

Research Methodology Portfolio
Loyola University Chicago

All students pursuing the Ph.D. in Research Methodology will complete a Research Methodology Portfolio as the requirement for advanced candidacy. The portfolio is an opportunity to demonstrate mastery of coursework in preparation for completing their dissertation proposal.

The portfolio contains three items: a) a report on a research consulting experience, b) a research paper demonstrating the candidate's understanding of all phases in the research process and the ability to analyze and interpret data from a research study, and c) a literature review of an issue in the candidate's minor area of study. The following describes each element of the portfolio.

Research consulting experience

During the candidate's course of study, she or he is expected to participate in the conduct of a formal research study, and/or to provide appropriate methodology- or evaluation-related consulting assistance. This experience should take place over the course of at least one semester. This experience could include actively participating on a research team; providing intensive consulting to faculty, graduate students, and/or community organizations; or working as a research assistant. In consultation with her or his advisor, consulting experiences through employment opportunities may also be appropriate for fulfilling this portion of the portfolio. The research consulting experience will culminate in a written report that will be approved by the student's major advisor.

Major research paper

The candidate is expected to submit a research paper that consists of the analysis of an appropriate data set that demonstrates the understanding and mastery of specific skills such as research methodology, statistical analysis, program evaluation or measurement theory. The major qualifying research paper should be in the form that is ready for publication. The candidate is strongly encouraged to present the research paper at a conference, and possibly submit it for publication. She or he may expand on projects used in a course with permission from the candidate's major advisor. Approval from the candidate's advisor before starting the major research paper is required.

Literature review

A literature review on the possible topic of a candidate's dissertation serves the third component of the portfolio. The idea of this portion of the project is to produce a well-focused and organized review of an issue that may be further explored in the candidate's dissertation. The candidate should identify a dissertation chair and work closely with her or him to conduct a thorough review of the topic of interest.

The candidate should consult with her or his advisor on the process and timing of working on the portfolio. The draft of the portfolio should first be approved by the candidate's advisor. The advisor will then submit the three components to the program chair to be approved by another faculty member in the program through the Graduate School's system.