

In Search of a Distance Education, Doctoral Persistence Model

{ Amanda J. Rockinson-Szapkiw, LPC, EdD

With high attrition (50% to 70%) in online, doctoral programs, program administrators and faculty need to identify ways to foster persistence. While Tinto's student integration model and Bean and Metzner's student attrition model are foundational to understanding persistence in higher education, they have limited explanatory power for the persistence of online, doctoral candidates. Given the unique characteristics of online, doctoral candidates and doctoral programs, a synthesis of empirical and theoretical literature is needed and was used to create a composite model to better explain persistence among this population. This model will be discussed. Derived from the model, I will present course, program, and institutional level strategies for improving online, doctoral persistence.

Abstract

∞ Education

- ∞ B.S. in Elementary Education
- ∞ M.A. in Community Counseling
- ∞ EdD in Distance Education
- ∞ Licensed School and Professional Counselor

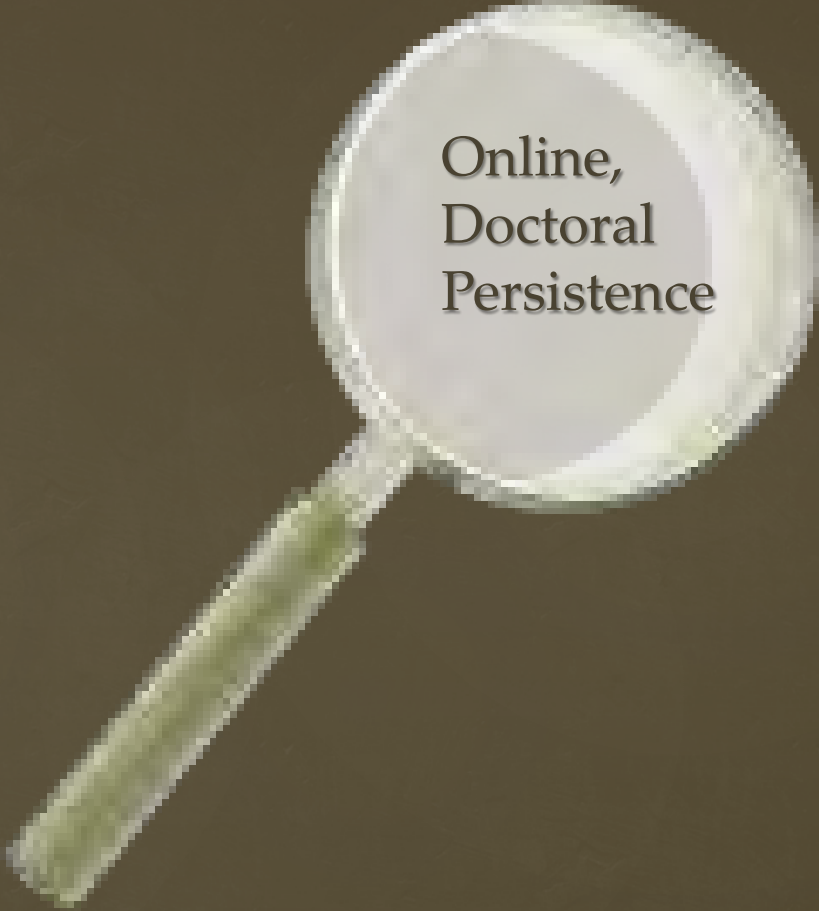
∞ Experience

- ∞ Over 5 years experience as a counselor
- ∞ Over 8 years experience in higher education
- ∞ Over 5 years experience in higher education administration for an EdD program

∞ Research

- ∞ Distance Education and Technology Integration
- ∞ Doctoral Persistence

About Me



Online,
Doctoral
Persistence

About the Presentation



Persistence...haven't
we been researching
that for decades?

About the Presentation



- ⌘ The current state of research:
 - ⌘ Residential, Undergraduate and Graduate Students
 - ⌘ Residential, Doctoral Students
 - ⌘ Online, Doctoral Student Research has been qualitative and antidotal

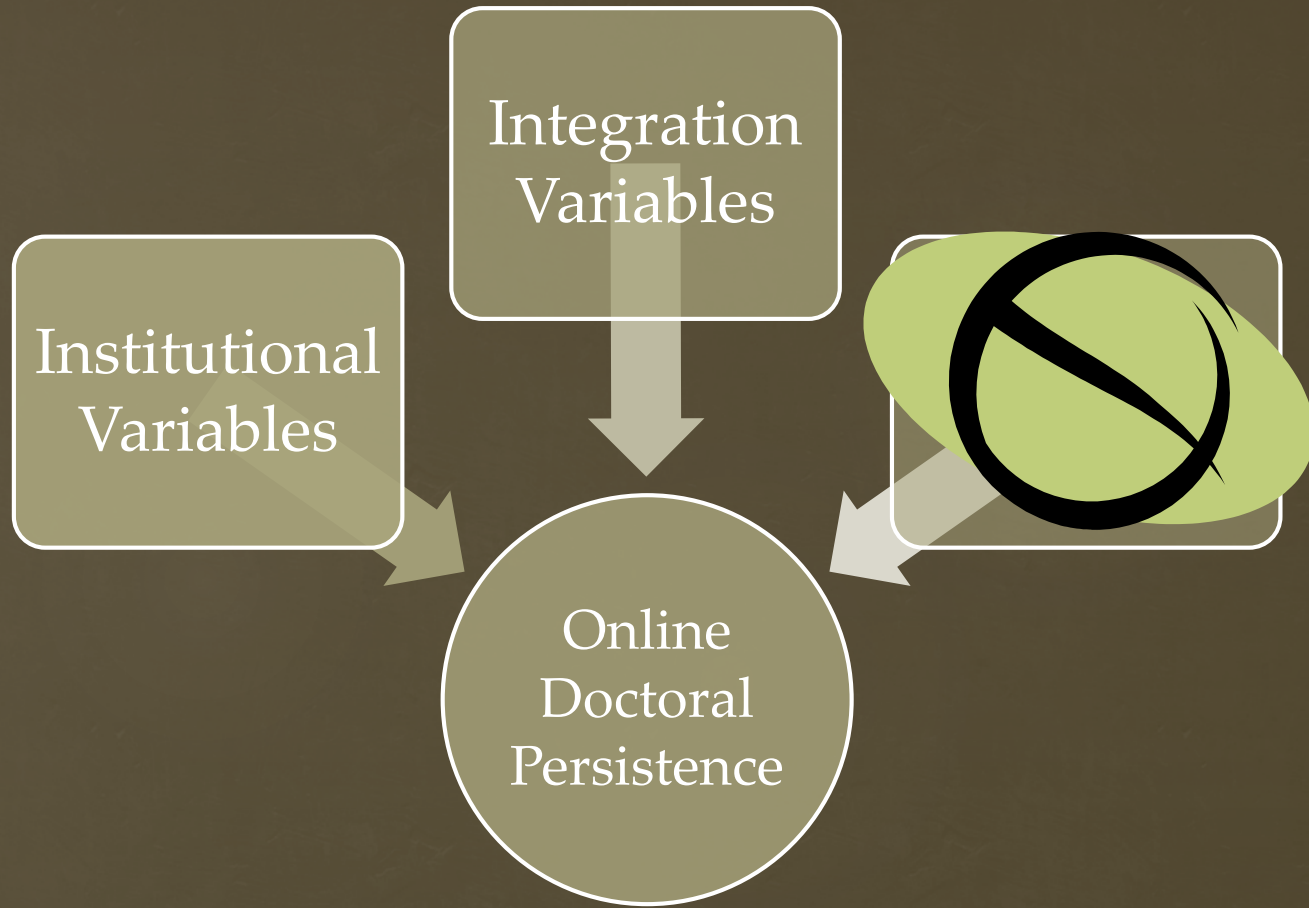
(Ivankova & Stick, 2007; Terrell 2005; Terrell, Snyder, & Dringus 2009; Wao & Onwuegbuzie 2011)

About the Presentation

⌘ A distance education, doctoral persistence model that guides program administrators and faculty actions needs to:

- ⌘ Synthesize the persistence models of Tinto (1975, 1987, 1993) and Bean and Metzner (1985)
- ⌘ Consider the unique characteristics of online students and programs
- ⌘ Consider the unique skills, knowledge and support needed for various doctoral program stages.

