on capstone progress. As such, the “assignments” for this course are the planning and then tracking of academic progress for the term and beyond.

Term planning and tracking are documented on a new Term Plan (formerly the Quarter Plan). For the updated course, students must submit an initial term plan (first a draft and then agreed-upon), a midterm progress check term plan, and a final term plan to both plan and then track their progress. The goal(s) for the term must indicate appropriate academic progress.
Check-ins on progress are a key part of the course. The schedule for the term:

**WEEKS 1 and 2**
1. Students submit the completed Initial Term Plan in the course shell under *DRAFTS by Day 7 of Week 1* to meet course expectations and not be dropped from the course.
2. Students complete the Negotiation & Commitment with their mentor/chair. (This requires communication between the student and the mentor/chair.)
3. Students submit the Agreed-Upon Term Plan in the course shell by *Day 7 of Week 2*. This is the Term Plan students must follow to make adequate academic progress for the course.

**MIDTERM**
1. Throughout the term, students should track their progress on the Term Plan by entering dates for task completion and by making journal notes on activities completed or modifications needed, noting any barriers and strategies to overcome them. *The mentor/chair must approve any modifications and can also add journal notes on the plan document for archival purposes (see the sample plans).*
2. **Students submit the Updated Term Plan midterm, following the Progress Check.**

**END-OF-TERM**
1. Students ensure that all dates and notes have been entered on the Term Plan.
2. Students submit the Final Term Plan by *Day 7 of Week 11* for the adequate progress review (grading).

**IMPORTANT NOTE on Classroom Participation**

In accordance with U.S. Department of Education guidance regarding class participation, Walden University requires that all students in the Dissertation Research Forum submit an initial draft Term Plan to the Term Plan *DRAFTS submission link* by *Day 7 of Week 1*.

Financial Aid cannot be released without class participation as defined above.

Students who have already taken and successfully completed at least one or more class(es) with Walden, and who do not participate within the first 7 days, will be dropped from that class.

**Notes**

*The course update is for PhD programs and *not* professional doctorate programs at this time. The professional doctorate programs are now using the updated term plan document as a new, stronger term-planning tool in their courses, however. The updated term-planning document does not impact professional doctorate capstone course assignments/grading.*
If you have questions about the updated course or term plan documents, please refer to the DISS 9000 and Updated Term Plan FAQs document under Instructor Notes in the course and/or the Term Plan forms with samples and Term Plan Job Aid found here. Also note that based on feedback to date, many updates will be made to the course for Winter term to assist with ease of Term Plan submissions and capstone draft submissions with Turnitin options.

Updates from the Office of Student Research Administration

Tony Ajsenberg
Director, Office of Student Research Administration

I am very pleased to welcome Mady Johnson to the OSRA team. Mady joined the team in June and is a Capstone Data Analyst. She will be reporting to Andy Kermode. Please see Mady’s article in this newsletter.

MyDR Reminder

There has been some confusion lately about the “release to author now” versus the “release to author later” options in TaskStream. It is recommended that faculty use the Release to Author Now option. Not choosing this option can cause delays for students in the evaluation process. To get more information about this process, useful guides for the chair’s reconciliation and the URR evaluations can be found on the Faculty MyDR site.

Committee Reports

The committee reports that were previously sent out to program leadership are now all self-service in Tableau for program directors (PD) and anyone they approve to access them. We are no longer emailing out these committee reports. Access to the Tableau committee reports can be requested through the CRQ Data Request form (CRQ Data) and may require approval from the PD (depending on the requestor’s role).

