



**SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE
& NEW EARTH INSTITUTE**
CONSCIOUSNESS-CENTERED GRADUATE SCHOOL



Southwestern College PhD Visionary Practice & Regenerative Leadership (VPRL)

Doctoral Student Handbook

2025-2026

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Please see 2025-2026 College Catalog for complete Institutional Policy & Procedures

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A Letter from the Director/Founder

Welcome to our Visionary Practice & Regenerative Leadership (VPRL) Doctoral Program. We are so proud of the successes of our doctoral program now in its fourth year. Here are some highlights for 2025-2026:

1. Our first four doctoral students have successfully graduated, earning their PhD degrees and publishing their dissertations in ProQuest, an internationally accessible database of doctoral work.
2. We welcomed our fourth cohort of 15 entering doctoral students in September, nearly half opted for full-time enrollment in our program. The others opted for half-time enrollment.
3. Currently five students are completing fieldwork and are on track to begin writing their dissertations in 2025-2026.
4. And another five students will be forming their Wisdom Councils this academic year and planning their Regenerative Visionary Projects or fieldwork.
5. There are currently 36 doctoral students, and we are actively involved in recruitment for the fifth cohort.
6. We now have 30 enthusiastic and committed VPRL faculty, including classroom teachers and faculty mentors.
7. New this fall based on the inspiration of current student, Justine Mastin, we added a voluntary peer support program pairing an 'older sibling' with a 'younger sibling' to provide an opportunity for students entering the program to be paired directly with upper class students for informal support, conversation, tips for success, and cross co-heart collegiality.
8. This year we have added Student Success Coaching to our available student services.
9. We added a designated VPRL Academic Advisor, Emilah DeToro, to organize New Student Orientation, keep Program Planners updated, provide a link to student services, and meet with students as needed.
10. We have added a new position in place as an Associate Director. Now we have a VPRL Program Coordinator, VPRL doctoral student Nena Martinez Anaya, working on campus in the BRAND-NEW PhD Program office. Stop by! We are located in the Quimby Memorial Library Building.

May this Student Handbook provide you with guidance and support, answer your questions, and offer clarity. If after looking in the Student Handbook, you have any questions or wonderings about anything impacting your learning journey as a doctoral student, please do not hesitate to reach out to Nena or to me. We are here to support you.

With gratitude,



Ann Filemyr, PhD



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Dedication

This program and these words are honored and informed by the living systems and knowledge holders, ancient and contemporary, ancestral and breathing, whose meanings, lives, and hearts have been dedicated to earth regeneration and cultural mending and resurgence. We dedicate the continuity of our offerings, work, and learning to those beings and contexts, 200 years and more from now, who will continue this beautiful unfolding, healing, and flourishing.

Introduction to Southwestern College

This Student Handbook covers information about Southwestern College's PhD degree program in Visionary Practice and Regenerative Leadership (VPRL), program dimensions, as well as policies and procedures applicable to students enrolled at Southwestern College in the doctoral program. The companion document to this Student Handbook is the 2025-2026 College Catalog. Academic requirements listed apply to students admitted during the 2025-2026 academic year.

Every student is responsible for reading the Doctoral Student Handbook and College Catalog and complying with the most recently enacted Doctoral Student Handbook and Doctoral College Catalog posted in Populi and on the College's website. College policies and procedures are subject to revision at any time.

This document, including all policies and procedures, has been developed according to Southwestern College's commitment to embody the stated values, mission, vision, and purpose.

THE PHD IN VISIONARY PRACTICE AND REGENERATIVE LEADERSHIP DOCTORAL PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

This unique transdisciplinary doctoral program, the PhD in Visionary Practice and Regenerative Leadership (VPRL), is designed to prepare regenerative visionary leaders. We seek those who are inspired to articulate the emergent story of cooperation, compassion, connection, and capacity. Faculty, in partnership with doctoral students, explore the ways humankind is changing the old story in which the paradigm of separation, domination, competition, and control reveals its fundamental failure to sustain life on earth. As we shift into the emergent story, we need leaders and practitioners who are prepared to navigate complexities and participate in change processes both within themselves and in the world.

This multigenerational process of change invites us to regenerate broken social systems characterized by inequity, violence, and struggle. The breakdown of social systems is correlated with the destruction of ecological systems. As we move into the Ecozoic era, relationships based on reciprocal partnership become the primary focus. How should we shape these relationships of mutuality in order for diverse individuals, families, and communities to live in good relationship with each other and with the plants, animals, soils, waterways, weather systems, oceans, and atmosphere upon which we depend for our lives?

Responding to these challenges requires change-makers capable of both honoring ancient wisdom traditions and creating new stories to envision and enact the new paradigm. This doctoral program is designed to enhance our ability to challenge assumptions and promote decolonial/indigenous thinking in order to be of service. The needs around us are abundantly clear. How can we respond as co-creators in partnership with place and people to shift destructive patterns and create biophilic lifeways?

During intensive residencies and online courses, adult learners will engage in a process to clarify their heart or soul calling. Faculty Mentors will serve as guides and provide keys for students to gain the capacity to realize their potential contribution. The learning process begins with critical analysis of intersectional challenges facing humankind and life on Earth. Through reflexive engagement with inner and outer reality systems, students will engage in visionary practices that encourage access to a greater source of creativity. The locus is not just on individual knowledge acquisition but on the development of the intelligent resilience of the group.

Additionally, unlike many doctoral programs, knowledge acquisition is not the sole aim of the program of study. The emphasis is on the application of knowledge in the service of relationships predicated on justice and mutuality for the sustenance of life on earth.

If we seek to change the world, what must we deconstruct in ourselves? Through courageous imaginal acts, students begin to break out of conventional thinking and ways of being. To accomplish the level of regeneration required, we must bring into being what has been lost or does not yet exist both within ourselves and in our communities.

The PhD in Visionary Practice and Regenerative Leadership furthers the mission and values of Southwestern College in Santa Fe and builds on its legacy as a unique institution of higher learning. Students may enter this program from any area of study, any profession, any career. The purpose is to enrich and enhance the student's ability to bring forth their unique gifts and serve as change-makers in any field. Leadership capacity emerging from greater self-knowledge and self-awareness will empower graduates to make a difference in their communities and/or selected profession or area of focus.