About the Presentation



About the Presentation – A Caveat

⌘ Why do doctoral students drop out? (Lovitts, 2001)

- ⌘ Over 50% of dropouts cited academic or institutional reasons
- ⌘ 20% of dropouts cited financial reasons
- ⌘ 20% of dropouts cited personal or environmental reasons
- ⌘ 10% of dropouts cited miscellaneous

Institutional factors exert more influence on doctoral persistence than student characteristics!

Persistence Models: Doctoral Education



- ⌘ Identify the Doctoral Persistence Problem
- ⌘ Discuss the Gap in the Literature and How the Literature Informed the Building of a Predictive Model for Online, Doctoral Persistence
- ⌘ Discuss a Predictive Model for Online, Doctoral Persistence that Synthesizes Empirical and Theoretical Literature and Its Predictive Validity
- ⌘ Identify Strategies for Increasing Online, Doctoral Persistence that Draws from the Presented Model

Objectives

The Persistence Problem

{ Identify the Doctoral Persistence
Problem

The doctoral program = “high risk” strategy



Brailsford, 2010, p. 15

The Persistence Problem



& 40% to 60% of doctoral students drop out

& Attrition rates for EdD programs are as high as 70%

(Bowen & Rudenstine 1992; National Center for Educational Statistics 2000; National Science Foundation [NSF] 2009; Nettles & Millett 2006; Sowell 2008; Terrell 2005; Terrell, Snyder, & Dringus 2009; Wao & Onwuegbuzie 2011)

The Persistence Problem



& Online doctoral programs report attrition rates **10% to 20%** higher than traditional programs.

(Rovai, 2002; Terrell 2005; Terrell, Snyder, & Dringus 2009)

The Persistence Problem

Part 1: The Entry Stage

Part 2: The Knowledge and Skill Development Stage

Part 3: The Consolidation Stage

★ *Part 4: The Research/Scholarship Stage*

Part 5: The Completion Stage

The largest degree of attrition in a doctoral program occurs during candidacy.

(Grover, 2007; National Science Foundation, 1998; Rockinson-Szapkiw, Spaulding, 2014; Tinto, 1993)

The Persistence Problem

- ⌘ In *The Research and Scholarship Stage*
 - ⌘ Transition from student to researcher.
 - ⌘ Transition “from being a consumer of knowledge....to creator...” (Gardner, 2008, p. 328)
 - ⌘ Required to demonstrate the ability to independently design, conduct, analyze, and present research.
 - ⌘ Writing a dissertation or action research project is difficult.

(Rockinson-Szapkiw & Spaulding, 2014, Introduction)

The Persistence Problem



⌘ The cost

⌘ Universities

- ⌘ Economic
- ⌘ Credibility
- ⌘ Federal Funding
- ⌘ Accreditation

⌘ Doctoral Candidate

- ⌘ Personal
- ⌘ Professional
- ⌘ Economic effects

(Bowen & Rudenstine 1992; National Center for Educational Statistics 2000; National Science Foundation [NSF] 2009 ; Nettles & Millett 2006; Sowell 2008; Terrell 2005; Terrell, Snyder, & Dringus 2009; Wao & Onwuegbuzie 2011)

The Persistence Problem

⌘ Program administrators and faculty need to:



- ⌘ Understand the factors that significantly influence online, doctoral persistence
- ⌘ To identify ways to foster doctoral persistence.

The Persistence Problem: The Need

⌘ **Doctoral Persistence** – “the continuance of a student’s progress toward the completion of a doctoral degree” despite the numerous challenges faced.



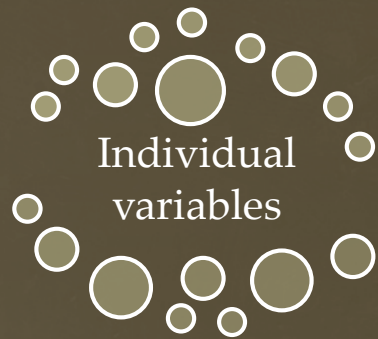
(Bair, 1999, p. 8)

The Persistence Problem: Definition

Persistence Models... or the Attrition Models & Other Research



{ Discuss the Gap in the Literature and How Literature Informed the Building of a Predictive Model for Online, Doctoral Persistence



- Family background
- Individual attributes
- Pre-college experiences



Institutional variables

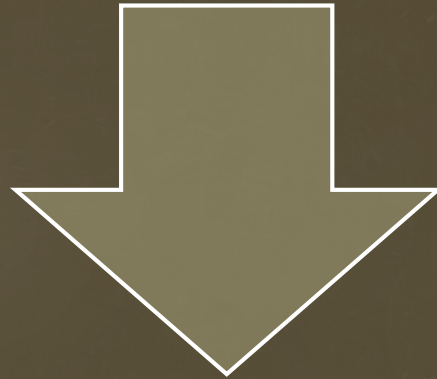
- Academic Integration (GPA; Intellectual Development/ Interaction with faculty)
- Social Integration (Peer interactions; participation in extracurricular activities)



Persistence Models: Tinto's (1975, 1993) Student Integration Model



Validates the need for universities to assume an active role in the academic and social integration progress (e.g. orientations).