Our Mission

The overarching mission of the Center for Research Quality is to align, maintain, integrate, and enrich those activities that contribute to the quality and productivity of Walden University research. Accordingly, its offices formulate, coordinate, and oversee the processes that support student research capstones as well as external research conducted under the auspices of the University.
Intervention Update

Alex Dohm  
Senior Research Progress Intervention Coordinator

Lou Milanesi, PhD  
Director, Committee Support & Doctoral Student Progress

Here is an update on recent intervention activities as well as ongoing activities to support committees and enhance student progress as we continue our CRQ intervention efforts:

• To recap our efforts, we are performing outreaches to committees when students have four or more URR returns in the proposal or final study stages of the capstone process. We also are providing lists of students’ time spent in the stages of the capstone process to program directors and deans, highlighting the top 20% of students with the longest ongoing times-in-stage. We began in the EdD program, then expanded to all PhD programs, and are now providing outreaches and data to all doctoral programs at Walden University.

• We continue to learn from our experiences in gathering data and reaching out to committees and key stakeholders. One trend we’ve seen in our conversations with committees in cases with four or more URR returns is that many of those committees have not met as a whole -- chair, 2nd member, and URR, as described in the URR Flowchart. The purpose of these meetings is to identify “deal-breakers” to advancing in the capstone, making sure all committee members are on the same page as to what the priority issues are, and devising a unified plan of action to resolve them and to allow the student to progress. We’ve seen that full committee meetings have proven effective in resolving barriers to progress in many cases, and we hope that committees will continue to engage in this collaborative student-centered approach.

• Likewise, we are continually working to expand and refine our data extraction and reporting methods to provide as much context regarding the student experience as possible in our support of student progress in the capstone. Our last enhancements included reporting on students’ number of S- and U-grades in capstone courses and automatically translating Banner codes into descriptive labels of the most recent student milestone completed. We are now working to soon include student enrollment history in our time-in-stage data to provide information on the level of student engagement, particularly for those students who may be nearing the eight-year completion cutoff. Likewise, we are also working on the differentiation of doctoral capstone committees assigned to the same student across multiple programs.
We look forward to continuing our collaboration with doctoral faculty and program leadership to further enhance student progress and the data we share towards this shared goal.

**Building Relationships in Support of Professional Doctorates**

Jan Garfield, PhD, CQE  
Director, Capstone Innovation and Assessment

Several of Walden University’s professional doctorates include opportunities for students to work with an assigned client organization in a virtual environment to complete an assessment of the organization’s strengths and opportunities for improvement using the Baldrige Excellence Framework and criteria. Over the course of approximately a year, a doctoral student works with the leaders of the client organization to develop a holistic assessment of the organization, including key themes, recommendations for next steps in the journey to performance excellence, and an executive summary.

Walden University and the Baldrige Foundation are partners in a joint venture that advances and accelerates higher education opportunities for members of the Baldrige community by spreading the word about Walden’s professional doctorates and opportunities for adult learners to gain real-world, real-time experience by working with community partners to undertake meaningful, relevant, and transformative research.

Over the 2018 Summer term, members of the CRQ and Josh Saunders from the Product Management Team have leveraged Walden’s partnership with the Baldrige Foundation to include new partnerships with the Alliance for Performance Excellence and the American Health Care Association (AHCA) to help ensure that, as Walden’s professional doctorates grow in number and enrollment, these students have access to a pool of vetted organizations to serve as community research partners and client organizations.

In addition, an initiative is underway to work with the university’s Center for Global, Professional, and Applied Learning to establish outreach to field sites seeking collaboration with a Walden doctoral student to conduct research or provide consultation for the organization. According to the results of a recent survey of over 3,000 site supervisors, 36% said they would find this type of service to be valuable or very valuable.

Please contact me with your questions, thoughts, and requests for further information about these CRQ initiatives in support of Walden’s professional doctorates. janice.garfield@mail.waldenu.edu
Summary of 2018 Updates to IRB System

Leilani Endicott, PhD
IRB Chair
Director, Office of Research Ethics and Compliance

Many updates have been made to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) system, which I’d like to summarize here -

**Improved IRB Forms**

The former IRB application has been broken up into shorter forms (A, B, C, and D) that are better tailored to different types of studies, particularly for secondary analysis of existing data.