The PhD in Visionary Practice and Regenerative Leadership furthers the mission and values of Southwestern College in Santa Fe and builds its legacy as a unique institution of higher learning. Students may enter this program from any area of study, any profession, any career. The purpose is to enrich and enhance the student's ability to bring forth their unique gifts and serve as change-makers in any field. Leadership capacity emerging from greater self-knowledge and self-awareness will empower graduates to make a difference in their communities and/or selected profession or area of focus.

We believe in the power each one carries within to contribute to the collective. We believe the seeds of change are carried in consciousness and can be expressed with the support and recognition of others. We believe our doctoral program can provide vital transformational learning for visionary practitioners and regenerative dreamers.

Institutional Learning Outcomes in the Doctoral Context

The Southwestern College Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) help guide the design of all programs of the college.

Students will:

1. Demonstrate the skills to facilitate transformation in self and others.
2. Demonstrate the ability to examine implicit assumptions embedded in belief systems and how they influence conscious relation.
3. Develop a commitment to multicultural awareness and competency.
4. Demonstrate the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to function as a conscious, competent, ethical professional.

Descriptions of the Institutional Learning Outcomes in the Doctoral Context

What follows are descriptions of each of the Institutional Learning Outcomes in the doctoral program context. Students will:

1. Demonstrate the skills to facilitate transformation in self and others

A core intent of both visionary practice and regenerative leadership is transformation. In the first phase of coursework in the VPRL program, “transformation” relates to the experience of exploring oneself embedded in a co-constituting relational matrix at multiple scales. Students learn to apply theories and methods of cosmological embodiment, visionary practice, Indigenous ways of knowing, regeneration, and partnership-based leadership to their own experience and use this process to transform their consciousness, design, and scholarly capabilities. A central aspect of this process is cultivating awareness of the dynamic relationship between how one creates conditions for vision and regeneration, whether relating to individuals, communities, or the world. In the second phase of core coursework, students actively engage with transformational methods and regenerative inquiry while digging deeper into multimodal insight processes for ethical repair and resurgence. As students continue to clarify their particular research areas, they design and carry out projects to catalyze transformational processes. This largely takes place in the project-based fieldwork. The design-action-reflection cycle of the project supports students distilling patterns and processes for transformation and regeneration. In the final phase of the program, ongoing work with the Wisdom Council and scholarly collaborative spaces allows students to continue their own growth process as they hone their professional helping and healing skills and identities. They come to incubate and mature extensive skills and presence, such that they both embody and catalyze transformative change. Students graduate with extensive capacities to lead visionary and regenerative transformation as earth-enhancing change-agents.

2. Demonstrate the ability to examine implicit assumptions embedded in belief systems and how they influence conscious relating

In each course, students are encouraged to explore implicit assumptions embedded in-cultural systems. Excavation of personal values and beliefs that have been embedded in the psyche as a result of unconscious identification with various social groups, such as family and peer groups, institutions/organizations, and local and global communities, lends to greater awareness of

limiting constructs that govern interpersonal interactions, decisions, and relationship quality as well as organizational and system dynamics. The classroom becomes a laboratory of personal and collective discovery, and awareness is promoted in both didactic and experiential ways. Assignments are designed to help students become more aware of their reactions to course reading and material as well as potential areas of bias that are affecting their perceptions about themselves, others, and the world. This continued process of inquiry, discovery, and reflection is a critical aspect of cultivating conscious relating.

Awareness of implicit assumptions is an essential skill in providing culturally appropriate and ethically sound regenerative leadership. Without such examination, a change agent is much more likely to impose their worldview on a situation, inadvertently perpetuating a hierarchical and/or colonizer model, which is antithetical to a process of change that empowers others. By cultivating habits of self-examination, humility, and curiosity, students are more able to serve diverse populations without imposing culturally-based views and values.

3. Develop a commitment to multicultural awareness and competency

Southwestern College recognizes that learning about difference is a core competency for all students. Students will be invited into deep reflection on the social and personal impact of diversity, power, and privilege as they learn about systems of oppression, accountability, and repair that exist internally and externally in the individual and the collective. Through experiential and transformational learning, students are asked to demonstrate effective engagement with ecosystems, communities, families and individuals who may be different from themselves.

Change agents find themselves working in increasingly diverse contexts. Multicultural awareness, knowledge and competency are core to the ethical practice of every regenerative leader. This exploration begins early in the program and continues through their coursework and into practicum and internship.

4. Demonstrate the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to function as a conscious, competent, ethical professional

Throughout the educational process, students develop and master core competencies required by their professions through grounded, holistic, comprehensive academic and field training. Knowledge of history, theory, applications, ethical standards, professional organizations, interventions, modalities, and emerging trends permeates the curriculum. Transformational skills are introduced, engaged with, and acquired via regular practice, with ongoing feedback and evaluation with peers and faculty. Attitudes and behaviors that demonstrate openness, creative inquiry, empathy, compassion, respect, curiosity, and non-judgment are cultivated and assessed in the classroom and through written work. The special gifts of transdisciplinary study and research as well as the focus on ethical systems repair and renewal generate conscious competency and ethical leadership for VPRL graduates.

Doctoral Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) at Southwestern College are divided according to:

1. Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)
2. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)
3. Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

Student Learning Outcomes are approved by the Academic Council. Changes may be made to update or revise program, course, or institutional learning outcomes with Academic Council approval. Course leaders, department chairs, or other academic leaders may propose the revision of student learning outcomes as a result of assessment processes and ongoing academic program improvement. If approved, these changes would be incorporated into future course syllabi and the College Catalog.

The relationship between ILOs, PLOs, CLOs, and specific course assignments is mapped in the syllabus for each course. These can be found in Populi.

Individual faculty may not change any student learning outcomes, including the ILOs, PLOs, or CLOs on their course syllabi.

Individual faculty may recommend changes to assignments and/or readings in the course syllabus as long as Course Learning Outcomes are clearly addressed. They may propose these changes to the Course Leader for consultation, discussion, and agreement. The Course Leader is then responsible to update the course syllabus and Populi for that section of the course.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Innovate, originate, and apply visionary and regenerative practices.
2. Select and actualize appropriate research methods.
3. Engage decolonizing and Indigenous practices and methods.
4. Curate and synthesize selected theoretical frameworks.
5. Develop collaborative, innovative leadership skills.
6. Utilize project management skills to move from vision/idea to embodiment/implementation.
7. Interpret data to sense connection, make meaning, and formulate recommendations.
8. Catalyze, inspire, expand, and deepen their work and lives through purposeful self-reflection and self-evaluation.