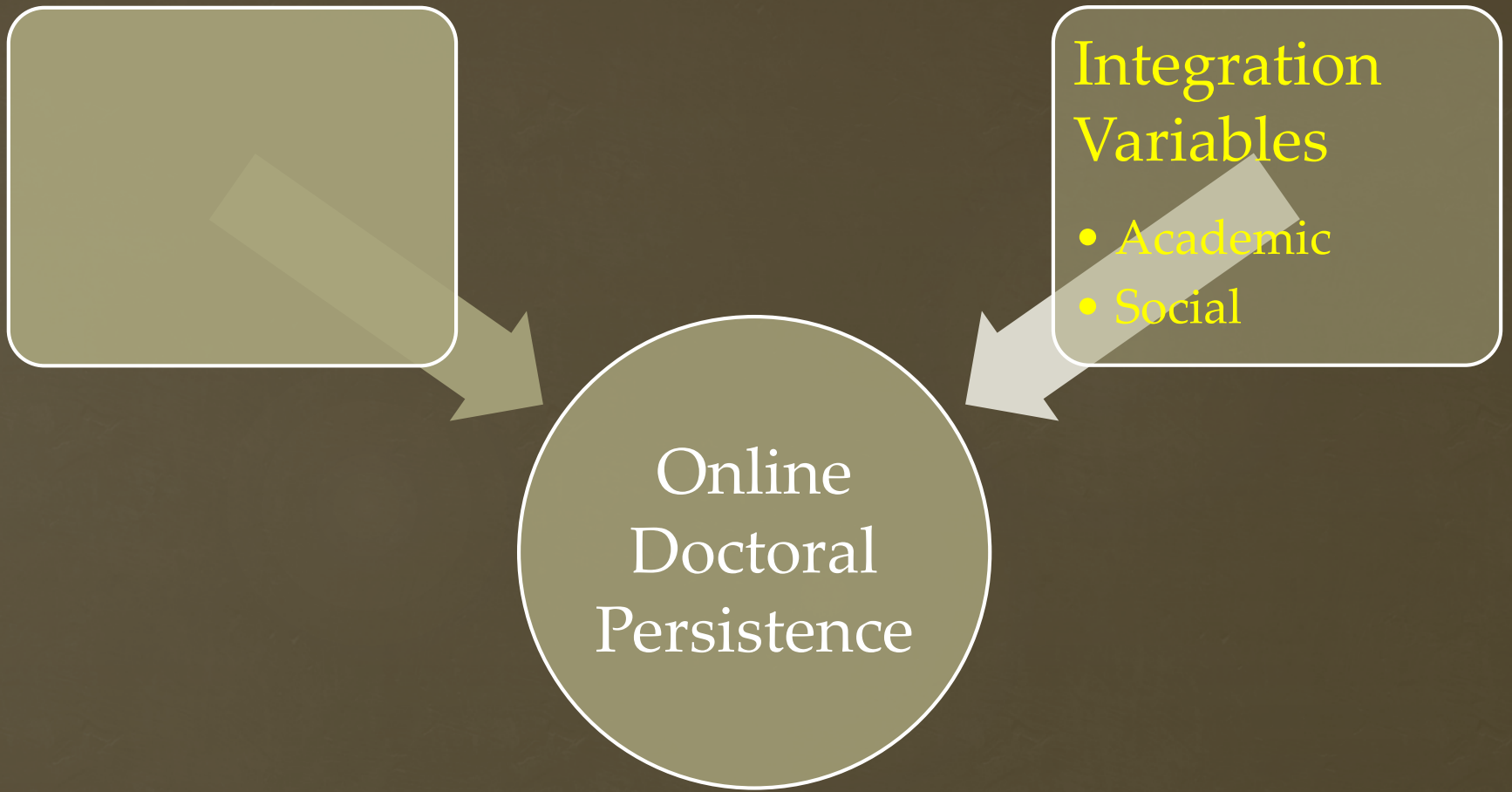


Academic and social integration into the university, as defined by Tinto, may lack relevancy. Did not consider environmental variables.

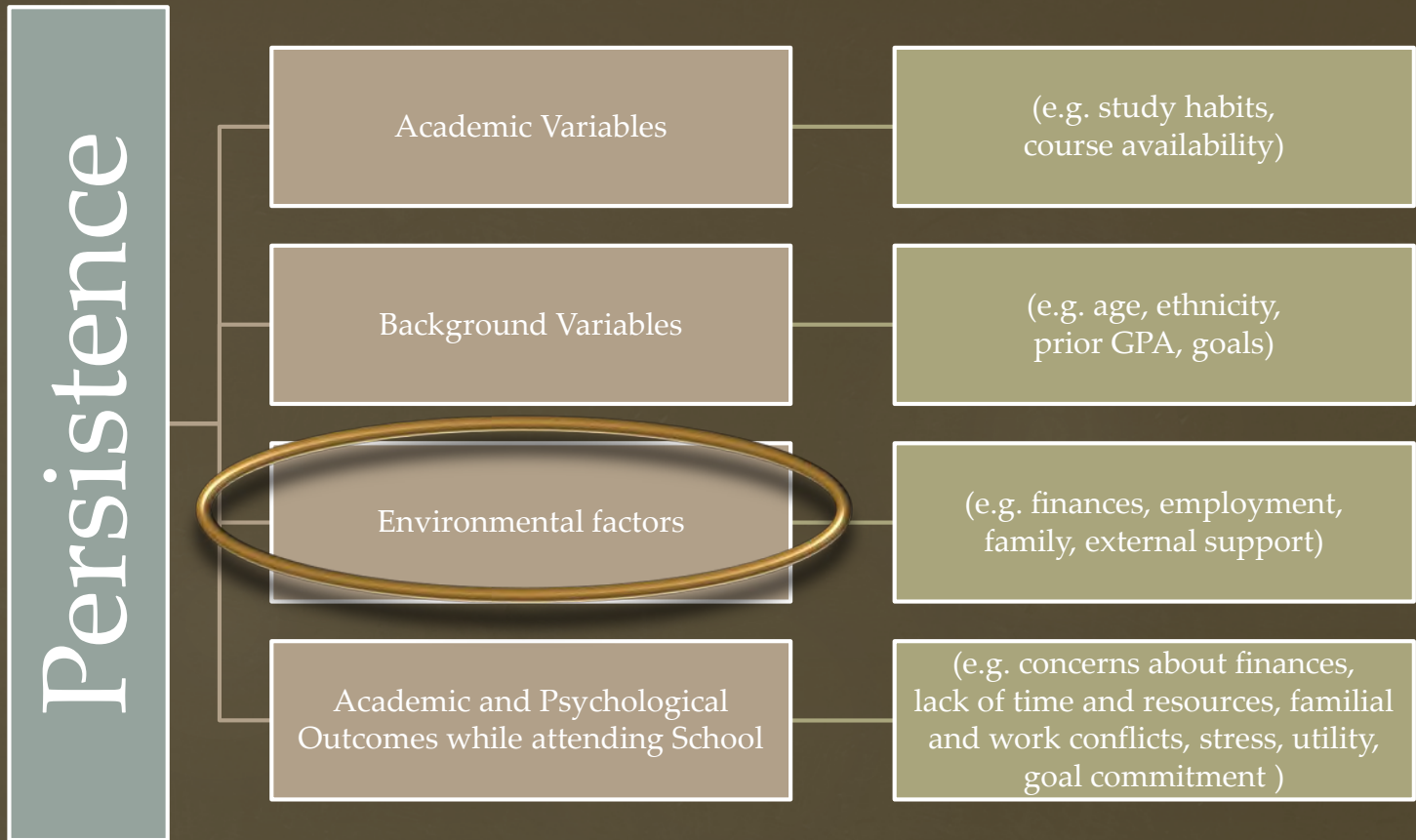
(Bean & Metzner, 1985; Tinto, 1975,1993; Wao, 2010; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011)

Tinto's (1975, 1993) Student Integration Model

Persistence Models



Online, Doctoral Persistence Model

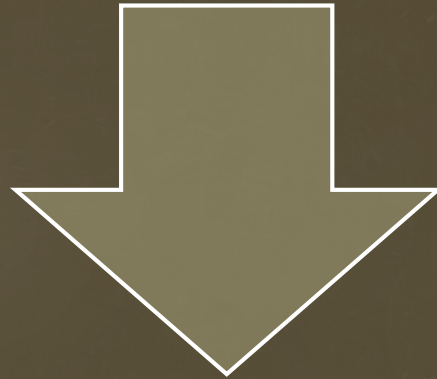


Bean and Metzner's (1985) Student Attrition Model for the Nontraditional Commuter Students

Persistence Models



Validates the need
to consider
environmental factors .



Designed with
on-campus students
in mind.

(Bean & Metzner, 1985;)

Bean and Metzner's (1985) Student Attrition Model for
the Nontraditional Commuter

Persistence Models

Institutional Variables

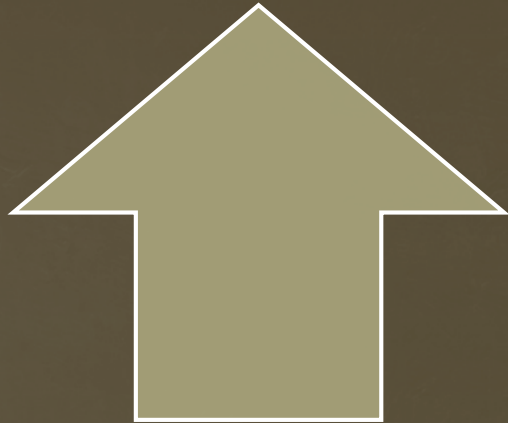
- Financial Aid
- Support Services

Integration Variables

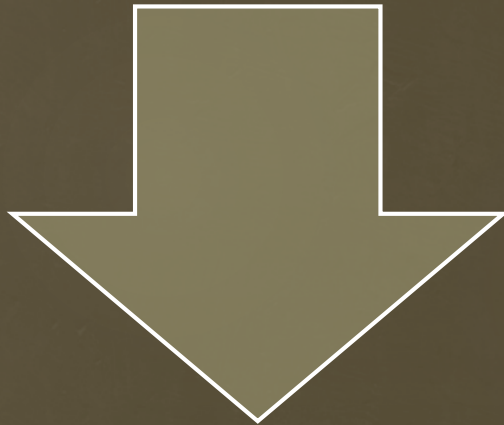
- Academic
- Social (Faculty & Peer)

Online
Doctoral
Persistence

Online, Doctoral Persistence Model



Validate the positive effects of social and academic integration (Tinto, 1975) and the influence of forces external forces (Bean & Metzner, 1985) on persistence



Do NOT consider:

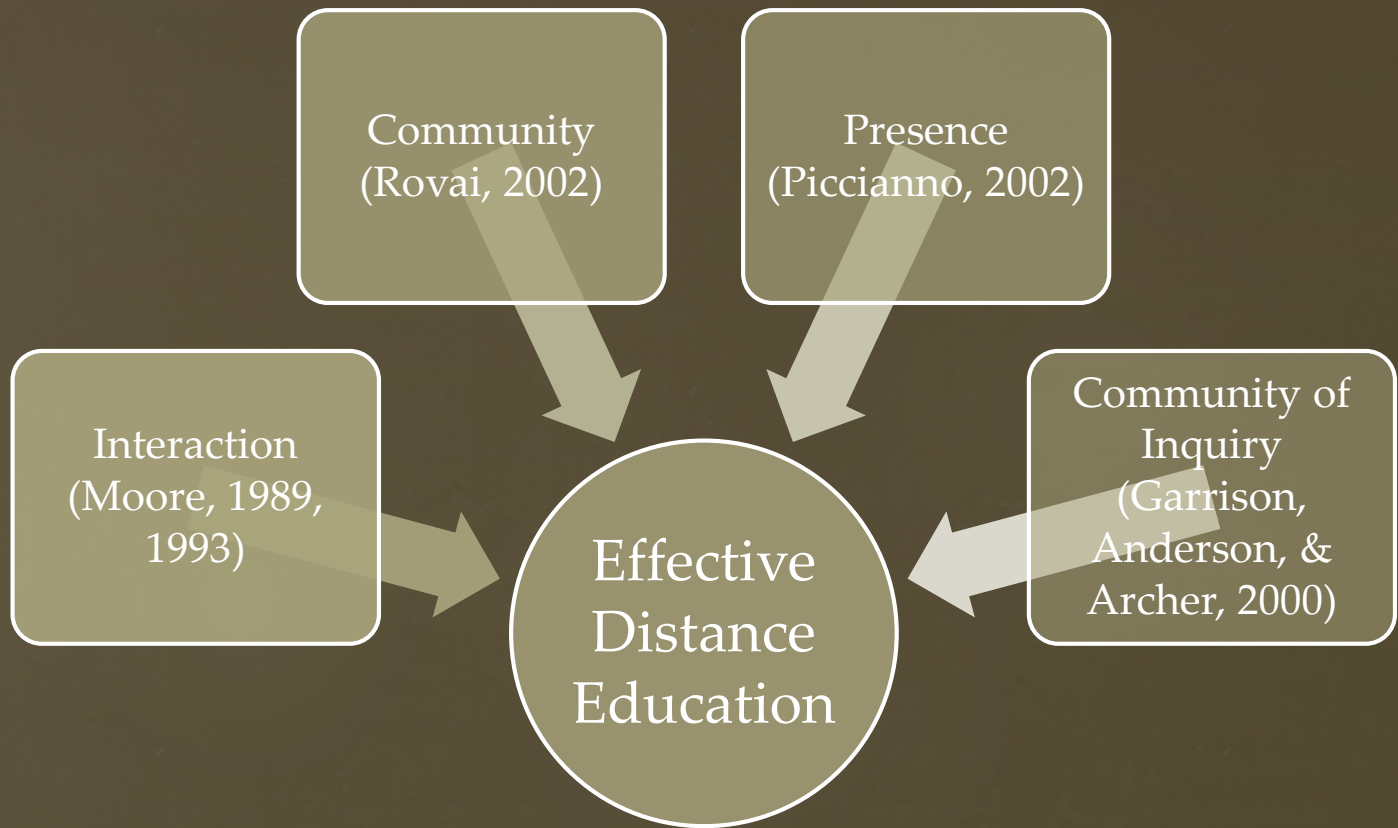
the unique characteristics of online students and programs

the unique skills, knowledge and support needed for various doctoral program stages.

(Bean & Metzner, 1985;;
Cabrera, Castaneda, Nora,
& Hengstler,1992;Earl-
Novell, 2006; Herzig, 2002;
Hoskins & Goldberg, 2005;
Ivankova & Stick, 2007)

Tinto (1975, 1993) & Bean and Metzner's (1985)

Persistence Models



Persistence Models: Distance Education

Sense of Community

“Social community, derived primarily from the work of McMillan and Chavis (1986) and McMillan (1996), represents the feelings of the community of students regarding their spirit, cohesion, trust, safety, trade, interdependence, and sense of belonging.”

“Learning community, on the other hand, consists of the feelings of learning community members regarding the degree to which they share group norms and values and the extent to which their educational goals and expectations are satisfied by group membership.”


Rovai, Whiting, Lucking, 2004, p. 269

Persistence Models: Distance Education

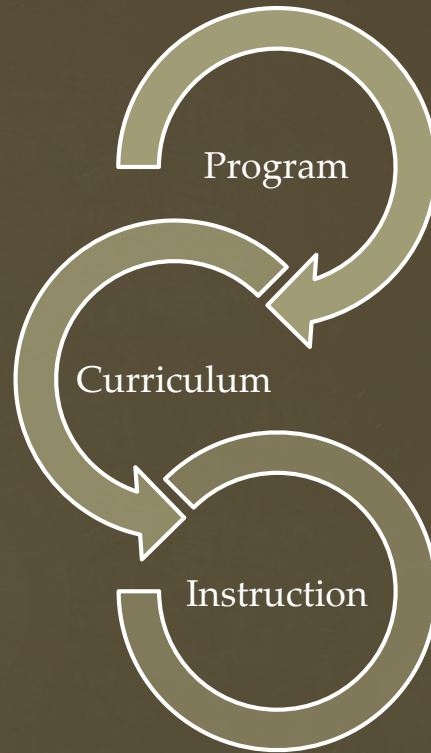


Online, Doctoral Persistence Model

Element	Definition	Indicators
Social Presence	Ability of learner to project self socially and emotionally, thereby being perceived as a real person in mediated communication	Open communication Group Cohesion Affective Expression
Cognitive Presence	Extent to which learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through reflection and discourse	Triggering event Exploration Integration Resolution
Teaching Presence	Design, facilitation, and direction in the course of cognitive and social processes to ensure an educationally meaningful experience.	Design and Organization Facilitation of discourse Direct Instruction



