

mat, and the following morning the work begins in earnest. The first day of the workshop is divided into twelve half-hour sessions in which each project is presented for discussion—but not by its own author. Instead, a student from a different discipline, informed the night before which project he or she will present, is asked to offer a sympathetic but critical five-minute review of the project's major concerns and to raise three or four questions to initiate discussion. During these initial half-hour discussions, the project's author is not allowed to speak. He or she must simply listen to how other students with closely related interests understand and interpret the project. This structure encourages students to refrain from immediately defending their work and helps them hear new perspectives and ideas with an open mind. During these initial discussions, faculty are encouraged to remain relatively quiet so that students can find their voice and begin to cohere as a community of peers and future colleagues.

On the second day, the workshop begins with twelve twenty-minute sessions. Each author has five to ten minutes to respond to the comments, issues, and critiques raised the previous day and to begin articulating the linkages to other projects that may have begun to emerge. These presentations help prepare students for their future as scholars when they may be called upon to defend their work in a noncombative and articulate manner. In addition, they become deeply engaged in each other's projects. Afterward, with input from faculty members, students identify common themes and key issues. These become the basis of that afternoon's and the next morning's thematic discussions of emergent issues, problems, and conceptualizations that cut across the twelve projects. The workshop ends with lunch the third day after a forty-minute session is devoted to a brief evaluation of the workshop itself, to requesting written evaluations, and to planning various means of continuing to meet and extend the discussions back on campus.

Invariably, the workshops have been exhilarating and productive for student participants and for the broader campus community. Students have written letters about the workshops' successes. One participant wrote, "The workshop was absolutely invaluable in helping to define the parameters of a do-able study. Feedback on my proposal pinpointed the areas that need further attention, both in terms of methodology and basic premise." Another said, "The workshop exceeded my expectations by being not only terrifically valuable in terms of my individual work but also by creating the personal fabric of an ongoing interdisciplinary community." Students reported that in addition to providing concrete assistance with the dissertation itself and engendering an interdisciplinary community, the workshop's interdisciplinary aspect clarified their commitments to their own disciplines and helped them articulate for themselves and for others the roots of their own intellectual assumptions and disciplinary identities. They forgot their fears of having chosen an unsubstantial, insignificant, or unoriginal topic.

Because hundreds of graduate students could benefit from the dissertation workshops or similar gatherings, and because we recognize that, alone,

we can serve only a small fraction of the campus's graduate students, we are gratified that the dissertation workshops' success extends beyond just the individual students who participate. The pedagogy of the dissertation workshop is beginning to seep into seminars on campus as some of the faculty involved in the dissertation workshops have people present each other's work in their own classes. In addition, faculty members are beginning to organize dissertation workshops in their own departments or areas of interest in order to build a broader interdisciplinary community and to foster campuswide intellectual networks. Finally, the Graduate Division, International and Area Studies (IAS), and the University Library staff have collaborated to devise ways of having doctoral students identify topics and organize the actual workshops.

Dissertations-in-Progress Abstract. UC Berkeley has established a new database called "Abstracts of UC Berkeley Dissertations-in-Progress" (ADP) on a university library Web page that students can easily search. The university library technical staff designed and maintains the database, and the Graduate Division is responsible for collecting and entering the abstracts. In addition to the 250-to-300-word accounts of the dissertation (which the student can revise at any time), the abstracts also include information on how to contact the author. To encourage students to put abstracts in the database and to work with other students, the library has designated a set of seminar rooms in which groups of doctoral students can meet regularly. As further incentives, the Graduate Division is offering "coffee and donuts" funding to make the meetings more conducive to collegiality, and IAS has offered to provide both general advice on meeting formats and to explore with interested groups the possibilities of organizing and funding a Three-Day Topical Interdisciplinary Dissertation Workshop.