Program Requirements: Overview

The PhD in Visionary Practice and Regenerative Leadership requires completion of 75 quarter units. Students may complete all requirements within three years in 11 ten-week quarters.

Students may also opt for half-time enrollment and complete it within 5 years. The program is designed as a cohort model in which all students take a common core of courses before they begin to focus on their individual or partnered doctoral projects and dissertation proposals. See below for a clear map of the learning journey.

Residencies

Three required residencies bring students and faculty together to strengthen relationships, build the learning community, and advance together through the program.

The initial residency, **Seeking**, brings students together in the fall of the first year for six days and includes a bioregional, land-based experience in rural New Mexico. This residency launches students into fall coursework, introduces them to the classroom faculty, and orients them to the program, campus resources, and each other.

The second residency, **Gathering & Grounding**, brings students together in the fall of the second year for four days. Gathering & Grounding represents the shift between the common core courses taught by faculty and the students' focus on completing their doctoral projects and dissertations with the support of the Doctoral Committee members led by the Committee Chair.

The third residency, **Crossing the Threshold**, brings students together for four days in the beginning of the Spring quarter of their last year. This final residency is a celebration of achievement and learning as students near completion of their dissertations. Students will share their work and engage in feedback from peers and faculty.

Residencies will be held on the Southwestern College campus or other locations in and around Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Mentorship

In the first year, each student selects a Faculty Mentor. The mentor provides specific support as students design their two self-designed study courses (see below) to support their own learning goals. The Faculty Mentor provides additional support to the student prior to Candidacy and the selection of the doctoral committee chair or Midwife/Coach and the formation of the Wisdom Council/doctoral committee. Once the Wisdom Council has been formed, those members serve as ongoing mentors and form a network of support for completion of the degree.

Common Core Coursework

In the first year or part one of the program, all students take a common core of courses designed to ground the theoretical, conceptual and experiential elements of this unique degree program. The first-year curriculum introduces students to visionary theories and practices, regenerative theories and practices, and a wide range of research methodologies, including decolonial/Indigenous approaches drawn from Indigenous scholars' critique of the construction of Western knowledge systems.

Once the common core courses are completed, students transition into the development of their doctoral projects, complete their dissertation proposals, and begin to construct their doctoral committees.

Self-Directed Study (SDS) & Scholarly Expression: Writing & Citing I & II

The Scholarly Expression: Writing & Citing I and II courses support the writing portion of the Self-Directed Study. The 3-unit Self-Directed Study courses consist of two parts: the individual course design (2 units) and Scholarly Expression: Writing & Citing (1 unit). Together, these are recorded as VPRL651-2 (3 units) and VPRL681-2 (3 units).

Each student working with their mentor determines the focus for their individual course design. For this aspect of the Self-Directed Study, the student can explore and deepen their understanding of the contexts, theories, and approaches explicitly related to their vision-seed inquiry. Students may strengthen their knowledge of theories and methods to help them design their future regenerative visionary project. Scholarly Expression supports the individual course design by providing skill development in writing and citing that will help ground their dissertation writing.

Additionally, students might gain familiarity with and connections to vibrant, region-specific resources, future collaborators, and/or prospective Wisdom Council members through the selection of their Self-Directed Study faculty person. Students may select anyone with expertise in their focus or field of study who has a doctoral degree, either a PhD or an EdD, and who is willing to serve as their Self-Directed Study faculty. SDS faculty do not have prior engagement with the VPRL doctoral program. They are hired by individual contract to work with doctoral students. This invitation engages students to seek out and connect with inspirational scholars in their field. Mentors and/or other faculty or VPRL program leadership can assist in identifying appropriate SDS faculty and making introductions to potential SDS faculty as requested by students.

Students may also opt to collaborate with each other on these courses. Students can design their individualized courses together. They might therefore explore joint, linked, or shared project possibilities or common grounding theories or approaches. Whether as solo initiatives or shared explorations, the individual course design component empowers immersive, project-specific knowledge and experience.

The intention of Scholarly Expression I and II is to provide direct support for the academic writing portion of the Self-Directed Study. Scholarly Expression in VPRL 651-2 meets three times over the ten-week quarter for 1.5 hours each time. VPRL 681-2 is asynchronous with no scheduled meetings. Students will work relatively independently to achieve the learning and may reach out to the instructor for individual sessions as needed. Total hours engaged with skill development in citing and writing, drafting and completing the final paper, and providing peer review to other student writers is 36 hours for one doctoral unit.

As part of the first year, full-time students design their individual courses for the Spring and Summer quarters. Half-time students in their first year enroll in VPRL 651-2 Self-Directed Study

and Scholarly Expression I in the Summer quarter of their first year and in VPRL 681-2 in the Spring quarter of the second year.

The individual course design portion is worth 68 hours of involvement with course material, workshops, or training activities.

Students have at least three options for their individual course design:

1. In the first option, students select an individual focus and determine the readings, activities, explorations, and assignments, along with input from both their faculty mentor and their selected SDS faculty person. They design this course with 3-5 meetings with their SDS faculty either via zoom or in-person course if the faculty member lives in proximity to the student. One requirement of the SDS faculty is to review their final academic paper and/or presentation and award credit.
2. The second option allows students to enroll in an intensive workshop or training of their choice that is connected to the focus of their individual course. The hours required for the training help fulfill the 68 hours required for the individual course design. They may need to add additional reading, writing, or experiential activities to complete the required 68 hours. If the trainer or workshop leader has a doctoral degree, they may also serve as the SDS faculty. If not, the student must select another SDS faculty to review their final academic paper and/or presentation and award credit.
3. In the third option, students may take one or two courses from the Certificate Programs of the New Earth Institute at Southwestern College. Each Certificate Program course represents 16 hours and is held over a two- or three-day weekend. Students must identify additional reading, writing, and experiential activities to complete the 68 required hours. Certificate programs include: Ecotherapy, Human Sexuality, Applied Interpersonal Neurobiology, Children's Mental Health, Trauma, Grief & Renewal, and Addiction, Abuse & Recovery. If the teacher of the Certificate course has a doctoral degree, they may also serve as the SDS faculty. If not, the student must select another SDS faculty to review their final academic paper and/or presentation and award credit. Some Certificate courses meet on the ground in Santa Fe and require face-to-face participation. Others are online. For a complete annual schedule of Certificate courses, please see the website at this link:

