

## **SUGGESTED BEST PRACTICES: Starting, Writing, and Finishing the Dissertation**

### **Recommendations for Students:**

1. Set tangible goals for each semester, and write them down. Send them to your advisor.
2. Make an audio recording of the “Proposal Defense,” and summarize the conversation in a text document. Keep referring back to this document, and send it to your committee members (for their information).
3. Join an informal “writing group” with other ABD students.
4. Establish a routine. Find a time and place to work on your dissertation every day. Concoct some way of measuring your progress.
5. Present your ongoing dissertation research in training seminars or as part of the departmental colloquium series. Be sure to invite your committee members to these events!
6. Schedule a meeting between the proposal defense and the final defense with your committee (during the summer, after one year?). Present your preliminary findings and update the group on your progress. Ask them to give you their feedback at this juncture.

### **Recommendations for Dissertation Advisors:**

1. Be clear about what you want your students to accomplish for an “S” (vs. a “U”) each semester. Put it in writing, and send it to your students.
2. Encourage your students to give you regular updates on their progress.
3. Provide your students with examples of what you deem to be exemplary dissertation proposals and/or finished dissertations.
4. Encourage your ABD students to help and support each other with their dissertation projects.

5. If you have multiple advisees, consider holding regular group meetings, where students report on their progress, and perhaps ask one student each session to present a “problem” that they are struggling with to the group.