**How will students know which form(s) they need?**

- IRB staff will guide them. Not all forms will be needed for every study, so each student should pay close attention to which specific forms are requested by IRB for their particular study. Every researcher starts with *(Form A)* and then receives tailored guidance from IRB staff regarding what other documentation is needed.

**Ethics Feedback Can Happen Earlier for Doctoral Students via the New “Preliminary Ethics Feedback Service”**

As part of this new service, each student will receive a tailored email from IRB (with chair copied) inviting the student to submit materials to the IRB for feedback *concurrently with the student’s URR* process. Students still cannot receive IRB *approval* until *after* the design has been finalized via the proposal defense, but at least students can submit their documentation earlier (i.e., prior to proposal approval) and obtain Preliminary Ethics Feedback, to help get the materials as ready as possible for approval.

**About the New IRB Forms**

- The first part of the application is now a webform *(Form A)* with branching that leads the student to the appropriate follow-up questions for that student’s type of data sources/sites. The form’s branching also leads the student to tentative guidance regarding which forms and site documentation are needed for that student’s situation, which will be followed up via email confirmation from an IRB staff member, within 10 business days.

- In contrast to the previous IRB form, which required a chair’s review and signature, completing the new online Form A is completely the student’s responsibility—*there is no place for chairs to sign Form A* and chairs do not need to approve the student’s Form A in advance. Chairs will automatically be copied on students’ Form A responses and all subsequent responses from the IRB, however. Chair’s signatures will still be requested on
the Word document IRB forms that students will be asked to complete based on their responses to Form A.

**What if a student or faculty researcher wants to use the old IRB process/form?**

- That is fine. The new service/form is optional. However, students do need to start with Form A if they want to take advantage of the Preliminary Ethics Feedback service.

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**Research Site Documentation Questions**

Jenny Sherer, MEd, CIP
Associate Director, Office of Research Ethics and Compliance

While there are many updates with the IRB, one element that has not changed is the requirement for students to submit appropriate site documentation, when necessary, with their IRB materials.

“Where the study is being conducted” and “what the role of the site is” both factor into whether and what site approval documentation may be needed. Further confusion can occur when a potential research site informs a student that an authorization agreement needs to be signed by Walden’s signatory official. Such terminology and requirements can be foreign to students, who are then left wondering what to do.

For site documentation, or any other research ethics related questions, encourage students should be encouraged to attend IRB office hours. The IRB can provide feedback specific to the student’s study and help explain what the next steps would be.

Information about when IRB office hours are offered and how to attend is available on the Research Ethics section of the Center for Research Quality website.
OSRA Staff Profile – Mady Johnson

Mady Johnson started at Walden University in June and works as a Capstone Data Analyst in the Office of Student Research Administration (OSRA), in the Center for Research Quality.

Mady assists with data requests and data reporting for the doctoral capstone process. She also supports reporting improvement and efficiency efforts along with creating data visualizations to represent doctoral capstone information.

Outside of work, Mady enjoys spending time with her family and being on the lake. She also loves continuously learning and is pursuing her PhD in Psychology at Walden University.

Methodology Advice for Faculty and Students

Marydee Spillett, EdD
Associate Director and Qualitative Methodologist

Got a question about qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methodology? The Center for Research Quality offers methodology advice for both faculty and students. The purpose of the methodology advice consultations is to support faculty in their doctoral committee work and to support students in their dissertation progress. The methodology advisors include Sunny Liu (Quantitative), Arfe Ozcan (Quantitative), and Marydee Spillett (Qualitative).

Methodology Advice Email for Faculty

Faculty may email questions to MethodologyAdvice@mail.waldenu.edu via their Walden email account. Questions are answered within 48 hours of receipt. Requests should include background information about the study and list the key questions or challenges which need assistance. Further information on the Center for Research Quality website under Research Resources.