In all options, students will select one of the following as their culminating or final activity for their individual course design to fulfill the SDS requirements:

- a. 10-12-page academic paper (in APA, plus cover, abstract, visuals, diagrams, and references) and a two-page reflection for each self-directed study course. A key feature of the self-directed study course series is that, alongside the topic-specific deep dives, students are supported in gaining key capacities in scholarly writing, including citational practice, cultivating their scholarly voice, and reclaiming zest in writing.
- b. OR complete a 5–6-page academic paper (in APA, plus cover, abstract, visuals, diagrams, and references) and a two-page reflection for each self-directed study course. A key feature of the self-directed study course series is that, alongside the topic-specific

deep dives, students are supported in gaining key capacities in scholarly writing, including citational practice, cultivating their scholarly voice, and reclaiming zest in writing. PLUS prepare and share a 10-minute presentation (PowerPoint or other media) to show new original work they have created, and/or emerging theories they are exploring, and/or methods they hope to apply to future fieldwork. Presentations will be shown in the 10th week and will be scheduled by the VPRL administration for the entire VPRL community. Students will sign up for a spot to present and will be available for Q&A discussion following the presentation.

NOTE: The purpose of this choice is to recognize the important role of active scholars in public presentations as well as academic writing. Please make this choice when you submit your Learning Contract to give VPRL administration an indication of how many presentations to plan for at the end of the Spring quarter. We are excited about this public sharing opportunity and what we will learn from each other. The richness and diversity of the unique courses will be more visible as we share learning. However, it is not mandatory to give a public presentation. It is an option. Students, with their faculty mentors and Self-Directed Study faculty, may make the selection that best supports student learning.

Distance Education Methods

Online courses will take place in the secure online learning system, Populi. Students will access this password-protected space for weekly assignments, discussions, online links to assigned readings, and viewings. Students will upload assignments into Populi for feedback according to the due dates published in the course syllabus in Populi.

Courses have both synchronous and asynchronous elements. Students work independently, in small groups, and during scheduled synchronous online video (Zoom) sessions. Students participate in online discussions during scheduled Zoom class sessions throughout each quarter. The quarterly course schedule presents Zoom-based synchronous class meeting times. Participation in scheduled Zoom sessions is required.

Each online course will extend over a ten-week quarter. Some courses are initiated during scheduled residencies.

Candidacy

As students complete the core courses and move into developing their dissertation proposals, designing their regenerative visionary projects, and assembling their doctoral committees/Wisdom Councils, they need to demonstrate their preparation for this next level of doctoral study through submission of the work required for candidacy.

The required submission is part of the Wellspring ePortfolio. Within a month of completing the core courses, students demonstrate their preparation for Candidacy by writing a 5–7-page contextual essay that places their own learning in relation to the eight Program Learning Outcomes. The contextual essay provides a lens for the Midwife/Coach Faculty to understand the

student's selection of their coursework as artifacts of their own learning. Both the essay and the coursework provide the basis for the review.

A written evaluation and verbal feedback from the faculty on the student's individual ePortfolio substantiate the student's readiness to move forward in the program. Instead of a single qualifying paper, the collection of student coursework in the ePortfolio, combined with the contextual essay, incorporating personal reflection on their learning, serves to mark the movement toward candidacy. Students who have not demonstrated appropriate preparation will receive specific feedback and an opportunity to improve their submission for candidacy.

Visionary is the capacity to envision what does not yet exist, or what has been lost or destroyed, and regenerative is the intrinsic power to flourish that can help bring it (back) into being.

Ann Filemyr, PhD

VPRL Program Director

Regenerative Visionary Project

The Regenerative Visionary Project is part of the culminating journey of the visionary and regenerative leader in the Southwestern program. It is completed over two consecutive quarters (six months) and represents 12 quarter units. It provides an opportunity for the doctoral student to embody and express their unique vision through direct engagement followed by meaning making through structured reflection. It provides an opportunity for leadership development and serves as the practicum or internship requirement of this doctoral program.

The student has a great choice in terms of an appropriate project. Perhaps they want to engage with a specific community, lead a regenerative project, make new creative work, cultivate characteristics within oneself, or do an intervention within a system, and see how the system responds to the intervention. The project could focus on ecosystem restoration, response to climate crisis, permaculture design, or other ecologically based innovation. It could be social entrepreneurship designed to help people better meet their basic needs, survive, and flourish. The doctoral project could be the creation of new, original work and the consideration of who you are creating this for – who do you hope to impact or serve by your creative work? It could focus on the relationship between the health of people and planetary health. Or it could be focused on personal growth and transformation as a necessary precursor to greater work in the world.

In the realization of the regenerative visionary project, the student enacts their vision in the field. They plan, prepare, and take action whether through community engagement, conducting interviews or focus groups, facilitating design charrettes, social entrepreneurship, or through piloting a project, a systems intervention, the making of new creative work, or a self-cultivation initiative. The regenerative visionary project is dynamic, and by design seeks feedback, input, guidance, and/or evaluation from members of the contexting community(ies) — engaged participants. So, as the student enacts their vision for regeneration, they expand their circles of insight. A critical dimension of the regenerative visionary project's quarter involves maintaining a daily fieldwork journal to chronicle their observations, experiences, feelings, ideas, and

insights. By both doing and being, action and reflection, the student engages in direct experiential learning.

The project should clearly link to the dissertation. The dissertation proposal includes a clear description of the project for approval by their committee or Wisdom Council. Students articulate their own visionary and regenerative aspirations and determine the focus, topic, title, direction, outcomes, and relevant engaged community participants for their doctoral projects.

The project can take many different forms, but each form requires the student to develop project management skills, such as the ability to organize toward a goal, create realistic timelines and budgets, etc. Project management often requires concise research to become familiar with the context within which the student seeks to make a contribution.