Practical Strategies for Writing a Dissertation. To address students' problems with the practical aspects of producing a substantial, significant, and original dissertation written in an "organic, clear, and not unliterary" way, as Hale put it in 1902, the Graduate Division collaborated with an outside writing consultant. Dr. Dorothy Duff Brown, a UC Berkeley Ph.D., helped the Graduate Division develop the popular workshops on dissertation writing entitled "Practical Strategies for Writing a Dissertation." From individual interviews with students in the humanities and social sciences who took a long time to complete their dissertations and from our monthly focus group meetings with current students in those disciplines, we identified the practical considerations behind students' concerns about writing the dissertation: Where and how do we begin? What are some useful tips for planning and outlining? How do we make the transition from data collection, literature review, and field research to writing? Are there some basic time management skills for scholars? When should one show sections of the dissertation to one's adviser? How can one assist the adviser in giving practical comments? How does one sustain motivation and complete the dissertation?

In response to these questions, the Graduate Division offered the first "Practical Strategies" workshop in 1990. During the next year and a half, we

continued to conduct focus groups after each workshop. Based on participants' reflections and comments, we refined the workshops until they achieved their current format.

Exactly as their title suggests, the dissertation workshops focus on the pragmatic aspects of writing the dissertation. Building on what we knew to be the major problems for students, we structured the workshops around coping with three basic areas: materials, time, and people. These workshops have proven successful in helping students organize their research and write the dissertation. The next few pages will describe them in greater length.

Materials. Producing a dissertation involves not only writing down ideas but also assembling a concrete, physical manuscript. Consequently, the workshop emphasizes utilizing the materials necessary to organize and generate a dissertation. To help writers avoid the pitfalls of abstract planning and to assist them in realizing the finished product, the workshop suggests that students work with concrete tools. Dissertation writers are advised to have a loose-leaf binder that represents the dissertation. Dividers should indicate all its sections and chapters and an appropriate number of blank pages should stand for each section or chapter. As a page of the dissertation is produced, it is inserted into the binder and the blank representational page is removed.

Planning and Outlining. Students are advised to generate a table of contents rather than an outline as the primary organizing tool for the dissertation. By developing a table of contents, the writer can see the whole as well as the parts. In addition, whereas an outline sends a subliminal message that the work is open-ended, can be changed, added to, or fixed, the table of contents stands as an index to a completed work, relating parts to a whole and implying a certain soundness. This, in turn, creates a sense of coherence in the writer's mind. Seeing a table of contents also prompts faculty to suggest changes within the defined structure, while respecting the integrity of the work presented.

One creative way to generate a table of contents is to draw a cognitive map. This map allows ideas to develop organically as a reflection of what the writer already knows about his or her topic. This intuitive, visual brainstorming, easily accomplished on a large sheet of paper, shows the relationships between thoughts or groups of ideas and often reveals the ideas' relative weight or importance. New connections between ideas emerge in the mapping process; sequences, parallels, subordinations, and complementarities all come to light. Maps are fast and easy to make. They are also fun, because they reflect the organic processes of the writer's mind and because it is not stressful to work on them. In addition, the map aids and permits creativity. Finally, the map is easily translated back into linear form, in this case, a table of contents.

Organizing Materials. Once writers have conceptualized the body of the dissertation, they should organize reference materials and notes according to their table of contents. Students are encouraged to think carefully about their filing system. One possible method is to organize dissertation notes in a simple cardboard file holder and a set of file folders with tabs. Each file folder is to be labeled provisionally, in pencil, according to the sections of the completed

dissertation: abstract, prefatory material, table of contents, chapters, list of tables, illustrations, appendixes, and so forth. In addition, the file box will contain a folder for memos to the dissertation adviser and committee members. All notes that are germane to the text should go in the appropriate folder. This process requires that the writer make an initial decision about chapter content. Although the advice on materials may seem trivial, we found that students are grateful for the discussion of these practical organizational strategies that faculty rarely address.

Transition to Writing. Students can easily compile this assortment of materials and notes in the dissertation binder with removable tape. They can tape notes in any form to the pages in the loose-leaf notebook and assemble them in the shape of the manuscript. The process of pasting together a section of text gives the writer the freedom to make early, provisional decisions. After writing a chapter, the student can place the whole chapter in the binder. These physical decisions force the writer to avoid abstractions. With this system, it is also easier to make and keep track of changes in the course of composing. This process fosters a playfulness that stimulates and enhances creativity and that can break the most stultifying writer's block.