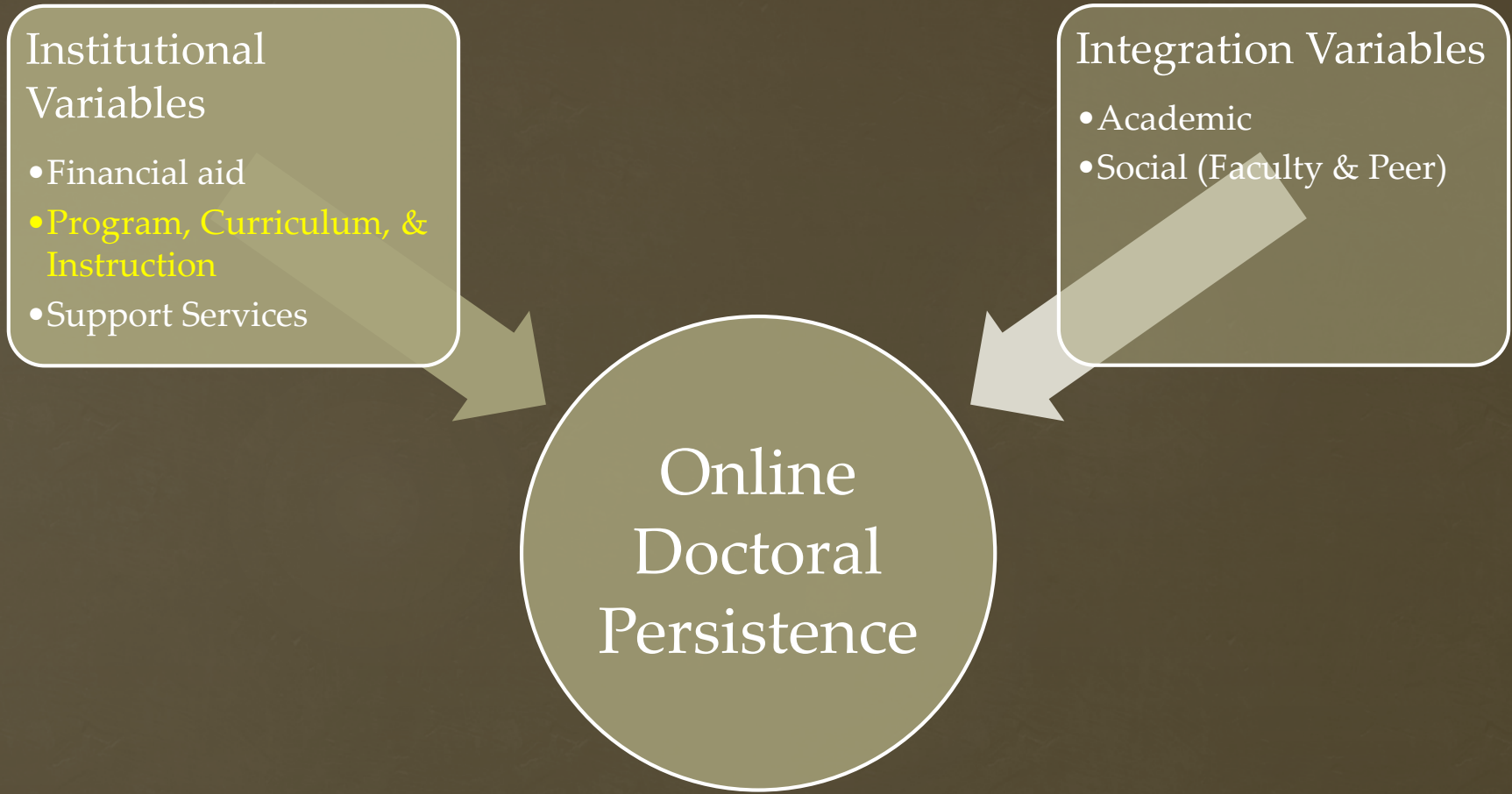
Institutional



- Connection between course-work and skills needed to execute the dissertation,
- Faculty guidance, facilitation, and instruction
- *Academic Match*- Correspondence between student's goals and expectations and program and curriculum focus, which is articulated clearly in program materials

de Valero, 2001; Golde & Dore, 2001; Hoskins & Goldberg, 2005; Jimenez, 2011; Spaulding & Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2012; Tenenbaum, Crosby, & Gliner, 2001

Persistence Models: Doctoral Education



Online, Doctoral Persistence Model

Satisfaction with doctoral curriculum and program

- Academic integration is fostered via community built in doctoral courses where shared knowledge and knowing occurs in a manner that prepares students to successfully develop as a scholar and develop skills to execute research.

Satisfaction with academic performance

- Academic integration refers to the “acquisition of knowledge and development of skills” (Tinto, 1997, p. 600), more precisely, the satisfaction with learning and academic performance, which is more relevant to graduate students and better measure of learning than grades.

Satisfaction with faculty help

- Academic integration is generally dependent on student relationships with faculty and advisors and their satisfaction with the faculty’s assistance through the program

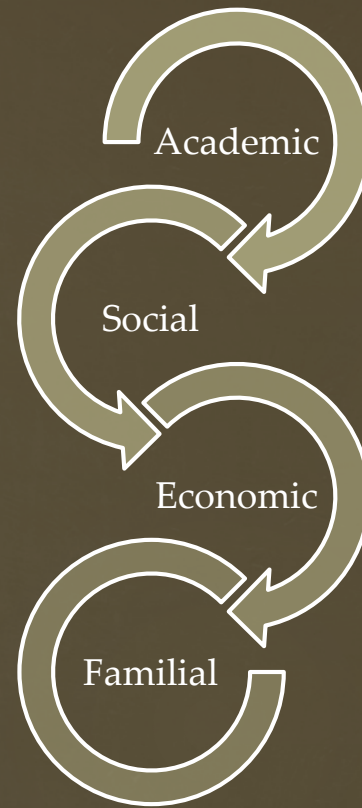
Persistence Models: Doctoral Education

Earl-Novell, 2006; Girves & Wemmerus, 1998; Rockinson-Szapkiw, Spaulding, Swezey, & Wicks, 2014; Rovai, 2004; Strayhorn, 2005; Tinto, 1997; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011



Online, Doctoral Persistence Model

Integration



Girves & Wemmerus, 1998; Rockinson-Szapkiw, Spaulding, Swezey, & Wicks, 2014; Strayhorn, 2005; Tinto, 1997; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011

Persistence Models: Doctoral Education

⌘ Economic integration

- ⌘ “degree to which student’s financial needs are met while pursuing the doctorate” (Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011, p. 117).
- ⌘ 3 questions related to financial strain, stress, and need were used to operationalize this concept

Earl-Novell, 2006; Girves & Wemmerus, 1998; Lovitts, 2001; Strayhorn, 2005; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011

Persistence Models: Doctoral Education

⌘ Familial integration

- ⌘ “the degree to which the candidate’s sense of connectedness with family members is met while pursuing the doctorate”
- ⌘ “this concept not only includes the maintaining of familial relationships and relatedness (a sense of belonging and care) but also includes the “fit” between the degree and family values” (Rockinson-Szapkiw, Spaulding, Swezey, & Wicks, 2014, p. 196).

Persistence Models: Doctoral Education

Institutional Variables

- Financial aid
- Program, Curriculum, & Instruction
- Support Services

Integration Variables

- Academic
- Social (Faculty & Peer)
- Economic
- Familial



Persistence Models

The Model & Study

{ Discuss a Predictive Model for Online,
Doctoral Persistence that Synthesizes
Empirical and Theoretical Literature and
Its Predictive Validity

- ⌘ A predictive, correlation research design
- ⌘ Hierarchical multiple regression (HMR)
- ⌘ To examine how the variance in the likelihood of online, doctoral persistence can be explained by the linear combination of institutional and integration variables.

Design & Analysis



- ⌘ 141 doctoral candidates
- ⌘ Enrolled in an online Doctor of Education program of 60 credit hours of courses with 9 of hours taken in residence
- ⌘ Located in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- ⌘ Completed an online survey while participating in an online prospectus development course between Spring 2014 and Fall 2014.

Participants & Setting

⌘ Ethnicity:

- ⌘ 110 (98%) Caucasian
- ⌘ 23 (16.3%) African American
- ⌘ 4 (2.1%) Asian
- ⌘ 3 (2.1%) Latino
- ⌘ 1 (.7%) was American Indian



⌘ Age:

- ⌘ from 20 to 69
- ⌘ majority reported their age range as
 - ⌘ 30-39 ($n=48$, 34%)
 - ⌘ or 40-49 ($n=51$, 32.6%).

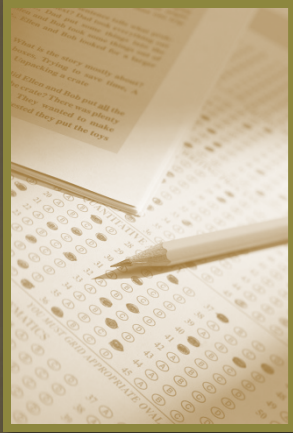
⌘ The majority of the participants were married ($n=117$, 83%)

⌘ Employment

- ⌘ worked full time ($n=126$, 89.4%).
- ⌘ Participants were employed in the field of education as K–12 teachers, K–12 administrators, school psychologists or social workers, counselors, or university staff, faculty, or administrators.