The Regenerative Visionary Project takes place over three quarters, through three different courses. Steps 1 and 2 happen in the first course and have to be approved by the Wisdom Council prior to enrolling in the second class, Action. In the third class, the student works closely with the Wisdom Council to reflect during the final phase of the project. Thus, the Regenerative Visionary Project has four distinct and interrelated parts:

1. **Research** – this is a vital first step for the student to become familiar with the territory within which they seek to make a contribution. Students may need to conduct fieldwork, conduct interviews or focus groups, lead design charettes, review the literature, research what others have done who have attempted to address the same underlying concerns, etc.
2. **Planning** – organize contacts, create timeline, budget, ask for and receive permission, etc.
3. **Undertake the project** – plan and hold meetings and/or fieldwork sessions/visits/experiences; plan from, track, and revise timelines; maintain deep discipline in the creative and critical dimensions of the fieldwork journal; Wisdom Council connection for updates, reaching out for problem-solving, fearlessly take action to avoid or mitigate barriers, create time and spaciousness for deep experiencing and careful noticing.
4. **Reflection** - once the project has been completed, it is time to evaluate. Students must design a method for collecting feedback, input, guidance, evaluation from members of the community and/or participants in the project.

The student keeps a fieldwork journal throughout the duration of the project to assist them with personal reflection. The committee receives copies of the feedback to reflect with the student on the learning that can be drawn from the experience. This material can later be folded into the dissertation.

To complete the reflection, students submit a written and/or visual and/or media-based structured reflection to their doctoral committee on actions taken during the project and input/guidance/evaluation from participants and/or members of community. The reflection is for sense-making and drawing out lessons from the experience. This could lead to deepening inquiry, exploring new avenues of research, identifying additional information needed, new

directions for service or leadership, etc. The methodologies of the dissertation proposal provide additional process and quality guidelines for the reflection process. Researchers aim for deepening capacity to reflect and meta-reflect, reaching out for relational sensemaking with the phenomena themselves and their own emerging insight transformations, the way the process of research itself might be changing their own apertures or processes of perception and change.

The Regenerative Visionary Project serves as the primary opportunity for students to develop and demonstrate leadership, develop their inquiry, and gather original data for their dissertation. It serves as the applied aspect of the degree.

Visioning and vision-based action are two interrelating, reciprocal expressions of regenerative leadership.

*Jaffa Frank, PhD
VPRL Visionary*

Dissertation

The final act of the doctoral journey is the writing of the dissertation.

Once the Visionary Regenerative Project has been completed, the knowledge gained by that experience now shapes the dissertation. The Project serves as a pilot and/or as pivotal research that provides context for data collection and for the application of concepts (the vision).

Structured reflection on the project combined with contextual and historic perspectives uncovered through coursework and the literature review support students to form the final coherent story told through the dissertation. The Wisdom Council or doctoral committee provides the sounding board and feedback mechanism to help guide the student's final work.

All doctoral dissertations are made public through ProQuest in order to serve others on similar quests.

The dissertation includes the following five parts:

Part One: INTRODUCTION: *Where, Who, and Why*

The student(s) will:

1. Identify themselves, their interconnected, intersectional positionalities and motivating inspirations, their communities, locations, place of focus, and orientation. They address why this issue/concern matters to them; why they are uniquely situated for this investigation; and what life experience and aspects of their own identity have prepared them to conduct this research and complete this dissertation.
2. Articulate the issue/concern/community/bioregion/ecosystem/opportunity being addressed and provide historical lenses within which to understand the issue/concern/community/bioregion/ecosystem/opportunity. This engages the reader of the dissertation to empathize and care.

3. Signal what is to come in the dissertation, introducing specific language including key concepts and terms.

Part Two: THE LITERATURE REVIEW: *What*

The student(s) will:

4. Describe the theoretical lenses that have shaped and influenced the dissertation research.
5. Distill the informing literature with a clear focus on the impact of pertinent material uncovered by the student in the literature review.
6. As relevant, synthesize these to offer a conceptual framework for the research.

Part Three: RESEARCH METHODS: *How and When*

The student(s) will:

7. Describe the research methodology and methods in detail.
8. Articulate a rationale for each part of the research method design.
9. Describe the approaches included to ensure high quality and depth in design.
10. Include details of ethical attention to methods and practices, including through Institutional Review, ethical consent and attention to ethical considerations in detailed procedures, protocols, and processes.
11. Describe the Regenerative Visionary Project with a focus on where this occurred, when, who participated and how they participated, what they did/what the student did.

Part Four: THE FINDINGS: *Making Meaning (So What)*

The student(s) will:

12. Describe the findings - what happened? Address what specifically has been learned from the actions taken and their reflection/evaluation on the research they conducted in the Regenerative Visionary Project.
13. Substantiate the findings with rich, thick description and summarize them visually or in other creative ways (i.e. maps, charts, graphs, blueprints, collages, photographs, video, audio, installation, performance, etc.) to bring the findings to life.
14. Either alongside the findings or after sharing them, discuss and interpret the findings – what do they mean? What literatures or other movements in the worldspace are evoked or resonant with what is arising? Elaborate on the connections and the “so what” of these insights.

Part Five: CONCLUSIONS: *Reflection, Expansion, Impact and Opportunity (Now What)*

The student(s) will reflect on the following questions:

15. Based on my/our interpretation of the findings what do I/we recommend? What do I/we propose?
16. What was most surprising?
17. What is emergent: what next steps, new questions, new directions are now relevant?
18. What is significant about this, and what next steps can be taken in the continuation of embodying this regenerative vision?

To conclude with next steps provides a road map for the student(s) or others who want to build on the experience and learning contained in the dissertation.

The final phase of this degree program is focused on writing the dissertation, receiving feedback, and revising until complete. The student works closely with the Midwife-Coach and their Wisdom Council to seek help and support in removing barriers, gaining fresh perspective, and continuing to produce timely writing and insight.

To note, students who undertake substantial creative work as part of their doctoral regenerative visionary project still also produce a substantial written dissertation.

Individual, Partner, Collective

It is important to note that in order to disrupt the high status given to the individual over the partner or the collective in academia and in Western civilization, this doctoral program allows students to work together in substantial ways.

For example, students may combine efforts and work together on the Doctoral Visionary Regenerative Project but write separate proposals, complete separate dissertations, and have separate Wisdom Councils (committees). In this case, they would be graded separately even if they shared the effort of working together on the project.