Time. The second segment of the workshop addresses the matter of time management. Unlike students in the sciences, who organize their research according to the schedule of the lab and whose dissertation-writing time is much shorter, students in the humanities and social sciences work alone and must learn to structure their own time. First, the workshop encourages students to establish a realistic daily work schedule and to try to be faithful to it. A good strategy for accomplishing this is to set the daily hour at which work on the dissertation will cease and to stop at that time. Achieving a firm control over the stopping time helps establish much better control over the starting time, because one is more likely to begin working early in order to accomplish what must be done for the day.

Second, the workshop stresses the importance of setting priorities for each work session. For example, a ten-minute planning session before the daily cut-off time may be sufficient for setting the next session's priorities and for producing momentum for the next day's work.

Third, it is important to recognize that having unlimited time does not guarantee greater productivity. Often, writers constrained by a more structured schedule, even limited work hours, are more productive and more likely to stay on track with the dissertation project than those with unlimited time at their disposal. Consequently, setting a target number of hours per week to work on the dissertation is recommended. The workshop emphasizes repeatedly that mental refreshment is essential to successful completion. A regular day off is necessary, regardless of whether the writer maintained the weekly schedule or not.

People. The third part of the workshop addresses the often delicate interaction with the dissertation adviser and committee members. To ensure that students receive good feedback on their dissertation, the workshop encour-

ages students to think of themselves as the project manager who must fruitfully manage relationships with committee members. One of the keys to this task is to use the memo effectually. With each submission of material to the adviser or committee members, the student should accompany the dissertation text with a memo stating exactly what is being submitted and where this piece fits into the dissertation in terms of the table of contents. Such a memo should also make comments about the major points or arguments presented in the writing and should detail what feedback is being requested. Finally, the memo should establish how the student will get back in touch with the faculty. Focusing on this aspect of the adviser-advisee relationship proves productive, because students tend to forget about the mundane aspects of this interaction or depend completely on the adviser's initiative in commenting on and returning material.

Outcomes. The five-hour "Practical Strategies for Writing a Dissertation" workshops continue to be one of the most popular programs that the Graduate Division offers in support of doctoral students. Each fall and spring semester, all doctoral students in humanities and social science departments who were advanced to candidacy the previous semester receive an invitational flyer informing them about the workshop and a return postcard to facilitate enrollment. Workshops are always full and there is inevitably a waiting list.

Another outcome of the workshop is that participants recognize that others have problems with the day-to-day mechanics of dissertation writing. They come to see that they do not have an intellectual deficiency that renders them unable to accomplish the task. These realizations help relieve guilt and propel participants toward the premise of the workshop—that there is a practical approach to dissertation writing that, in spite of students' anxieties and insecurities about the nature of the dissertation-writing process, will make the project doable.

Students often continue meeting with each other in pairs or in groups, applying the information and the models they have learned to the writing process. By repeatedly delivering sound information, the institution implicitly gives all doctoral students in the humanities and social sciences the message that using practical strategies can help them complete the dissertation and the doctoral degree.

Academic Publishing Workshop. Besides being a demonstration of originality and a test of the doctoral candidate's ability to undertake scholarly research, the dissertation is also a product. Only when it is published does this product become accessible to an audience other than the dissertation committee. The implicit (or explicit) expectation that a dissertation, or at least portions of it, should be published often makes the dissertation writer anxious, inhibits the writing in anticipation of publishing (particularly in fields in which the dissertation is regarded as the magnum opus), and may slow progress toward degree completion.

To ease students' anxieties about publishing and to clarify the process of academic publishing, the Graduate Division developed and presented

"Academic Publishing for Graduate Students in the Humanities and Social Sciences." This workshop was designed to address faculty's and departments' approaches and attitudes toward publishing and to provide students with information about publishing dissertations as journal articles or books through an academic press.

This two-hour workshop had a panel composed of faculty members in the humanities and social sciences, editors at the Stanford University Press and the University of California Press, student editors of campus publications, and two recent Berkeley Ph.D. recipients who had book contracts. These panel members answered the most commonly asked questions about publishing journal articles and the dissertation and presented their viewpoints and suggestions on whether, when, and how to publish.