Participants: Demographics

⌘ Likelihood of online, doctoral persistence =
College Persistence Questionnaire (Davidson,
Beck, & Milligan, 2009)



- ⌘ Good construct validity: PCA
- ⌘ Test-retest reliability, $r = .67-.78$
- ⌘ Predictive validity: 66% accuracy in predicting students would enroll for a proceeding semester
- ⌘ Cronbach's coefficient alpha was .909 in present study

Instrumentation:
Criterion Variable

Institutional

Financial Support			
	Financial aid	Do you receive grants/scholarships that partially cover your tuition costs (grants, scholarships, tuition waiver, Federal Work/Study, graduate/teaching assistantships, etc.)? (Yes/No)	Bean & Metzner, 1985; McAlpine & Norton, 2006 (D)
	Full tuition remission	Do you receive grants/scholarships that fully cover your tuition costs (grants, scholarships, Federal Work/Study, graduate/teaching assistantships, etc.)? (Yes/No)	Bean & Metzner, 1985; McAlpine & Norton, 2006 (D)
Program, Curriculum, & Instruction			
	Curriculum for dissertation preparation	How well did the courses you took during your EdD program prepare you for successfully completing your dissertation? (very well, well, fair, poor, very poor)	Bean & Metzner, 1985; de Valero, 2001 (D); Jimenez, 2011(D); Tinto, 1975
	Clarity of expectations and organization of program materials	(R) How clear have the faculty and the online resources been in detailing what you need to do in order to be successful in dissertation? (very unclear, somewhat unclear, neutral, somewhat clear, very clear)	Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000 (DE); Song, Singleton; Hill, & Koh, 2004 (DE); Wasburn-Moses, 2008 (D)
	Facilitation	In general, when you receive evaluative feedback from dissertation instructors (e.g. research consultant, committee) how useful has it been in determining how to improve? (very often, somewhat often, sometimes, rarely, very rarely)	Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000 (DE); Wasburn-Moses, 2008 (D)
	Direct Instruction	In general, rate the quality of instruction you have received about your dissertation? (very quality, quality, neutral, poor quality, very poor quality)	Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000 (DE); Wasburn-Moses, 2008 (D)
Support Services	Satisfaction with support services	How satisfied are you with the support services offered (e.g. library, advising) while pursuing your EdD.?, (5-point Likert type scale from very satisfied to very dissatisfied)	Bean & Metzner, 1985; Braxton, Milem, & Sullivan, 1998; Tinto, 1975

Integration Variables

<p>Academic Integration (Scores range from 5 to 25; Cronbach's alpha=.819)</p>	<p>Satisfaction with quality of faculty help</p>	<p>How satisfied are you with the quality and level of instrumental help (e.g., coaching, challenging, critical feedback for dissertation improvement, encouragement of productivity in terms of publishing and presenting), psychosocial help (e.g., counseling, role modeling, empathizing), and networking assistance (e.g., helping students makes connections in the field, serving as a professional reference) you have received from faculty during your EdD program? (very satisfied, satisfied, neutral, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied)</p>	<p>Earl-Novell, 2006 (D); Hoskins & Goldberg, 2005 (D); Spaulding & Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2012 (D); Tinto, 1997; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011(D)</p>
	<p>Satisfaction with curriculum</p>	<p>How satisfied are you with the courses you took while pursuing your EdD? (very satisfied, satisfied, neutral, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied)</p>	<p>Bean & Metzner, 1985; Tinto, 1975; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011(D)</p>
	<p>Satisfaction with curriculum for dissertation preparation</p>	<p>How satisfied are you how the courses you took while pursuing your EdD prepared you for dissertation? (very satisfied, satisfied, neutral, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied)</p>	<p>Bean & Metzner, 1985; de Valero, 2001 (D); Jimenez, 2011(D); Tinto, 1975; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011(D)</p>
	<p>Satisfaction with overall program experience</p>	<p>How satisfied are you with your overall satisfaction with the EdD program? (very satisfied, satisfied, neutral, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied)</p>	<p>Bean & Metzner, 1985; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011(D)</p>
	<p>Concern about academic performance</p>	<p>(R) How often are you concerned about whether you can successfully complete your dissertation? (very often, somewhat often, sometimes, rarely, very rarely)</p>	<p>Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011(D)</p>

Integration Variables

Social Integration

Doctoral Faculty Connectedness Scale (DSCS) (Terrell, Snyder, & Dringus 2009); Cronbach's alpha = .927

Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000 (DE); Rovai, 2002 (DE); Terrell, Snyder, & Dringus 2009 (D); Tinto, 1997

Doctoral Student Connectedness Scale (DSCS) (Terrell, Snyder, & Dringus 2009); Cronbach's alpha = .955

Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000; Rovai, 2002 (DE); Terrell, Snyder, & Dringus 2009 (D); Tinto, 1997