Methodology Advice Office Hours for Students

Students are welcome to attend the Methodology Advice Office Hours held weekly. Office hours provide an informal, group advising setting where students may ask questions and receive advice about research methodology at any stage during dissertation or doctoral study research. Office hours are appropriate for students with short answer questions about specific research topics. Time does not allow for in-depth methodological review or for individual
tutoring. Students are encouraged to discuss the advice provided with their committee members.

Dates and times for office hours vary and are posted monthly on the Center for Research Quality website under Research Resources.

**Instrument Development**

**Sunny Liu, PhD**  
Quantitative Methodologist

**Instrument Development**

We often recommend our students to select already validated and reliable instruments for their studies because of the significant amount of time and effort needed in developing new instruments. However, if developing a new instrument/questionnaire/survey is necessary, here are some good resources and considerations to keep in mind.

**Steps in Instrument Development**

1. List the research questions.  
2. Identify and list the topics in each question.  
3. Identify all background variables to be collected.  
4. Conduct a literature review of instruments that may include items relevant to your study.  
5. Inventory variables to be sure they align with proposed data analysis.  
6. Write the introduction/instructions.  
7. Arrange the order of the items.  
8. Pretest the instrument on a colleague.  
10. Test “revised” instrument on colleagues periodically.

**Decision Framework for Question Utility**

1. Does the item measure some aspect of one of the research questions?  
2. Does the question provide information needed in conjunction with some other variable?  
3. Will respondents understand the question or item?  
4. Will respondents have the information to answer the question or item?  
5. Will respondents be willing to answer?  
6. Is other information needed to analyze the item or question?  
7. Should the item or question be asked of all respondents or a subset?
Criteria for Writing Quality Items:

1. Avoid statements that refer to the past rather than the present.
2. Avoid statements that are factual or that can be interpreted as factual.
3. Avoid statements that can be interpreted in more than one way.
4. Avoid statements that are irrelevant to the psychological attribute under consideration.
5. Avoid statements that are likely to be endorsed by almost everyone or almost no one.
6. Select statements that are believed to cover the entire range of the affective scale of interest.
7. Keep language of the statement simple, clear and direct.
8. Statements should be short not exceeding 20 words.
9. Each statement should only include a single thought or idea.
10. Statements containing universals such as all, always, none, and never introduce ambiguity and should be avoided.
11. Words such as only, just, merely, and others of a similar nature should be used with care and moderation in writing statements.
12. When possible, statements should be in the form of simple sentences rather than in the form of compound or complex sentences.
13. Avoid the use of words that may not be understood by those who will be completing the scale.
14. Avoid the use of double negatives.

Analyzing Pilot Data

- **Factor Analysis**: use CFA to verify the structure of the items comprising the instrument (construct validity)
- **Item Analysis**: use correlation analysis to examine the relationships among all items
- **Reliability**: such as alpha and omega
- **Validity**: evaluate evidence of the content, convergent, discriminant, and predictive validity

References


Refresh of our Academic Journals

Daniel Salter, PhD
Director, Strategic Research Initiatives

Our third installment of programs and services that support the research process at Walden highlights our five academic journals.

In 2018 we have been working on updating the look-and-feel of the journals' sites in ScholarWorks, including new logos, article templates, and a refresh to their sites. Our hope is to launch the full package of changes later in 2018. For now, I want to provide a “preview of coming attractions”, along with short descriptors for each journal and contact information for the editor.

The editors and I would like to remind everyone that, while our journals are supported by the university, they provide diamond open access (i.e., no charge to authors or readers) peer-reviewed research to the various disciplines in which they are embedded. They are not Walden-only outlets.

I would also like to make specific note of our newest journal editor, Cheri Toledo, who took the helm of the JERAP after Paul Englesberg retired from the role. Cheri is joined by Amy White, who will be serving as Associate Editor.

