DOCTORAL STUDENT PROGRESS AND THE USE OF THE DOCTORAL DEGREE COACH™ TOOL: PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

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MEET YOUR PRESENTERS

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SESSION AGENDA

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS
JOSH SAUNDERS AND KAREN MILHEIM

DATA AND FINDINGS
MICHELLE BROWN & LAURA KNIGHT LYNN

NEXT STEPS
ALL
At the end of this presentation, participants will be able to:

✓ Describe experiences with supporting doctoral students in making progress and completing the capstone/dissertation

✓ Identify the needs of doctoral students in transitioning from coursework to capstone/dissertation

✓ Describe the usefulness of a digital planning and tracking tool to support doctoral students on the capstone/dissertation process
What are some of the challenges faced by students during the transition to and completion of the doctoral dissertation or capstone?

(post in chat)
AND MANY OTHERS....
Doctoral students face numerous challenges in completing online doctoral programs:

- Course structure, workload, resources, absence of human interaction (Deshpande, 2016)

Online institutions are incorporating a diverse range of strategies and offerings to mitigate these challenges:

- Peer or e-mentoring (Palermo-Kielb & Fraenza, 2018)
- Course design (Cuevas & Neal, 2018)
- Advising strategies (Grady, 2016)
Supporting Research

Technology creates opportunity for new, innovative solutions

Reference: (Lin et al, 2018; Popenici & Kerr, 2017)
WHAT IS THE DOCTORAL DEGREE COACH?

- The Doctoral Degree Coach™ is a digital planning tool with several features designed to support student progress and successful completion of the doctoral capstone.
Doctoral Degree Coach is here

Your Doctoral Degree Coach™ is the one place to keep you on track to your doctorate.

For Students
See how the Doctoral Degree Coach can help you track your progress.

LEARN MORE  SIGN IN

For Faculty
Help facilitate your student's doctoral research with a simple, straightforward tool.

LEARN MORE  SIGN IN
THE DOCTORAL DEGREE COACH

Phases of Dissertation or Capstone/Project

Goal Completion Date

Curated Resources and Help Contacts

Write Your Literature Search Strategy Section

In this section you will describe the scope of the literature review. Include databases, search engines, key search terms, etc. Note the number of articles you selected for your review.

Refer to the appropriate capstone/project checklist for more detailed guidance on the literature review.

How Do I Describe The Literature?: Form and Style Editors
The Role of the Literature Review: Library
Professional Doctoral Program Links on the OSRA Website: CRQ

Need help on this task?

Form and Style Editors
editor@waldenu.edu
Go to the Form and Style website
Goal Date for each To-Do

Progress Indicator Based on Student Reported Progress
PILOT
Develop the pilot version of the Doctoral Degree Coach (then the Doctoral Research Coach)
Launched in EdD program to approximately 50 users

Spring/Summer 2019
EXPANSION
Improve and redesign tool based on findings from pilot and launch to all PhD program students

Winter 2019
FURTHER EXPANSION & IMPROVEMENT
Launch the tool to all professional doctoral program students

2020 and beyond
CONTINUED ENHANCEMENT
Continued improvement and enhancement of the tool with planned launch of extended version winter 2020
✓ Intuitive and user friendly
✓ Applicable content and resources
  ✓ Foundational
  ✓ Scaffolded
  ✓ Flexible
✓ Reflective of the Walden brand
Accessible to all doctoral students
Available to doctoral committee members
Communicated clearly with training and support
Supported by university stakeholders
Program agnostic
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DATA PLAN

Pilot
- Qualitative Feedback
  - Utilization Data

All Programs Launch
- Continued Qualitative Feedback
  - Utilization Data

One Year Post Launch
- Embedded Course Survey
  - Utilization Data

Research Plan
- Metrics Related to Student Progress
  - Utilization Data
WHAT WALDEN STUDENTS ARE SAYING...

“The doctoral coach was immensely valuable to my doctoral journey. The curated resources and step-by-step, easy to use navigation kept me on track as I worked on my capstone.”

“The Doctoral Degree Coach has been incredibly useful to me as I have progressed through my dissertation. Even with clear documentation, navigating the capstone process itself can be a daunting task. The Degree Coach makes it easier by providing information specific to completing each step along the way – with links to the resources and other tools you need to be successful. Paired with a great capstone committee, the Degree Coach makes me feel like I have a qualified guide helping me navigate this challenging final segment of my academic journey.”
Extended coach launching Q4 2020/Q1 2021

Move toward a more seamless experience, integrated with the doctoral student experience

Develop a long-term roadmap for the tool

Continuous product refinement and improvement
QUESTIONS?

Deshpande, A. (2016). A Qualitative Examination of Challenges Influencing Doctoral Students in an Online Doctoral Program. *International Education Studies, 9*(6), 139-149.


Palermo-Kielb, K., & Fraenza, C. (2017). Bridging the social, academic, and cultural divide for international students: Using peer-to-peer support strategies online. In K. L. Milheim (Ed.), *Cultivating diverse online classrooms through effective instructional design* (pp. 87-115). Hershey, PA: IGI Global

Evaluate Sessions and Win!

- Navigate to specific session to evaluate
- Select “Evaluate Session” on session details screen
- Complete session evaluation*

*Each session evaluation completed (limited to one per session) = one contest entry

**Five (5) $25 gift cards** will be awarded

Must submit evals using the OLC conference website, beta platform mobile app