Or students can opt to share a single committee and submit a single proposal together, share the work of the project, and write the dissertation together. Students may do this in a partnership or in a group or collective of up to five members. The partners and/or the members of a collective would all receive the same grade on all work submitted regardless of the appearance of who did what. How the partners or collective make decisions, divide up the workload, complete the work, reflect on it, and complete the dissertation would be left up to the partners or the collective itself to propose and submit to the Wisdom Council for review and approval. Students choosing the partnership or collective path need to make a substantial commitment to each other because if the partnership or collective falls apart, they will need to begin again and establish separate committees, submit separate proposals, etc.

Though it can be challenging to work with others, this doctoral program recognizes the value of partnership and the power of collective effort. There is much to learn about interpersonal communication, challenging embedded patterns and beliefs, listening deeply to each other, and making necessary compromises in order to reach the common good. We believe true partnership and collaboration is necessary in the creation of a new way of being and belonging to each other and the planet. Therefore, this doctoral program does not consider working as a member of a team to be shirking one's duty or avoiding hard work. We recognize the hard work in developing emotional intelligence which is vital for making and maintaining good collaborative relationships.

Indigenous education is a process of coming to know, honor, and apply essential principles of ecological relationship in its broadest terms. This way of educating honors the continual enchantment of human relationships to each other and the natural world. It's education for life, community, and ensoulment.

*Greg Cajete, PhD (Tewa, Santa Clara Pueblo)
VPRL Classroom Faculty*

The Wisdom Council

In keeping with the focus of this doctoral degree on providing a decolonial/Indigenous context for advanced learning, we have renamed the Doctoral Committee as the Wisdom Council. All committees have these four members: student, chair, second reader and community member. However, we have renamed and reconfigured the roles of the members on the Wisdom Council as Catalyst/Creatrix (student), Midwife (Chair), Lotus (second faculty reader), and Source (community member).

The purpose of this committee structure is to counter the dominant hegemony that researchers must remain distant from the persons and the subjects that they study in order to maintain some false notion of objectivity. It is the position of this doctoral degree that subjectivity, connection, and closeness are required to change the destructive course of civilization. We have come to the end of that age wherein distance is valued above connection. We know now that only through relationships of accountability and reciprocity are we able to advance knowledge that serves the values of love, respect, peace and the future survival of all life on earth.

Wisdom Council Membership

Each student selects the members to serve on their Wisdom Council, and each Council has between 4 and 6 members, including the student.

Each member carries a significant role as described below.

1. Wisdom Council Member: The Student – The Catalyst Creatrix

The student, not the faculty member, is recognized as the central fire and serves as the catalyst creatrix. It is the student's core vision, the development of the student's leadership skills and abilities, and their capacity for meaningful reflection that is the central focus of this doctoral degree. Each student holds responsibility for their own learning as they seek to embody their values and manifest their vision. Students select their own Wisdom Council members and may change Council membership if needed.

It is the student's responsibility to select their three Wisdom Council members, communicate with them regularly, and keep moving themselves and their committee forward. If a member must step down, it is the student's responsibility to replace that member within a month.

2. Wisdom Council Member: Chair/Facilitator – The Midwife/Coach

The role of the doctoral committee chair is to facilitate the Wisdom Council, midwife the birth of the student's Project and Dissertation, and mentor the student into the realization of their potential contribution as a regenerative leader.

The Midwife/Coach must be a member of the classroom faculty and may serve to inspire, guide, challenge, and encourage. They should help the student develop their doctoral project and dissertation with clarity and insight. They also understand the requirements for completion of the degree and can ensure the student makes progress toward completion. In this way, they serve as a midwife to a mother, providing support across the threshold and through the initiation toward

success and celebration. The Midwife holds primary responsibility for providing guidance and timely feedback to the doctoral student.

We use the term facilitator/midwife or coach instead of chair as ‘chair’ references the authority granted to the person who sits on the throne (chair). This paradigm shift indicates the significant partnership required between the student/catalyst/creatix and the faculty facilitator/midwife/coach.

3. Wisdom Council Member: Second Faculty Member – The Lotus

The role of the second faculty member is content expertise. They should be rooted in the content of the student’s inquiry. Just as a lotus flower is rooted in the darkness beneath the surface and rises to the surface to fully bloom in the light, the faculty member who serves as the Lotus provides deep grounding in the literature and/or research methods selected by the student. They help the student bring new knowledge into the light. They must hold a doctoral degree. They carefully read each draft and provide detailed feedback as the dissertation is developed. They may be a member of the classroom faculty or not. The student may select the second faculty member from anywhere in the world. Once appointed, the Lotus will serve as an adjunct faculty member on the Wisdom Council.

4. Wisdom Council Member: Community Member – The Source

Students will select someone from the community involved in their doctoral project. The focus for the community member is on the social and ecological needs of the community. Their interest is tending to the community’s health and well-being, capacity-building, access, and opportunity. They are directly connected to the source of the student’s visionary regenerative practice, and their interests may be practical and applied. They provide a clear conscience on the Wisdom Council to ensure that throughout the development and reflection on the Regenerative Visionary Project the student’s work in the community does not deplete the community but rather serves to empower. This member does not need to hold any academic credentials. They may be of any age, language group, culture, or community. They are required to participate fully in committee deliberations and decisions in order for their perspectives to be incorporated into every aspect of the student’s work.

A few quick examples for selection of the third member: a project designed to empower teenage girls concerned about climate change could have a Source who is a teenage girl concerned about climate change; a dissertation on greening abandoned urban land might feature a Source who is a local inhabitant from the area. A Wisdom Council for a project to strengthen grassroots activism should include a grassroots activist; a dissertation on Indigenous water protectors should include a Wisdom Council member who is an Indigenous water protector. The Wisdom Council for a project on bringing together troubled youth and animals displaced/injured by habitat destruction might be best designed to include a youth who cares about animals. A Wisdom Council for a project originating a new art-based ecotherapy for families struggling with addiction should include a family member or recovering addict, etc.

In some cases, it might not be obvious who the “Source” could be. In these situations, the student is urged to discuss with the other two members of the Wisdom Council about possibilities and creative ideas in this regard. To note, the Source role is not the same as the data sources or

research participants or co-researchers the student engages with. The Source, similar to other members of the Wisdom Council, serves as an ongoing representative of the perspective of the community(ies) being engaged with.