The Journal of Social Change (JSC), sponsored by Walden University, welcomes manuscripts focusing on interdisciplinary research in social change that improves the human condition and moves people, groups, organizations, cultures, and society toward a more positive future.
Contact Mark Gordon at JSC@mail.waldenu.edu

The International Journal of Applied Management and Technology (IJAMT), sponsored by Walden University's School of Management, is a peer-reviewed, online journal that addresses contemporary national and international issues related to management and technology. The objectives of the IJAMT are to:
• Encourage collaborative and multi-disciplinary examinations of important issues in business and technology management and:
• Engage scholars and scholar-practitioners in a dynamic and important dialogue.
Contact Raghu Korrapati at IJAMT@mail.waldenu.edu
The *Journal of Educational Research and Practice* (JERAP) is a peer-reviewed journal that provides a forum for studies and dialogue about developments and change in the field of education and learning. The journal includes research and related content that examine current relevant educational issues and processes. The aim is to provide readers with knowledge and strategies to use that knowledge in educational or learning environments. JERAP focuses on education at all levels and in any setting and includes peer-reviewed research reports, commentaries, book reviews, interviews of prominent individuals, and reports about educational practice.

Contact Cheri Toledo at [JERAP@waldenu.edu](mailto:JERAP@waldenu.edu)

The *Journal of Social, Behavioral, and Health Sciences* (JSBHS), sponsored by Walden University, is a peer-reviewed, online, interdisciplinary journal focusing on theoretically-based research that addresses contemporary national and international issues. JSBHS articles include peer-reviewed research reports, brief reports, comprehensive literature reviews, book reviews, and student research. The objectives of the JSBHS are to:

• Encourage dialogue between scholars and practitioners in the social, behavioral, and health sciences that fosters integration of theoretically-based empirical research with practice, and:
• Inform the relationship between practice and research in the social, behavioral, and health sciences.

Contact Lee Stadtlander at [JSBHS@mail.waldenu.edu](mailto:JSBHS@mail.waldenu.edu)

The *Journal of Social Work in the Global Community* (JSWGC) is a peer-reviewed journal and recognizes that social work is a global phenomenon with a myriad of contributors and perspectives. The journal is open to social work practice and research both domestically and abroad.

Contact Pete Meagher at [JSWGC@mail.waldenu.edu](mailto:JSWGC@mail.waldenu.edu)
Research Dissemination Support Grant Winners - August 2018

The Research Dissemination Support (RDS) program supports all faculty (core, contributing, emeritus) and staff who promote the visibility and scholarly reputation of Walden University through the dissemination of their research and research-related activities. The RDS program offers two types of grants: 1) Presentation RDS – travel support for research and research-related presentations at conferences; and 2) Publication RDS – support for research and research-related publications. For further information about this program, including how to apply, please visit our website.

Following are the grant recipients for August 2018. The RDS recipients’ names appear below in bold-face. A complete list of RDS recipients for the current, and previous program years, is available in ScholarWorks.

Center for General Education


College of Health Sciences


Smeaton, G., Struckman-Johnson, C., Fagen, J., Bohn, R., & Anderson, P.B. (2018). Generational differences in frequency of tactics men and women use to gain sex from an unwilling partner: Millennials diverging from

**College of Management & Technology**


Kangas, L. (2018, October). *Presentation, revelations and findings: Adult learners preference with emerging technologies*. Presentation given at the 67th Annual AAACE Conference, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, USA.


**College of Social & Behavioral Sciences**

Bastian Hanks, B. (2018, October). *Ten key strategies to successfully teaching on-line*. Presentation given at the Rocky Mountain Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Park City, Utah, USA.


Green, J. (2018, August). *NBCC-I mental health facilitator training*. Presented at the Mwenge Retreat Center, Moshi, Tanzania.


McLain, C.M. (2018, October). *Trauma informed model of student development: An ounce of prevention*. Presentation given at the Rocky Mountain Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Park City, Utah, USA.


**Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership**