

Problem Statement Essentials

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Thank you so much everyone for joining me in this, um, problem statement essentials.

I see I'm gonna look at the, um, the roster that we have in with our class because I see some familiar names.

I'm really glad that some of the students in my own class have joined us tonight.

So thank you so much. Um, I'm gonna look at it again in a minute 'cause I can't see all of you right now.

I can only see my presentation screen.

So, um, this, this, uh, webinar is going to teach you how to write an effective problem statement.

We're going to talk about, um, you know, from wherever you are, whether or not you already have your topic picked out to whether or not you're, um, you are still deciding on a topic.

We'll cover all of that.

Alright, the first couple things is, while I'm just laying ground rules here, if you could go into the chat and if you could tell me question one, question two and three.

You're just putting a number in there.

So, question one, what program are you in? You're just gonna put a one if you're in EDD two, if you're in DBA three.

If you're in DHA. Question two, do you have a topic yet? You're putting a one, two or a three.

And then question three, have you written your problem statement yet? So I should see your answers saying 1, 2, 1 or 3, 1, 2, or something like that.

All in the same message. Don't, don't do a whole bunch, just all in the same message.

If you guys could put that in the chat, that would help me.

And as you are doing that, I will just establish some ground rules for our webinar tonight.

Um, if you have any questions, if I'm speaking too fast, if you need anything, you can put any questions that you might have in the chat.

Dr. Smith is going to be monitoring the chat for us.

But, um, I'm also okay if you just come off of mute because when I'm talking and when I'm presenting, I'm not necessarily looking at the chat.

And so when there is a lull in the conversation or when we break, I absolutely will look at the chat and Drella will let me know if questions come up.

Um, but feel free to just come off the microphone and just ask your questions because these webinars are a place for us to just talk and to work together and get good information from each other.

Okay, I hear all those messages coming in, so thank you everyone.

Um, the only other ground rule that I have is to just, let's keep this professional and, um, if you do have questions, please just make sure that your questions are questions that are good to the benefit of the whole group.

Um, sometimes we will get students come on here and ask individual questions that really only help that one person and then that's just taking the time of the other participants in the group.

And so if you do have an individual question, I ask you to just jot it down and then hang on at the end of the presentation and then at the end of the presentation, I will address yours after anything else has come back.

Okay? Alright.

So I'm going to go ahead and jump into the topic here.

So, how do I get started with the research process? So whether you are new or seasoned, this is a question that many of us struggle with as we are beginning to have a research project.

I know even for myself, my, I am a, I got, got my doctorate several years ago now, and my topic came pretty easily to me.

I had like my top three and then this one kind of just stuck out to me and the topic that I ended up selecting.

But even now, now that I'm beyond writing my dissertation, um, anytime that we write research in our professional lives, this is still a time where, um, you know, in order to work in higher ed, you have to be constantly working on your resume and constantly working on, um, scholarly activities, like publishing articles.

So even myself, after having gone through it, I'm like, Hmm, what should my next topic be about? Because we always wanna be thinking, and we always want to be, um, thinking about what's next for us.

So within these slides, we're going to explore how to select a topic and how to formulate a researchable problem with your research questions that you're going to be working on.

And so when we say researchable problem, it needs to be a problem that is able to be researched and it has to be something that is going to bring something different and unique to the re to the literature that's already out there.

Okay. All right. We're gonna go through these steps.

We're gonna brainstorm. We're gonna generate keywords, talk about initial research.

We're going to refine our topic, talk about additional research, and then we will work on creating a problem statement towards the end of the webinar.

First, we're gonna jump into brainstorming. Okay? So research ideas are generated from a variety of resources.

So you have to think about in your own life where you're going to pull a research idea from.

You can pull from your personal interest, just something that interests you and something that you enjoy studying.

You do just have to be careful that whatever your interest is, it has to be related to your program of study, which we'll talk about that in just a moment.

You can pull from current social issues that are going on in this one.

You just have to be careful because for those of you at the beginning stages of your dissertation or beginning stages of your research, think about how long it's gonna take you to finish and make sure that those current social issues are still going to be issues that are relevant when you finish your dissertation.

Or for those of you who are here just for research when you're finished with your research project.

So for, uh, actually I'm gonna say what I was about to say for the next couple sites.

Um, also students pull their ideas from a problem within their industry.

What issues or problems are you seeing in your current place of employment? Is that something that you can focus your dissertation on or your research on? And, um, is it a personal interest? It also has to be an interest of yours.

You can also pull ideas from other researchers, and I will show you where you can find that in a couple of minutes.

All right. So top uh, tip one, make sure that it is interesting to you.

Pick a topic that interests you because you are going to be living with this topic for a very long time.

Now, all of us go into a doctoral program hoping to be one of the students that finishes in two or three years.

That's our hope, that's our goal. That's what we want to do.

However, life happens, right? You have family issues that have to attend to, you have work obligations, you have community obligations.

And so sometimes your doctoral plan doesn't go as you had hoped in the beginning.

And so this needs to be a topic that you're going to be interested in in a long time.

I need to shut my phone off. I'm sorry.

It can't just be a topic that you are interested in, in this moment.

You are going to be stuck with this topic for a long time.

So make sure it's something that excites you and make sure it's something that holds your interest.

It needs to be something that you deeply, deeply care about and something that you are motivated to make a change in our world or in your industry based on whatever topic.

Okay? Because that those feelings and the, that passion that you have for your topic, that passion and you caring about your topic is what is going to get you through and push you when times get difficult.

Because a doctoral program, as most of you have been told, it's not easy.

Many people, there would be more people with a doctorate if it was easy and it's not easy.

And so having that passion will help you get through those times.

Alright, let's talk about alignment to the program because whatever topic you decide, it has to be aligned to the program that you are in.

So these are the programs that we have, and I'm gonna go through these topics and this is where I would like you to come off of your microphone.

Um, and you can tell me, or you can put it in the chat.

Also, you can tell me if the topic that I name is aligned to the program that it's listed next to.

So for example, in the program, doctor of Educational Leadership is sports medicine, specifically talking about concussions, if that's something that you are passionate about, but you are enrolled in the Doctor of Educational Leadership Program, do those two things match? What do you think? No. No.

Okay. Good. Good.

For the most part, it does not match, right? Um, I can see you having a push for this.

If it happened to be that the principal of the school was noticing that there were kids that were getting hurt on the playground at recess, then maybe it would be an educational leadership program.

But in this context, just sports medicine, talking about concussions, it doesn't really have a tie.

Right? That might better fit within the Doctor of Health Administration maybe.

Okay. All right. The next one, police recruitment.

Does police recruitment match the doctor of business administration? Not really. Okay, good. Not really.

Um, this one again, you can talk a little bit about because a police force isn't really a business and so it wouldn't really fit within that context.

So that one doesn't really fit either. Okay.

How about this next one, doctor of Health Administration.

How about increase, um, that you saw an increase of crime in rural, rural communities? No. Good. Okay. This one doesn't.

Okay, so what do you think the last one is? The last one gonna match? No, no.

Last one doesn't match either. Okay.

So you need to be picking things that match within the program.

Um, something like drug addiction.

If it was drug addiction within a school setting that the leader is noticing more and more students are getting arrested for drug issues or that they're having an increase of students who are getting caught with drugs in the school, then that could be an educational leadership topic, but not really just on its own.

Same thing with a drug addiction in the business world.

Are you noticing your employees are having more mental health issues? Something like that. Like that there could be a tie.

So for the most part, these don't match, but you could make a justification.

If you can make a justification that the topic does align to your program in some way, then you will be able to use it.

If you're ever not sure, ask your faculty members and you just send them a private message.

Even if it doesn't have anything to do with the class that you're taking, we are all here to help you.

We're all here to support you.

The decision of you selecting your topic is going to rest with your committee members.

And you're going to be assigned to your committee members in DOC seven 15.

If you have not reached seven 15 yet, you are learning the how to of research.

That's what you're worried about right now.

You are picking topics that might end up turning into your dissertation, but they might not also.

Okay. Alright. So recommendations from experts.

I need to hide this 'cause it's hiding my words.

As we read various scholarly writings and other classes and attend presentations, authors and presenters will often make recommendations for future research on a topic.

So that's another area that you can use to develop your topic.

So let's say you attended a conference at your work, or let's say you just read a, you're a member of an organization, um, a professional organization that, that releases a newsletter every month or something like that.

What are those people who are published in the articles or who are hosting the conferences? What are they saying is a problem within our, within our industry? Another opportunity for you to get recommendations from the experts that are already out there.

Because a lot of times those conferences, the journals that you read, um, research articles that you read, they will give you ideas of things that you can do from their article.

Okay. All right.

My screen is frozen. There we go. Okay.

Another thing that you can do is that you can use other dissertations to guide you.

So what you can do, you might wanna take your phone out and take a picture of the screen, okay? Because on this screen, it tells you how you can get to the University of Phoenix dissertations.

So what you're going to do is you're gonna go to the Phoenix Library.

It's on the Quick Links tab in your classroom, and then I would suggest saving it to your face by clicking the little like star that's in the upper right hand corner of your address, your web address bar.

So you're gonna go to the university library, then you're gonna search research databases.

It's like in the middle of a screen, you're gonna search research databases, you're gonna click on letter D, you're gonna go to dissertations.

And then once you're there, you're gonna type in a topic of interest to you.

Just a, a broad topic is good for now.

And once you get there, you're gonna open up a dissertation.

Now, this is a University of Phoenix dissertation.

And so this is a really good practice, especially for those of you who are at the beginning stages, for you to be able to find where these dissertations are located.

You're going to be so far ahead of the game if you understand where you can find these, because the dissertations that are in our database are all students who have already graduated.

They are already doctors.

They have passed through our program.

Now does that mean that those dissertations are perfect? No, because every chair, every URM uh, university research methodologist, every panel validator is a little bit different.

You might find mistakes in there.

Hopefully we've caught them all.

But you can use these to guide yourself when you're writing your, um, when you're writing your dissertation to begin with.

So let's say you're working on the significance of the study section and you're like, I have no idea how I even begin to start writing this section.

Pull up an old dissertation and look to see how other people have, have written that section.

It'll be a huge tool for you.

Specific to this webinar, I am specifically going to talk about chapter five.

If you look at the table of contents of whatever dissertation you find in chapter five, you're gonna see the conclusions and recommendations within that section towards the bottom.

This is one of the last things students write.

They write recommendations for future research.

So let's say, uh, a topic of interest to you is mental health.

You can type in mental health, you can find three different dissertations that had to do with mental health.

Um, your real topic would have to be more narrow than that.

You would have to say like, mental health among, um, medical assistants in the southeast.

It would have to be very narrow.

But in every dissertation, they have this recommendation for future research.

So they give you ideas right there.

So if you can figure out a couple of topics that you're interested, go and read that recommendations for future research, because then those will give you some ideas.

Okay? All right.

And then, um, finding similar studies.

You can find articles in the University of Phoenix Library, and you can save those articles in a folder to, um, to browse yourself.

That QR code, it just brings you to the library page.

So, um, I can put the QR code in the chat too, but I think you guys should all be able to get to it on your, um, on your quick links tab.

Okay, now I lost where you guys are.

Here we go.

And now I lost my chat.

Come on. Here we go. Okay. I'm sorry.

Okay, so that is just the link to get to the library.

All right, any questions before I go onto the next topic? So, Dr. Baker, what we see you sharing right now is like your screen in the chat. Is that your intent? Yes. Okay. Yep.

I was just previewing the chat just to make sure there was nothing I needed to go back to.

Okay, perfect. Okay. Okay.

So now the next part, again, if you guys have questions, just come off a chat, um, or come right onto the microphone is fine.

Alright, so the next way.

So we've already brainstormed, brainstormed.

You have a basic idea of what your topic could possibly be about.

Um, it is important to tell you that you are not locked into your topic at any part of the program.

So whether you are at the beginning or whether you are already in DOC seven 15, you will be, you're not locked in ever.

The, the only thing is that, um, your access courses, the courses that happen at the beginning of the program, those courses are there to teach you the how to part of research.

We're going to practice writing problem statements.

We're gonna practice writing purpose statements and research questions, and selecting research designs and all that.

We're gonna practice, and you're gonna practice several times in a bunch of your different classes.

And then by the time you get to 7 15, 7 15 is your first doctoral seminar class where you're writing chapter one of your dissertation.

That's the one that you really do need to know what topic you're going to use.

Everything that happens before, you are free to change your topic as much as you want.

Um, if you start with something and realize it's just not working, you are free to change your topic and that's not a problem.

But by the time you get to seven 15, we do want you to have a decent idea of what your topic is going to be.

We will still be helping you fine tune it.

We will still be helping you with your problem, purpose and all that.

But seven 15 is really the class, class that you need your actual problem.

But I will say the earlier you know what your topic is, the more feedback on that topic get.

So let's say you are a person who knows your topic today, and you know, at least the general idea of what you're going to do in your RES 7 0 9 class.

You're gonna declare a topic that you are thinking of using, and you're going to practice writing a problem, a purpose and research questions.

Then when you get to your doc 7 57 14 class, you're going to do that again.

You will work on a problem, a purpose research questions.

This time you'll write an intro and a background and all that.

Then you'll do the same thing.

When you get your qualitative methods class and your quantitative methods class, you're gonna be practicing over and over and over again.

So I will say that if you know your topic, by the time you get to seven 15, you already submitted a problem, a purpose in research questions that your faculty gave you feedback on.

And so it would be good if you took their feedback and applied it to your actual chapter one.

Um, you already wrote an intro in seven 14.

You can use a part of that intro. It's called dovetailing.

When you use what you've learned before and you adapt it to what you're doing now.

So the earlier you know, the better, but you're still not locked in.

You can change your mind at any point, even after you have conducted your or started your chapter one.

If you decide you wanna change your topic, that's fine.

If you decide when you're in your chapter three that you wanna change your topic, that's fine, but you will just be adding on time to completion of your program.

So the earlier you can find out the better.

Once you know your topic, then you are going to get into generating keywords.

So here is where you are going to figure out what words, what keywords and phrases are you going to use in order to start your search to find more information.

So these keywords, you're gonna find out what you're missing, what are possible subtopics that you might need within that topic that you chose.

What is the background of and the problem within that area of exploration? This is a great time for you to use ai.

You can open up any of the AI tools and you can say, I am thinking of doing a topic on mental health in for medical assistance.

I need to know a list of 15 different research keywords that match my topic to help me find, um, to help me find articles in my university library.

Ask I ai and AI will come out with 15 keywords that you can use to put into your, um, into the search term at the university library website.

Okay, that's a great use of ai.

All right, any questions about keywords before I go on to the next thing? Okay. Oh, did I just hear the chat go off? Yes. There's a question. It says, how do you cite ai? Excellent question. If you are just using AI to generate keywords, you actually don't need to cite it because you are not taking those keywords and plopping those keywords into your actual writing.

You are just taking those keywords to use to help you search.

Um, the only time that you would end up needing to cite AI is if you used AI's words, if you used the output of what you put in, in your actual writing, your dissertation.

Um, there are, there's a, a, a group right now working on AI tools for doctoral students.

Um, I highly recommend you check out that website because it is a great place for students to go to get more information about AI help.

But, um, you would not cite it just for using keywords.

I hope that makes sense. Oops. Okay.

Did I hear another question or is that okay? Nope, it was a thank you.

Okay. All right. Great. Sorry, I can't see you guys on the same screen that I am presenting from, so sorry.

Okay. All right. Next then.

So then you're gonna start your initial research.

So once you've got those keywords, you kind of know what you're going to be searching.

You're gonna start your in initial research, your initial, oh my gosh, your initial research.

You are looking to see what the current research that is out there.

You're looking to see what already exists on your topic so that you can figure out how to fine tune and how to narrow your own topic.

You are gonna do this by using those keywords.

You're gonna put those keywords into the university library search function, okay? I would recommend going to the advanced function because in the advanced function, you can use the words and, and the words or are in there.

So you can say, I'm looking for mental health and medical assistance.

I'm looking for mental health and elementary school teachers.

I'm looking for medical, um, mental health and whatever.

So you can use those keywords.

I would highly recommend not going to Google to search for your articles, not even Google Scholar.

And the reason why University of Phoenix, the last time I talked, we had 118 research databases, and each one of those research databases has probably a million articles in it.

There's no reason you need to go anywhere else.

And if you're just using Google or you're just using like Google Scholar, you are going to get articles that you don't have access to, and it'll say you have to pay \$37 for access to this article.

No, you, your articles are free and the University of Phoenix Library.

And, um, you should never have to pay for an article throughout your entire program.

Don't pay for articles, use the University of Phoenix Library.

Everything that's in there is free because you are a student.

Um, but if you didn't listen to me, and if you happen to find something on Google Scholar, um, and you really want access, but you can't find it in our library, our library works just like your local library where you can loan, if you can enter library loan articles.

So contact our librarians and there's a little ask us button on their website.

You can just hit that and you can say, Hey, I'm really looking for this article it's asking me for to pay for it.

Can you help me out? And almost always, they are able to find articles for you.

Okay? So when you're using this initial research, you're going to identify what already exists and what may be replicable.

So you don't want to replicate exactly someone else's study because then you're not bringing anything new.

But you can absolutely take someone else's study and make a small tweak to make it your own and to make it be slightly different.

That doesn't mean that you're copying their problem and their purpose and their research.

You're not doing any of that. You're just taking the idea of what they had.

And you are taking that idea and you are making it.

You can explore subtopics within your chosen topic and then find additional areas that have yet to be researched.

That's the sweet spot.

The sweet spot of your topic is to find something that has not been researched.

You're trying to find a gap in the literature.

And when you are reading all of these articles and you're asking all these articles, you will start to see like, Hey, I noticed a gap in the research.

And so make that gap is where you can belong.

That's where your topic can come in. Okay.

So something like, I keep giving the example of like mental health in, um, medical assistant.

That's been something that's been highly researched or like teacher shortages or nursing shortages.

Those have been highly studied already.

And so you need to find a niche within that topic.

If you really wanna do that topic, that is going to bring something new to the table.

Okay.

Dr. Baker there a question? Uh, yes.

What tool would you recommend for citation? Uh, for a citation generator? Um, is the name, is it the, is that the RefWorks one? I like RefWorks. I would say RefWorks.

Um, I think so too. And it's, um, it's REF is lowercase and then works W-O-R-K-S.

Um, I'm not super familiar about how that works, but I do know that we have webinars on that.

Mm-hmm. And so, um, and we have recorded webinars too.

So if you're looking for something specific and you wanna know how to work, um, how to use RefWorks, then you can, um, go in the

research methodology group, which we'll post the link towards the end.

Uh, and you can ask for it in there too.

There's a second question, what if you have a problem? But the research gap is very large.

Um, can you expand on that a little bit? Centia, are you able to unmic or, or, uh, or come on and, and provide some context.

I'm gonna minimize this so I can see you.

I'm not sure. Let me see.

Um, I don't know if she's able to un mic, that was all of the question, but maybe we could keep going.

And if she was able to un, un mic, uh, Dr.

Dr. Baker, I have a question, um, to sort of like, kind of similar to that.

If you are not finding articles in your area that are recent, like in the last five years or not enough articles to back up what you are doing for your research.

'cause I'm kind of finding that issue with what I'm doing as well.

Yes, that, that's a great question too.

Here's another plug for AI use.

Um, I will have to find out, and I don't, Dr. Smith, maybe you remember the name of it.

There is a, there's an AI tool that helps you find articles.

So, um, you can use that AI tool.

Um, Dr. Smith, if you have that link to the AI webinar, um, just before we leave tonight, can you put that in the chat or not the webinar, I'm sorry.

The, um, ai, the new web.

Yes. Yes. I can put the AI research group in here and I've heard helps to find articles, but I don't know if that's the one you are referring to. Um, Maybe that is Okay.

Oh, somebody just put that hyper right? AI is good.

Excellent. Okay. Um, also, another benefit that you have of being a University of Phoenix student in our doctoral, this is something that is for doctoral students only.

You can actually make an appointment with our librarians.

It's a one-on-one appointment.

You call in, you give them your research topic, and they help you find articles.

And that's a huge help too.

I know that students who, who take advantage of this resource, so many times they come back and they say, man, I wish I would've done that earlier, because it is such a huge, helpful tool for you.

So once you have an idea of what you want your topic to be, I highly recommend making an appointment with your, with the librarians, if you're, especially if you're having trouble finding stuff, um, Dr. Smith just put the AI research group in the chat.

I would open that up and say that to your favorites as well.

There are so many great resources on that, on that one as well.

Okay. Any other questions before I move on to the next thing? Okay. Alright. This is really important. Okay.

So as I say to my young children, I say, okay, okay, my children put your thinking caps on and put your listening ears on.

This part's really important.

You cannot put the cart before the horse when it comes to your problem formation.

And what I mean by that is that the research and what is currently out there should be the thing that is driving your problem formation, your personal experience, your ideas, your passion should not be leading your problem formation here, because right then and there, the fact that your problem came from your interest or your experience, you have already inserted bias into your study.

And it's okay if you come with, if you come with an idea from your personal experience, but you need to take that personal experience and you need to see what's already out there in the research.

You need to read, read, read, read, read, read, read so many articles on that topic before you attempt to come up with your problem formation.

And the reason why, number one, bias number two, it's really difficult for you to say, this is a problem that I am having.

Your problem statement, as you're gonna see in a little bit, it has to be supported by current research.

So if you're saying, this is my problem, and then you're trying to find research to match what your problem is, you're gonna have a really hard time being able to find exactly what your problem is being supported by the research.

It's the other way around.

You need to read, read, read, read, read.

What are these research articles saying is a problem.

Then you take that and you formulate your problem.

So your idea for your topic can come from your personal experience, from your passions, from your interests, but your actual problem formation needs to come from the literature.

What does the literature say? Because your problem statement has to be supported by literature.

Your problem statement cannot be a you problem.

This is a them problem.

This is a universal problem that is a problem for all teachers or all managers or all whatever.

Okay? So make sure that the research is driving your problem, not your problem.

Then you're trying to find research. Okay? I hope that makes sense because that's really important.

And this is something that so many students, I would say the majority of students come into Doc seven 15 where they're writing their chapter one and they're telling me a you problem event like a me problem.

Your, your whole entire dissertation cannot be written on the basis of being a me problem.

Okay? It has to be supported by literature.

All right, any questions about that? Sorry, every time I, um, hear that little ding, I gotta go back.

Okay. Alright. Um, there's more citation, generators being shared in the chat.

Thank you guys so much. Okay.

All right, next. All right.

So after we've done that initial research, then we're going to refine our topic.

So refining, we, you need to, um, you can need to conduct your initial research on more than one topic.

So pick your top two ideas, your top three ideas, and start reading what's out there on that particular topic.

And then figure out which one you're interested in, in exploring further.

Okay? Always be on the lookout for a problem found within your research on your narrowed topic.

So as you're reading those articles, read the articles thinking, is there a problem in here somewhere? That's what you should be reading, okay? Once you have narrowed to a topic, you're gonna run it through the litmus test, okay? I'm gonna share with you what the litmus test is. Alright? So when you select a research topic, you need to decide is it focused, alright? So it cannot be too broad.

Your dissertation is not trying the purpose of it and the outcome of it.

You are not going to solve world hunger with your little dissertation.

You're not going to solve homelessness with your dissertation.

That's much too broad.

You're not going to solve a mental health crisis with your dissertation.

It needs to be narrow.

It needs to be focused instead of trying to solve a problem within the entire organization.

What little problem, what small problem can you attempt to solve and attempt to research within your organization? A lot of students will come in saying, um, just one that I was reading earlier today.

A student of mine is working on, um, just inequities in, um, in access of leadership materials to underrepresented groups.

And so in that, um, I completely lost my train of thought where I was going with that.

Oh my gosh, I never do that.

I don't remember what I was gonna say, but make sure that, oh, I know.

So her initial idea was to rewrite the organization's entire, um, like equity, uh, and training program.

That was her idea. She wanted to come in and rewrite their entire program.

That's too big. Your dissertation, unless you wanna be at this for 10 years, you can't pick a topic that's, you can't pick a anything that is that too big.

So you need to narrow it down.

So instead, she is collecting perspectives from employees to look to see how they feel, um, if there is inequities in the leadership training and their access to leadership and stuff like that.

So she's just focusing on a much smaller piece of it.

So you need to narrow it down, okay? You need to ask yourself, is it feasible? Is it something that can be done in a reasonable amount of time? Similar to the student I just told you about.

My initial idea for my dissertation was to develop this program.

And I wanted to see if having teachers who were trained, having college faculty members, I wanted to train them on how to teach.

I wanted to train them on teaching methodologies because college professors, they're hired based on their content knowledge of math or sociology or psychology or whatever.

They're not hired on the premise that they are able to teach that information.

So I wanted to, I wanted to have a create a program where I have 15, 20 people come in and they take my program, and then I wanted to test to see if, if it worked, if students were more satisfied or whatever, that would've taken me forever and I would've had to find 20 people who were willing to give up a semester's worth of time with me to get the training done for free with no certificate at the end, no college degree at the end, no bump in pay at the end.

That was never gonna happen.

And so my own URM advised me, why don't you just look to see trained teachers versus not trained teachers? And is there a difference between trained teachers and not trained teachers? That was so much easier. That was narrowed. It was feasible.

I was able to get it done in one semester instead of extending it out.

So look to see if it is feasible.

Long-term studies are out, unless you want to be a student who's doing this for 10 years, which I don't think anyone on this call is.

Okay. You also need to check to see who will care, who's going to care that this is, that this topic, uh, has been researched.

Other people have to care about it.

Again, this goes back to this being a me problem.

It can't be only me that cares about this.

Other people need to care about it.

If other people don't care, then no one's gonna pick your, um, article up.

No one's going to allow you to publish an article in their journal.

Um, no one's gonna allow you to present at conferences.

You have to look to see, like, think of what's next.

For my own dissertation, I ended up going with this college faculty training thing.

I had a couple other ideas. My background is in education.

I was thinking about doing something with like school lunches because like the health of children is something that interests me and I am, my background is education.

I thought about doing something like that and this, those were like my top two topics that I was going for.

And I ended up going with this one because this topic is going to work for me.

So, for example, that training program that I told you about that I wanted to write to train college faculty members, well, guess what? I wrote a book on it. And my book now can be published for other people who are college professors and they want to learn how to teach adult learners.

They can purchase my book.

That was a lot of time and energy and effort that went into that.

But now I sit back and I collect checks from it and it's great.

It's not like a significant amount of money, but it's just a little bit like my topic was able to work for me because other people cared about it.

It, okay? So you wanna make sure that your topic is something that people will care about.

And then when you finish, that's when you dev, that's when you rewrite the training program.

That's when you, um, you take it to a bigger scale.

You wanna finish your dissertation first, then you take the results from that because then you will have the results from your dissertation to prove what you were trying to prove.

And you can take that data and take that to get somebody to agree to allow you to rewrite the training program or whatever.

Okay? You also have to ask yourself if your topper, if, if your topic, if the decision that you made was timely.

Okay, let's think about that for a moment.

Alright, so how about this? Um, if this were my topic, although exploring the attitudes of women towards Bill Clinton may have been relevant a few presidential terms ago, it may not be a timely topic today, right? Is this really, um, anything that students would care about for main topic of a dissertation? Are other people gonna care about that? What do you think? What do you guys think is revolving your entire dissertation around Bill Clinton? Is that relevant? Is it timely? We moved a couple generations away from that.

So probably, uh, US olders might be interested in it, but not for the youngers that are working on their studies, Right? And this might be something that you reference within your dissertation.

If your dissertation topic has something about is on women's studies or women in the workplace or something, that might be something you reference because it's part of our history, but it is not something that is relevant to today.

Okay? Think about covid.

A lot of our students in the last couple of years have done like teachers shortages as a result of covid or nursing shortages as a result of covid or moving to remote work environments because of covid.

What do you guys think about that? About using those today? I'm gonna come off this so I can see your responses.

Yes, it's still relevant. Okay.

I will say it's a little bit relevant.

Yeah, it's pretty much because think about it. Done.

Yes, we are. I'm I'm over it. I agree.

Yeah, we are now in the year, we're in the year 2025 now, right? So we're in the year 2025.

Covid happened in 2020.

So we are five years post covid.

Now, is every single industry out there still feeling the effects of covid? Yes. However, most organizations have figured out they, they have figured out how to return to work already.

They've figured out how to, um, yes, covid.

Um, yeah, most organizations have figured it out.

So we don't need to be having our whole entire topic be about covid.

And I also want to remind you, for those of you who are in the beginning of your program, for those of you that are in the beginning of your program, it's 2025.

Now, you're not going to finish the program for two or three years if everything goes well, which a lot of times it doesn't go well.

So if everything goes well, you will finish by 2027.

2028. Life happens for many of us.

We might not finish until 2030.

Is anyone really going to care about covid when we get to 2030? Probably not. Right? So you can certainly talk about how Covid shook up the industry.

It can be a part of the research that you put into your topic.

It can't be the topic.

It should not be the topic of your dissertation. Okay? Alright. Um, all right. Next one.

My tip for you is to be flexible.

Um, your ideas are going to change in this program where you are today versus where you are when you publish your dissertation.

It might be a completely different thing.

So you need to just make sure that you are open to changing and open to being flexible.

All right? Next is additional research.

So you're gonna look for words that best describe your narrow topic.

Look for specific problems that are found within that narrow topic.

And always ask yourself says who says who is what we say? And you might get that feedback from your faculty members that they say, say, says who? Everything you state in an academic paper, when you're talking about the research that you've done, it needs to be cited by another person.

You are not allowed to go on for pages and pages and pages, or even more than a paragraph about your own experiences with this.

Your personal experiences do not go into a dissertation.

Okay? All right.

We're gonna get into creating your problem statement.

So there's the problem statement sentence, and then there's the fully developed problem statement.

And so the problem statement sentence, that's one sentence within your whole entire problem problem statement.

So it's gonna end up being a paragraph, but we're gonna specifically talk about the one sentence, your problem statement.

So the whole entire paragraph, it has to provide background information.

It has to state the problem with that sentence that we're gonna talk about in a second.

It has to provide scholarly support for the existence of the problem, and then indicate potential benefit of addressing the problem.

Like where was that gap and what are you gonna do because of the gap? Okay? Alright.

This screen, I recommend taking a picture of it.

This is your problem statement sentence format.

Your problem statement sentence does not have to be in this format.

However, this is the most commonly used one.

And if you do this, you are doing it correctly because every problem statement has to state the problem, and it also has to state the consequence, okay? And it has to have a citation.

So this is where your passions, your experiences cannot drive your problem because you have to have a citation and you have to be properly citing it.

Your citation has to be within the, the prev within the last five years of when you graduate.

So within five years of when you graduate, it cannot be five years from now.

It's five years at the time you publish your dissertation, at the time you finish your dissertation, okay? Which means when you are looking for problem statements, now you should be looking for sources that are one or two years old, okay? To give you that time. Um, there are students who, if, if you take a very long time to finish your dissertation, because life happens, you will have to go back and you'll have to update a lot of your references, okay? You don't wanna do that if, if it's not you necessary.

All right? So here's an example. All right? The problem is that during the dissertation stage, candidates face challenges engaging with academic writing.

That's the problem, is that candidates face challenges engaging with academic writing, resulting in what happens because they're facing these challenges.

There's a need for an additional writing support, okay? That's the consequence of problem.

And then the support, the supporting citation within one to three years, I would say.

Okay? Alright.

The other important part is that you are properly citing the source where it came from.

Okay? I'm not gonna read this to you.

If you guys could please read the problem statement that is written there, and then read the direct citation.

So you'll see that the problem statement was cited by Blake and below is exactly what Blake said.

So you tell me if you think I cited it properly.

All right? What do you think? Did Blake say what I said? Blake said in the, um, in the problem sentence? No, no, no, no, no. Right. Okay, good.

Those, this is a bad example.

So this is another problem that students do.

So a lot of times when students come to us with their me problem, they try to find a citation that fits what they're trying to say, and then

they severely misquote the person that they cited from.

And you are basing the problem is your whole entire dissertation is based on this problem, the whole thing.

And so when you are basing your problem on a citation that you did not cite properly, you're basing your whole entire citation on, on not research then, okay? So you have to be very careful to make sure that you are citing properly, okay? Once you have your problem statement, oops. Okay? Once you have your problem statement, you need to think about alignment.

So once you have your problem, start thinking about the methodology and the design.

Your problem, your purpose, your research questions should all be in alignment.

Now, I'm going to give a very bird's eye view of what alignment looks like, but I will tell you, we have an entire webinar.

We have it recorded, and we host it regularly in live sessions.

Um, those of you who are in my class right now, I've been pushing this webinar for you, please watch it.

You will be in such better shape.

If you understand what alignment is from the beginning, you will be in such better shape.

So I'm going to give you a very bird's eye view, but keep in mind the next three minutes, it's going to be three minutes of an hour long webinar.

Okay? So this looks very busy, but look, you're gonna use the same keywords to help alignment.

So the problem, look on the problems on the left, the purposes below it, the research questions are to the right.

Okay? So you can see the problem has college professors in it.

The purpose has college professors in IT research.

Question one and two have college professors in it.

They all have teaching methodology training.

They all have meeting the needs of 21st century college students.

They can, you see how all of these are in there? They're the problem, the purpose, the research questions, they're all using those same, same keywords.

Okay? The, you'll also notice that this one in particular, and we're not talking about the purpose statement tonight, so I'm not gonna go too far into it, but the sentence format is the purpose of the methodology and design.

The qualitative is two, that's the sentence stem that you use for purpose.

Case studies are all about perceptions.

So you need a word in there.

You need a word in your purpose that has something to do with the research design that you chose.

So this one has to do with perceptions.

So notice that perceptions is in my purpose and perceptions is also in my research questions.

Okay? This is alignment for you. All right.

Um, did I see that there was a question? Uh, Dr.

Uh, baker, there's a hand up and there are a few questions about citations here.

Okay, Steven, go ahead. Yes, Thank you, Dr. Baker. Uh, quick question.

Uh, I noticed that, uh, you used the word perception.

Uh, will it be, will it be okay if I said experiences or, uh, what is your intake on that? You can, but you really have to look up your research design in particular, because case study really is about perceptions.

So that word really should be in there.

Um, a place for you to look and get help is your dissertation guide.

Your dissertation guide has a page in the guide for each design.

Um, and we can get into like way more questions.

If you have questions about it, reach out in the research methodology group and you will be able to, um, to see there, we, we can share some resources for you in there.

Um, I saw some earlier questions about how many citations are you allowed to use? Your problem statement should have one, but your entire problem section should have several.

Um, theoretical citations.

I'm not sure what you mean by that.

Current events or issues.

Can current events or issues supplement scholarly resources to? Um, your problem statement should come from empirical research.

Empirical research, meaning it had a method, it had a problem, it had participants, it had, um, it had a research design, it had conclusions.

That's where it should come from.

You should not, not, not, not, not be pulling your problem statement from like journals, um, unless the journal was talking about an empirical study.

Okay? And again, like that's another topic.

That's a huge topic for another day too.

So if you have those questions, um, be sure to reach out.

Okay, we are almost out of time here.

Um, I do wanna share with you this alignment worksheet.

This is going, this is, it has so many resources on this worksheet.

I would highly recommend you fill this out because, um, it's really going to help you with your alignment.

And like I said, the earlier you have this figured out, the better off you will be.

Okay? If you have additional, if you have other things that you need help with.

Um, this link that I'm gonna put in the chat right now, it's going to go to a document.

It has a whole bunch of other resources on it.

It goes to CDS central, it goes to the dissertation chapter resources.

That is a document that has all of our previously recorded webinars.

So a lot of these questions that you guys are asking, we have whole entire webinars on them, so I highly recommend looking at them.

Um, it talks about how to get to you, uh, university of Phoenix dissertations, the events page, Facebook group, how to get to the library, the research hub, the research methodology group is linked in that document as well.

Um, Dr. Smith put a link to a survey for our webinar tonight.

If you guys could all please take a couple of moments before you log off for the night to fill out that survey, that would be hugely helpful.

Um, I know that this webinar has a lot of information.

I know I went kind of fast.

Um, if you have any questions after today, I'm gonna put my, um, email address in the chat.

I am happy to point you into the direction of other, um, resources that we have.

You can also find us in the research methodology group.

Yes, that one sheet is worth its weight in gold. It is.

So I, I believe that you're talking about the dissertation chapter resources.

Please. Everyone check that one out.

It is, um, incredibly helpful.

Alright, we only have a couple minutes left.

Are there any last minute questions? I do have another meeting that starts right at seven.

It look like there's some Thank you, Dr. Baker.

We really appreciate your time and, and for sharing your expertise with us.

Of course. Thank you so much everyone for coming.

I appreciate you really are going to be better off, um, in your program.

When you understand these concepts a little bit earlier in the program, it's really going to help you.

Um, don't be afraid to reach out.

Um, I'm not allowed to like guide students on their topic selection or anything like that, but I can absolutely point you in the right direction and that research methodology group, if you're not a member of that, please join up because we have a live chat that's monitored in that one.

And I can help you, I can guide you in that group as well as Dr. Smith and several other expert methodologists in that group. Thank You so much.

Um, it looks like Steven, you have your hand up again.

Did you have a question? No. Okay.

I think I forgot. Put it down. I'm sorry. Oh, It's not a problem. Thank you so much. Thank you. Thank you. You Dr. Baker. Thank you.

Yes, thank you. Thank you everyone for joining.