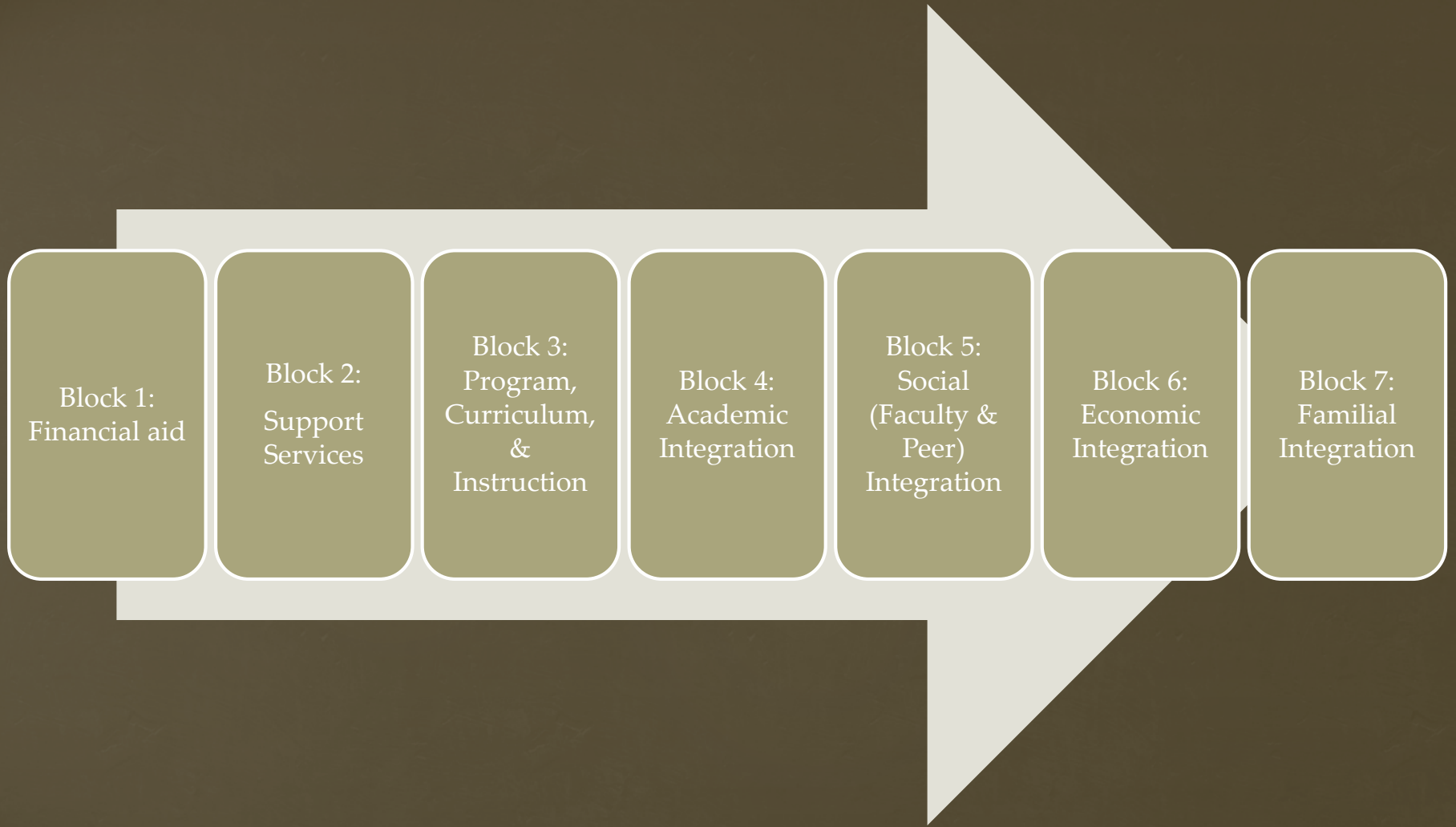
Integration Variables

<p>Economic Integration Scores range from 3 to 15; Cronbach's alpha= .65</p>	<p>Financial stress</p>	<p>(R) How often do you worry about having enough money to meet your and your family needs? (very often, somewhat often, sometimes, rarely, very rarely)</p>	<p>Bean & Metzner, 1985; Earl-Novell, 2006 (D); McAlpine & Norton, 2006 (D); Rockinson-Szapkiw, Spaulding, Swezey & Wicks, 2014 (D); Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011 (D)</p>
	<p>Financial strain</p>	<p>How difficult is it for you or your family to be able to handle college costs? (very difficult, somewhat difficult, neutral, somewhat easy, very easy)</p>	<p>Bean & Metzner, 1985; Earl-Novell, 2006 (D); McAlpine & Norton, 2006 (D); Rockinson-Szapkiw, Spaulding, Swezey & Wicks, 2014 (D); Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011(D)</p>
	<p>Financial need</p>	<p>(R) Considering on your current financial situation, how inclined are you to take on additional work in order to pay bills? (very, somewhat, a little, not vary, not at all)</p>	<p>Bean & Metzner, 1985; Earl-Novell, 2006 (D); McAlpine & Norton, 2006 (D); Rockinson-Szapkiw, Spaulding, Swezey & Wicks, 2014 (D); Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011(D)</p>
<p>Familial Integration</p>	<p>Familial connectedness</p>	<p>(R) How much do aspects of your family life and connection with your family suffer because you are a doctoral candidate? (Very much, much, some, little, very little)</p>	<p>Rockinson-Szapkiw, Spaulding, Swezey & Wicks, 2014 (D)</p>

⌘ Hierarchical multiple regression

- ⌘ Each block or step demonstrates how one or each set of new predictors add to the explanation of variance in the likelihood to persist

Analysis



Analysis

		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Likelihood to Persist		41.43	16.39
		Yes (<i>n</i>)	No (<i>n</i>)
Institutional Variables			
Financial Assistance (Model 1)	Financial aid	33 (77.2%)	116 (22.1%)
	Full tuition remission	23 (15.4%)	118 (79.2%)
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Support Services (Model 2)	Satisfaction with support services	4.23	.70
Program, Curriculum, & Instruction (Model 3)	Curriculum for dissertation preparation	3.26	1.12
	Clarity of expectations and organization	4.23	1.03
	Facilitation	4.52	.75
	Direct Instruction	4.53	.69
Integration Variables			
Academic Integration (Model 4)		20.27	4.31
Social Integration (Model 5)	Connectedness to faculty	38.01	6.62
	Connectedness to other students	34.70	8.21
Economic Integration (Model 6)		9.09	2.78
Familial Integration (Model 7)		3.37	1.07

Results: Descriptives

Independence of residuals :

- The Durbin-Watson statistic of 2.02 demonstrated no violation.

Linearity

- Scatter plot of the independent variable and the criterion variable and the regression line demonstrated a linear relationship existed between the independent variable and the criterion variable.

Multicollinearity

- As no VIF values exceeded 10 (Warner, 2012), multicollinearity was not a concern.

Normality

- Studentized residuals plot and the Shapiro-Wilk test values showed that the assumption of homoscedasticity was met. In addition, normal P-P Plot and normal Q-Q Plot of the studentized residuals demonstrated that the residuals (errors) are approximately normally distributed.

Outliers

- While eight cases in the distribution had Mahalanobis distance values exceeding the critical chi square value (29.588) for 11 variables, they were all maintained as none of their Cook's distance values exceeded a 1, suggesting that these cases did not have undue influence on the model.

No major violations

Results: Assumptions

Model	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²	Adj. <i>R</i> ²	<i>R</i> ² Change	<i>F</i> Change	<i>df</i> ₁	<i>df</i> ₂	<i>p</i> for <i>F</i> Change
Model 1: Financial aid	2	.91	.41	.01	.001			2	138	
Model 2: Support Services	3	18.32	< .001**	.27	.27	.27	52.45	1	137	< .001**
Model 3: Program, Curriculum, & Instruction	7	28.33	< .001**	.60	.58	.31	25.87	4	133	< .001**
Model 4: Academic	8	49.70	< .001**	.75	.74	.15	80.62	1	132	< .001**
Model 5: Social (Faculty & Peer)	10	54.37	< .001**	.81	.79	.06	18< .001** .96	2	130	
Model 6: Economic	11	50.50	< .001**	.81	.795	.004	3.07	1	129	.082
Model 7: Familial	12	48.39	< .001**	.82	.802	.008	5.56	1	128	.02*

The Results

Note. **p* < .05, ***p* < .01

The entire model, including all the institutional and integration variables, significantly predicted the likelihood of online, doctoral persistence. The linear combination of these variables explained 82% of the variance in online, doctoral persistence .




Variable	β	SE B	B	t	p	Zero- Order r	Partial r	sr^2
Financial aid	2.15	1.58	.06	1.36	.18	.09	.12	.05
Full tuition remission	1.05	1.91	.02	.55	.59	-.03	.05	.02
Satisfaction with support services	.97	1.08	.04	.90	.36	.53	.08	.03
Direct Instruction 	4.22	1.22	.18	3.46	.001**	.67	.29	.13
Facilitation 	2.19	.97	.10	2.26	.03*	.50	.20	.09
Clarity of expectations and organization of program materials	-.76	.61	-.05	-1.24	.22	.03	-.11	-.05
Curriculum for dissertation preparation	-.28	.64	-.02	-.45	.66	.40	-.04	-.02
Academic Integration 	1.73	.22	.46	8.05	< .001**	.82	.58	.30
Social Integration: Faculty Connectedness	.47	.14	.19	3.47	.001**	.72	.29	.13
Social Integration: Peer Connectedness	.29	.09	.14	3.26	.001**	.50	.28	.12
Economic Integration	-.39	.25	-.07	-1.56	.12	-.03	-.14	-.06
Familial Integration	1.58	.67	.10	2.36	.020*	.48	.20	.09

Table3

Contributions of Each Predictor Variables to Variance in Likelihood to Persist in Model 7 (N = 141)

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Implications

{ Identify Strategies for Increasing
Online, Doctoral Persistence that
Draws from the Presented Model

⌘ **Program, Curriculum & Instruction**

- ⌘ Systematic course study that enables students to develop skills and knowledge needed to complete their capstone research project or dissertation (Year 1- Literature, Year 2- Research, Year 3- Analysis)
- ⌘ A “one stop shop” content management system & collaborative workspace
- ⌘ Media rich guidance and instruction (e.g. audio feedback)

⌘ **Academic & Social Integration**

- ⌘ Social media and collaborative conferencing system integration
- ⌘ Faculty-led content , design, or milestone specific CoPs (e.g. Leader- Scholar Communities)

⌘ **Familial Integration**

- ⌘ Family orientation
- ⌘ Social media or collaborative technology integration (e.g., wikis, Facebook, Twitter).



Implications

& Implications in
Practice &
Research

Implications

Navigation tabs: Dissertation Portal, Administration Portal, Candidate Portal, Candidate Research Showcase, Committee Portal, Research and Analysis Library

Left sidebar: View All Site Content, Administration Portal, Candidate Portal, Candidate Research Showcase, Committee Portal, Contacts, Research and Analysis Library, Recycle Bin

Dissertation Portal

Dissertation Handbook & Timeline

Follow the links below to access the Dissertation Handbook and Dissertation Timeline pages. These will serve as a foundation for your entire dissertation process.

- Dissertation Handbook (PDF)
- Dissertation Timeline

Calendar

The Dissertation Portal Calendar contains the dates and the times of all candidates' prospectus, proposal, and dissertation defenses. The calendar also contains the dates, the times, and the locations of other School of Education (SOE) events.

Forms

Below are links to the forms needed for the dissertation process.

- Proposal Defense Rubric and Decision Form (.doc)
- Dissertation Announcement Template (.doc)
- Editing Checklist (.doc)
- Dissertation Defense Rubric and Decision Form (.doc)
- Research Consultant Form: Quantitative Research (.doc)

Dissertation Portal Subsites

The dissertation portal currently has three subsites for individuals involved in the dissertation process.