In order to make this information available to all students, the Graduate Division produced *Academic Publishing: A Guide for UC Berkeley Graduate Students in the Humanities and Social Sciences*, which draws on the information presented in the publishing workshop. The first section of the guide discusses the merits, drawbacks, and process of publishing journal articles as a graduate student. The second section addresses what is involved in turning the dissertation into a book, considers the likelihood and process of publishing the dissertation as a book and the publishers' perspective on dissertation publishing, and examines a variety of publishing options. The final section includes recommended references, sample letters of inquiry to the University of California Press, a compilation of student-run journals at UC Berkeley and submission information, and a list of questions a student author might ask a prospective publisher.

Both the workshop and the resulting publication are intended to guide students in deciding what and when to publish and thereby to help them complete the dissertation in a timely manner. In other words, the workshop and publication should assist students in becoming successful professionals in the discipline.

Conclusion

Because the Graduate Division at UC Berkeley cares about its graduate students and takes its role as an educational unit seriously, it is committed to supporting all students at every phase of the degree program. Because our research demonstrated that humanities and social science students encounter specific field-specific obstacles to successful completion, especially during the critical dissertation-writing stage, the Graduate Division has implemented programs designed to address the particular needs of humanities and social science students as they write dissertations. By advising departments to allocate student's financial support, providing one-year dissertation fellowships, organizing and leading interdisciplinary dissertation workshops, presenting practical strategies for dissertation writing, and creating resources for academic publishing, the institution has endeavored to expedite the dissertation-writing process.

An analysis of data on doctoral students' progress indicates that our efforts have been successful. Comparing doctoral completion rates over time, we

found that, overall, the doctoral completion rate increased by 11 percent (see Table 7.2). This percentage is consistent with the limited comparable national data on retention (Bowen and Rudenstine, 1992; Miselis, McManus, and Kraus, 1991; National Research Council, 1996).

Using a somewhat different time frame in 1997 than in the 1991 Nerad study, one sees that of the cohort entering between 1975 and 1977, 49 percent completed a doctoral degree. Of those who entered from 1978 through 1980, 55 percent received a doctoral degree. Of the cohort who entered between 1981 and 1983, 60 percent completed a doctoral degree.

Comparing the group that entered between 1975 and 1977 with those who entered between 1981 and 1983 yielded the following results. In the arts, the completion rate increased from 37 percent to 44 percent. Likewise, the doctoral completion rates increased in languages and literatures from 27 percent to 43 percent. In the social sciences, the rate went from 43 percent to 52 percent. We like to think that the improved doctoral completion rates for the later entering cohorts in the humanities and social sciences are, to some degree, a result of the Graduate Division's efforts to assist students during the critical dissertation-writing phase of the doctoral program.

In the process, we hope that we have also helped reinvigorate intellectual life and interaction among students and helped create cross-disciplinary intellectual communities. We see evidence that in providing information and model programs, the institution has acted as a catalyst. Students, faculty, and departments are adopting and modifying these programs to fit their specific needs.

Table 7.2. Completion Rates of Doctoral Students at UC Berkeley

Field	1975-1977 (after 11 years)		1978-1980 (after 11 years)		1981-1983 (after 11 years)	
	N	(percent)	N	(percent)	N	(percent)
Arts	82	(37)	74	(36)	91	(44)
Biological sciences	312	(68)	333	(70)	334	(73)
Engineering	679	(53)	727	(63)	746	(65)
Languages and literatures	427	(27)	328	(35)	350	(43)
Natural resources	186	(58)	185	(65)	172	(63)
Physical sciences	770	(63)	754	(67)	741	(73)
Professional schools*	637	(40)	650	(39)	467	(48)
Natural social sciences	759	(43)	697	(49)	652	(52)
Total students	3,852	(49)	3,748	(55)	3,553	(60)

Note: N = number of entering students.

Note: Completion rates were calculated eleven years after students enrolled in the graduate school at Berkeley; that means for 1986, 1987, and 1988, respectively.

Note: This table uses a different mode of calculating attrition and somewhat different definitions than the 1991 study, as shown in Table 7.1.

* Includes architecture, business administration, city and regional planning, education, librarianship, public health, public policy, and social welfare.

Source: Graduate Division, UC Berkeley, "les7583," Jan. 21, 1997.