

## Guidelines for Dissertation Prospectus Michigan Program in Survey and Data Science (MPSDS)

The prospectus is a doctoral candidate's proposal or plan for dissertation research and writing. In unison with writing a prospectus, a student must assemble a dissertation committee following [Rackham Graduate School Guidelines](#) and work with the designated MPSDS administrative contact to submit the required committee paperwork.

The student is expected to work closely with the dissertation committee chair and other committee members to formulate a dissertation topic and to write the prospectus. The student provides the dissertation committee with a written prospectus and makes an oral presentation of the proposed research.

The dissertation should consist of material suitable for one or more journal articles or chapters, though it will generally be more detailed; most dissertations will report an experiment or a series of experiments, non-experimental studies including new statistical methodology or innovative modeling, secondary analyses, or simulations.

Requirements for prospectus: A dissertation prospectus is a proposal for research that has not yet been completed. The prospectus should contain: (1) an abstract of the specific aims of the investigation; (2) the background and significance of the proposed research, including the conceptual framework; (3) the research design and methods of procedure, including measurement techniques to be used, if applicable; (4) analysis strategies to be followed; (5) a tentative timetable.

Length of prospectus: Ideal length of prospectus should be 10-15 pages, double spaced. Exact length can be agreed upon with the committee chair.

Oral Presentation: Students are responsible for arranging a meeting with their dissertation committee to present their prospectus. The committee members will determine the format of this meeting.

Completion of requirement: Once the dissertation committee has met and approved the prospectus (with any requested edits), the student should consider that the agreed upon document represents the necessary and sufficient elements of an acceptable prospectus. The final step of the prospectus process is the dissertation chair communicating approval to the designated MPSDS Student Administrative Manager.

Deadline: Students are required to meet this milestone before the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of their doctoral studies (end of winter term).