5. Additional Expertise – The Consultant (Optional)

Students may select one or two pro-bono consultants who provide expertise on particular aspects of the project and/or dissertation. Consultants do not need to hold a PhD. They may work as advocates, public policy experts, lawmakers, scientists, ecologists, conservation biologists, climatologists, healthcare providers, scholars, activists, organizers, educators or in other specific professions. The consultant's role is to provide additional information and/or context to the Wisdom Council. They are not required to read or provide written feedback on the dissertation, but they may provide feedback on the Regenerative Visionary Project and/or the dissertation. They may be invited by the student to attend Wisdom Council meetings and/or to serve to support the student's learning and understanding in other ways.

The addition of consultants is optional.

Guidelines Regarding Wisdom Council Meetings

Every doctoral Candidate is expected to meet with their Wisdom Councils at least twice per quarter during the following courses: VPRL 810 Dissertation Proposal Revision, all Regenerative Visionary Project courses (VPRL 770, 780, and 790), and all Dissertation coursework (VPRL 820 to 910, plus VPRL 920 as applicable). A Wisdom Council meeting is a synchronous Zoom session with the following four people—the Midwife, the Student/Catalyst, the Lotus, and the Source members of the Wisdom Council—for at least one hour. We recommend scheduling 1.5-2 hours for Wisdom Council meetings. If any one of these four members cannot attend, the Wisdom Council meeting must be rescheduled.

In the exceptional instance of last-minute catastrophic emergencies, cancellation and rescheduling is strongly preferred; or the meeting can be held. Note that the Midwife and Student/Catalyst must be present in all circumstances, plus at least one other Wisdom Council Member.

No Wisdom Council meeting counts if the Midwife and Student/Catalyst plus one other member are not present. However, if someone signals that they cannot make it ahead of time, the Student/Catalyst should cancel and reschedule. If the Student or Midwife cannot make it, the meeting must be called off and rescheduled.

Student/Catalyst Responsibilities with Wisdom Council Meetings

Minimum expectations are to hold a Wisdom Council meeting once in the first five weeks of the quarter, and once before the end of the quarter. Respectfully organize meetings by (1) determining mutually agreeable times well in advance of meetings, through tools such as Doodle polls; (2) send out Zoom links and agendas well in advance of each meeting; (3) offer materials with sufficient time to review; (4) send out reminders about the meeting a few days beforehand; and (5) take notes and send these out within 3 days of the meeting, summarizing key insights and recommendations and highlighting any decisions, action items, and next steps. Upload the

invites, agendas, and notes for each Wisdom Council Meeting in Populi as soon as such artifacts are available.

The VPRL Doctoral Residencies

Residency I: Seeking

In the first residency, the cohort comes together in New Mexico. The initial residency, Seeking, brings students together in the fall of the first year for six days. It includes a bioregional, land-based experience in rural New Mexico in order to experience the land as presence and begin the exploration of visionary practices. This residency launches students into fall coursework and introduces them to the classroom faculty. Residency sessions provide an in-depth introduction to program learning outcomes and the arc of the doctoral journey. An orientation to academic advising, student and career services, course technology, library services, financial aid, the business office, and other campus resources is provided. Students prepare and present preliminary material on their intended regenerative visionary project and its connection to their dissertation focus. Students will be engaged in giving each other meaningful feedback. They explore what “breaks their hearts” and what they intend to mend or repair – both within themselves and in the world. Students meet with doctoral faculty and are matched with a Faculty Mentor.

Residency II: Gathering and Grounding

During the second residency, each doctoral candidate prepares a formal poster session. The scheduled poster session allows each candidate to present poster-style and incorporates time for faculty and cohort members to speak one-on-one regarding their emerging clarity about their upcoming fieldwork. This occurs as part of the second residency. The second residency also initiates the final core coursework synthesis process through in situ gathering of herbs with reciprocity practices in the New Mexico landscape, and the dying of cloths imbued with meaningful symbols and patterns to hold their emerging vision. The second residency marks a powerful shift from divergence to convergence as the students enter a phase of focusing on their dissertation proposal and regenerative visionary project in the time to come.

Residency III: Crossing the Threshold

We have reconsidered the typical “defense” conducted by a few faculty members and instead have designed the defense as a mostly cohort-based experience to occur during the third and final residency. It is called “The Offering.” It is offered during Residency III: Crossing the Threshold, scheduled towards the beginning of the final Summer quarter. This occurs at the beginning of the final Summer quarter (not the end) in order for cohort members to receive feedback and support from others nearing the completion of their written dissertations.

The Offering - Presentation & Feedback. During the third residency, each doctoral candidate will give a formal presentation to their cohort and faculty, which will be followed by a discussion. At this point the dissertation is well underway though not yet completed, and input can be integrated into final revisions.

Networking and Launch Planning. A systems networking process during Residency helps students near completion to develop a launch plan and the networks to sustain taking their work into the world.

Celebration. Successful completion of all aspects concludes the final 'threshold' prior to completion of revisions to the written dissertation. The third residency will incorporate celebrations for this achievement.

The Learning Journey

Cohort - This is a cohort model. Studies have shown that the relationships established between members of a cohort contribute to retention. Students in the cohort take many core courses together during their required coursework. They come together during residencies. Full time students meet in the initial residency, Seeking, continue their relationships in a shared second residency, Gathering & Grounding, and celebrate their successes together in the third and final residency, Crossing the Threshold. Half-time students thread their way through a parallel path of continued shared experiences over a longer period of time, while enjoying fresh synergies with different waves of full- and half-time learners. Though they have different Wisdom Councils (committees) who will oversee their work for much of the second and third year, full-time students will take the Collaboratorium together (see explanation below). As a small, intimate graduate school, we have relatively small cohorts. Our cohort size for the new doctoral program is up to 20 students. We seek to ensure that every student who we admit will be able to complete. We work closely with these students throughout their program to ensure that we have done everything possible to support them to achieve completion. Some of our specific strategies to accomplish this are detailed below.

Checkpoints – Attendance in all scheduled sessions during each residency is required. Attendance for all scheduled class sessions of Zoom synchronous classes will also be required. Lack of attendance is the first red flag that something is amiss. Lack of attendance would initiate a report to the Director of the Program. Preparation for all residencies and completion of assignments for all courses are required. Course grades reflect both preparation and completion of required work. Grades are the second checkpoint. Students must achieve a passing credit (which reflects a grade of B- or better) in every course in order to advance through the program.

