

Appendix A: Prospectus Cover Page

**Prospectus for the Ph.D. in Public Administration and Policy
Florida State University**

Alternate Roles of Administrators in Affecting Political Agendas

by

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submitted to and approved by

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December 21, 1996

Appendix B

REQUIRED CONTENTS OF THE PH.D. DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS

The dissertation must be a significant contribution to knowledge on a topic related to the student's major field of study. It should reveal the student's capabilities in carrying out original research and represent a substantial scholarly effort on the part of the student. A prospectus is not a dissertation itself but it is a blueprint for one. It may also be thought of as similar to a grant proposal. (and it is a good idea to submit one to help support you at the dissertation stage).

The prospectus typically consists of three chapters: Introduction, Theoretical Framework, and Research Methodology. These roughly parallel the first three dissertation chapters. Each of these chapters will be revised, extended and more fully elaborated in the final dissertation. The length of the prospectus is usually between 60 and 100 pages, but the length will vary depending on the nature of the research project and the expectations of your committee and major professor.

1. Introduction

The focus of the introduction is the research problem or question. This chapter is to provide a clear and concise description of the research question and its significance. This is one of the most difficult aspects of research because the research question must be something that is of interest to you personally, acceptable to your advisor, important to the discipline of public administration and "doable" given your material and intellectual resources.

In this chapter you will need to explain why you are asking your question. Does it address a puzzle within the existing literature? Is there a gap in the existing literature? Is this a question that hasn't occurred to anyone before which has relevance to a whole range of literatures? The importance of the research problem to public administration as a discipline must be made clear. This involves citation of "authorities" from the discipline. Evidence must be presented that you are working on a problem that is going to be regarded as significant.

2. Theoretical Framework

Model, conceptual framework and theoretical orientation are terms that have been variously defined in the methodology literature, sometimes without a great deal of precision. They all however suggest the great importance of developing or adopting a set of logically related abstract ideas, which are central to your research problem.

Theory is a reasoned and precise speculation about the answer to a research question, including statements about why the proposed answer is correct. Theories imply specific falsifiable hypotheses and build upon prior research.

As sets of propositions explaining why events occur the way they do, theories describe patterns for interpreting data and understanding their larger significance.

The presentation of the theoretical framework must clearly explain important concepts and relationships among them. You should not have a separate single

review of the literature. Rather, when you are presenting the research problem in the introduction and when you are developing the theoretical framework, you must review literature that is related. In effect then, there must be a review of the literatures which are relevant to the particular area of the prospectus.

3. Research Methodology

The distinguishing feature of academic research, compared to research by journalists and writers is the care given to procedures. The appropriateness of the procedures depends directly on the conceptual framework and related research question. This section should describe and justify the research design that will be employed to answer the research question. It also should describe the data and evidence that will be used. The specific data collection procedures need to be described and justified. Finally, the specific quantitative and or qualitative analysis techniques must be identified and justified.

The prospectus must be accompanied by a cover page, table of contents, abstract, a time table and references.

Cover Page

The cover page must list the proposed title; your name; the Florida State University, Askew School of Public Administration and Policy; Ph.D. in Public Administration and Policy; the names of the supervisory committee with a place for their approval signatures; and the date of submission.

Table of Contents/Chapter Outlines

The Table of Contents must list each chapter and the major sub-topics within each chapter. The Table of Contents should indicate the major dimensions of the topic and a broad descriptive outline of the work to be done.

Abstract

The abstract in one page summarizes the basic structure of the proposal. The abstract should include a statement of the research problem and its significance, the model or conceptual framework, and the methodology to be employed. There must be a clear statement of the research problem. The abstract must begin with a one sentence statement of the problem. If it takes more than one sentence, you are probably unclear about the nature of the problem.

Time Line

You must include a time line that includes projections for the completion of each of the research tasks.

References

This should be appended to the end of the prospectus. The bibliography should not be excessively long and only needs to include works cited in the prospectus.