

## Guidance for Writing Chapter 5 - Dissertation and Thesis

In preparing the final chapter of a dissertation and thesis, it is important to reflect on what your study means. Establish a clear purpose for the chapter as you organize the interpretation, discussion, and conclusions of the study. This is your opportunity to articulate your contributions to original scholarship, and to express what you think you found that is important and why.

Here are a few guidelines (Melville, 2009):

1. Before writing, assess the significance of the findings. List your findings with the strongest ones first. If you are using a theoretical framework or set of principles, organize what you found according to these concepts.
2. If you had to present your findings to the authors you cited throughout the literature review, why should they pay attention to what you discovered? How do your findings add to, modify, or challenge existing research on your topic?
3. Clearly state your claims, be sure each claim is based on specific findings, and explain the reason why the claims are made.
4. A second section in the discussion chapter addresses and explores implications for practice. For the sake of clarity, create separate sections for implications that involve research, professional practice, or policy.
5. When preparing the conclusion section, imagine giving a brief talk to your colleagues. Based on your findings, what are three meaningful conclusions you can share with them?

### References

- Blum, K. (2006). Teaching students how to write a chapter four and five of a dissertation. [unpublished paper].
- Melville, K. (2009). Dissertation guidelines: About your dissertation: suggestions and advice. [unpublished paper]. Human Organization and Development Program, Fielding Graduate University.
- Roberts, C. M. (2010). The dissertation journey: A practical and comprehensive guide to planning, writing, and defending your dissertation (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (pp. 177-182)
- Sacred Heart University Library (n.d.). Organizing academic research papers: 8. The discussion. Retrieved from <https://library.sacredheart.edu/c.php?g=29803&p=185933>