- Candidates' My Dissertation Portal Sites**
This site lists each candidate and provides a link to his or her personal research portals.
- Committee Portal**
This is a site for chairpersons and committee members only. It contains useful resources related to assisting candidates in successfully navigating the dissertation process.
- Administration Portal**

Site Description

The Dissertation Portal is a medium where doctoral candidates can access useful dissertation resources and can collaborate with committee members and peers during the dissertation process.

Dissertation Announcements

The Dissertation Timeline 10/14/2011 11:53 AM
by Rockinson-Szapkiw, Amanda J
Trying to remember what step comes next? Or trying to make sure you completed the necessary tasks in the dissertation process? Visit the Dissertation Timeline. Go to:
https://community.liberty.edu/Academics/School_Education/Dissertations/Pages/Dissertation_Timeline.aspx

Important Dissertation Defense Dates for Fall 2011! 8/19/2011 11:17 AM
by Rockinson-Szapkiw, Amanda J
If you are enrolled in EDUC 990B term, September 16th is the last day to hold a defense and August 26th is the last day to submit your manuscript to a Research Consultant for a dissertation defense review. If enrolled in EDUC 990D term, November 18th ...

▣ Add new announcement

Links

- SOE Dissertations: The Digital Commons SOE Dissertation website houses previously published dissertations.
- LU Institutional Review Board (IRB): The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) website provides all necessary forms and information to submit an IRB application. Internal Review Board (IRB) review and approval is required and is a federal mandate. Research can not be begun prior to full approval from IRB.
- LU Graduate Writing Center: The Graduate Writing Center offers aid for professional writing. The Liberty University Graduate Writing Center website provides resources should be used at the beginning of the dissertation writing process, not as copy editor at the end.
- LU Library: The Liberty University Library website provides access to a variety of resources necessary for dissertation research. The homepage provides access to InterLibrary Loan, to online library services, and to the research portal.
- ILRC Dissertation Publishing Guidelines: A graduation requirement is that all dissertations must be electronically submitted to the Library. The ILRC Dissertation Publishing Guidelines website provides step by step information about how to electronically submit and publish your dissertation manuscript.
- EndNote: EndNote is a citation management software that assists you in organizing and managing references. EndNote is available for free download to university students via the Liberty University library.
- Dissertation Process Facebook: The Facebook fan page provides a medium for interaction with peers and professors. The site is used to share updates, helpful hints, important reminders, and notes of accomplishment.
- End of Semester Dissertation Survey: At the end of each semester, complete the survey to let the SOE know how you are doing in the Dissertation Process.

▣ Add new link

Contacts

Implications: "One Stop Shop"

My Dissertation Portal

Document Libraries

Task List

Discussion Forum

Status Updates

Title	Dissertation Status
Heuvelman-Hutchinson_Lorene	Proposal Successfully Defended (Chair)
Heuvelman-Hutchinson, Lorene	IRB Application Approved

Task List

- Step 1: Proposal Development
- Step 2: Proposal Defense
- Step 3: IRB
- Step 4: Research Execution/Data Collection
- Step 5: Manuscript Development
- Step 6: Dissertation Defense
- Add new item

Useful Links

- Dissertation Guide
- Dissertation Portal
- Dissertation Portal: Video and Tutorial Library
- LU IRB
- LU Graduate Writing Center
- LU Library
- LU Dissertation Publishing Guidelines
- EndNote
- Add new link

Task List
The task list includes all the major steps of your dissertation process. When completed, you mark the task as completed.

Dissertation Timeline
The timeline is a calendar that can be used to create your own personal dissertation timeline. You can add tasks and projected completion dates. This timeline may also be used for scheduling and noting important dates. A committee member may enter dates he or she plans to be out of town or teaching an intensive.

Libraries
The five libraries can be used to upload files related to the dissertation process. Uploading files to SharePoint allows you to back up your work. It will also help you keep items organized, and it allows you to share files with your committee to easily access files.

Contact Information
The contact information area can be used to list contact information for you and your committee.

Discussion Forum
The discussion forum is a place where you and your committee members can begin any desired discussion thread.

Submission: Proposal

Library: Manuscript

Library: IRB

Library: Forms

Library: Artifacts

Task List

Status Updates

View All Site Content

Recycle Bin

Approvals

Discussion Forum

Contact Information

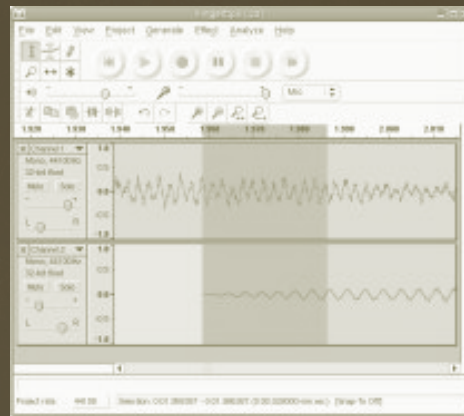
Implications: Collaborative Workspace

Research has demonstrated that the implementation and use of this portal increased doctoral candidates' connectedness by 9%.

Rockinson-Szapkiw, A. J. (2012). Investigating uses and perceptions of online collaborative workspaces for the dissertation process. *Research in Learning Technology*, 20(3), 267-282.

Implications: Collaborative Workspace

Audio Feedback



Online, doctoral students who receive audio feedback report higher perceptions of teaching presence, cognitive presence, and perceived learning compared to students who only receive text-based feedback (Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2012)

Rockinson-Szapkiw, A. J. (2012). Should online doctoral instructors adopt audio feedback as an instructional strategy? Preliminary evidence. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 7, 245-258. Retrieved from <http://ijds.org/Volume7/IJDSv7p245-258Szapkiw0359.pdf>

Implication: Technology

& Social
networks
& Facebook
& Twitter

There is a positive relationship between candidates' use of web-based communication technologies such as Skype, Facebook, and Twitter and sense of connectedness with peers.

Rockinson-Szapkiw, A., Spaulding, L.S., & Heuvelman-Hutchinson, L. (2014, in press). Connecting at a distance: The relationship between Facebook use and doctoral connectedness.

Implication: Technology

Continuing to Build the Model and Future Research

{ Additional slides

Individual Variables

Personal attributes

Demographics

Personality

Motivation

Agency

Academic factors

Autonomous Processes

Organization skills

Time Management Skills

Stress management Skills

Research Skills

Technology Skills

Environmental Support and Stress

Familial/ Social

Vocational

Institutional Variables

Financial aid

Program, curriculum, & instruction

Support services

Integration Variables

Academic

Social (Faculty & Peer)

Economic

Familial

Online, Doctoral Persistence

- ⌘ A Model for Online Doctoral Persistence (SEM)
- ⌘ A Model for Explaining the Online, Female Doctoral Candidate's Negotiation of Her identities and Her Persistence (Grounded Theory)
- ⌘ Exploring the Intersection between Female Faculty Members' Identities as Mothers and Scholars (Phenomenology)
- ⌘ Online Doctoral Persistence Questionnaire (Instrument Validation, a doctoral dissertation student)
- ⌘ Examining the Role of Big Five in Methodology Choice and Persistence (Correlation)
- ⌘ A Resilient Life After Sexual Exploitation: Understanding How Girls in Uganda Regain their Hope and Dignity

Future Research Projects

Questions
&
Answers

Amanda Rockinson-Szapkiw

AmandaSzapkiw@gmail.com

www.AmandaSzapkiw.com/contact



Contact Information



5 Interesting Fact:

- ∞ Pet tigers, Thailand
- ∞ Paraglided off Coronet Peak - New Zealand
- ∞ Learned micro-enterprise bead work while working with trafficking survivors - Uganda
- ∞ Tracked lions with two Masai Mara tribesmen - Kenya
- ∞ Appeared as an extra on the HIMYM sitcom (Season 8) - California

Learn More About Me?

Visit www.AmandaSzapkiw.com

& <http://tinyurl.com/doctoral-persistence-model>

Presentation Information

⌘ Available upon request .

** All images are
royalty free clip art,
Microsoft.

References