Course Grades – The PhD program operates on a pass/fail system. VPRL doctoral students must receive the equivalent of a B- or better in order to have successfully completed a course. If the grade is a fail, in other words, meriting a C+ or lower, students are required to re-take the course for a passing grade. We carefully track pass rates at the course level. If a student does not pass a course, they are placed on Academic Probation and coaching is required.

Celebration – Each residency involves some form of celebration as formal recognition of where the student stands. Successful participation in the first residency, which occurs at the beginning of the first quarter of the program, marks not only acceptance into the program but a launch into the first quarter of coursework. Successful participation in the second residency recognizes the beginning of the transition from student into doctoral candidate. The final residency involves recognition and celebration of the work completed, which by the beginning of the final quarter

includes successful completion of the doctoral fieldwork (the Regenerative Visionary Project) and near completion of the written dissertation.

Collaboratorium – This is a unique course structure we offer to increase student completion of the dissertation. This unique course is facilitated by a Faculty Member. It is designed as a co-requisite with the writing of the dissertation courses and provides an avenue of support and focus for each student in addition to and outside of their Wisdom Council (dissertation committee). The Collaboratorium is required.

Flexibility – Though students initially sign up to attend full-time or half-time, we allow students whose life circumstances change to petition to change their degree pathway or academic program plan to either slow down or speed up. Students may need to ‘stop out’ or take a leave of absence. We have clear policies describing these processes in the Doctoral Course Catalog. Students may take a leave of up to 180 days without re-applying. We accommodate student need in this regard to the fullest extent we can, while maintaining program integrity through the required course sequencing as defined in our approved degree program plans.

Continuation – Students who have not completed the written dissertation as scheduled may continue to enroll to complete the dissertation for an additional three quarters for three doctoral units each quarter. After they have completed those additional three quarters, if they still need more time, they may petition to continue to enroll to complete the dissertation on a per-quarter basis.

Graduation – As higher education professionals, we come together each year to celebrate our graduates in a public ceremony of recognition and honor. Doctoral graduates are invited to attend and to speak at our annual graduation ceremony. Each doctoral student will be given two minutes to stand at the microphone before the assembly and share their moment of crossing the stage and accepting their diploma. They may choose to speak, sing, dance, laugh, cry. We provide each one of our graduates each year this opportunity to stand before their class, friends, family, faculty, and the larger community to be recognized and applauded for their accomplishment in completing their course of study and being conferred the degree which they have earned.

Life After the PhD - The final residency includes a section on launching one’s postdoctoral life through meaningful networks, strategies, and plans. Students prepare for and attend a session led by a faculty member on how to build one’s life and career post-graduation. The purpose of this is to assist students in envisioning and planning their work after the doctorate as a way for them to begin to imagine life after completion. Building on the research about visualization and the success of athletes who visualize the end of the race before it begins, this required activity enables and encourages students to focus on completion as they prepare for next steps beyond the dissertation.

Alumni – As part of the graduation ceremony, we officially welcome each graduate into our Alumni Circle, reminding them of their enduring connection with Southwestern College. We anticipate inviting our alumni back to attend our doctoral residencies in the future to serve as examples of successful graduates who have taken the work of their doctoral degree into the world to make meaningful change.

REQUIREMENTS FOR DEGREE COMPLETION

There are both full-time and half-time pathways to graduation in the doctoral program. At the onset of their program, doctoral students will select whether they intend to study full time and complete the 76 doctoral units in twelve quarters or enroll half-time to complete the 79 doctoral units required for half-time enrollment in 21 quarters. Any exceptions to the academic program planner/degree pathway described below must be approved by the Academic Council or its designee. Full-time attendance requires enrollment in a minimum of 6 doctoral units per quarter. Half-time attendance requires enrollment in 3-5 doctoral units per quarter.

Students studying full-time or half-time who have not completed their dissertation within the required timeframe may extend their studies to complete the dissertation. Students may enroll in an additional 3 doctoral units each quarter following the completion of all other program requirements to finish the dissertation. Students must complete their dissertations within three years after completing all other program requirements. The optional course as needed to complete the dissertation is VPRL 920 Dissertation Continuation (3 doctoral units).

Requirements for the Full-Time Pathway Toward Degree Completion

Duration: 12 quarters, 76 doctoral units

Year 1 – 25 doctoral units

Fall Quarter – 7 doctoral units

- VPRL 600 Residency 1: Seeking (1 doctoral unit)
- VPRL 610-2 Embodied Cosmology for Inquiry (3 doctoral units)
- VPRL 620 The Phenomenology of Visionary Practice and The Call to Serve (3 doctoral units)

Winter Quarter – 6 doctoral units

- VPRL 630 Traditions of Native American Thought: New Minds and New Worlds (3 doctoral units)
- VPRL 640 Regenerative Leadership (3 doctoral units)

Spring Quarter – 6 doctoral units

- VPRL 651-2 Self-Directed Study and Scholarly Expression I: Writing and Citing (3 doctoral units)
- VPRL 670 Roots and Streams: Finding Your Voice, Clarifying Your Vision, Mapping Your Influences (3 doctoral units)

Summer Quarter – 6 doctoral units

- VPRL 681-2 Self-Directed Study and Scholarly Expression II: Writing and Citing (3 doctoral units)
- VPRL 660 Introduction to Research Methods: Pathways of Insight (3 doctoral units)

Year 2 – 23 doctoral units

Fall Quarter – 6 doctoral units

VPRL 710 Ethics: Embodied Social Justice Leadership for Vision & Regeneration (3 doctoral units)

VPRL 720 Advanced Research Methods: Regenerative Inquiry (3 doctoral units)

Winter Quarter – 4 doctoral units

VPRL 731 The Vessel: Exploring Historicity, Lineage, and Legacy (1 doctoral unit)

VPRL 800 Preparing the Dissertation Proposal (3 doctoral units)

Spring Quarter – 7 doctoral units

VPRL 700 Residency II: Gathering & Grounding (1 doctoral unit)

VPRL 770 Regenerative Visionary Project I: Planning (3 doctoral units)

VPRL 810 Dissertation Proposal Revision & Completion (3 doctoral units)

Summer Quarter – 6 doctoral units

VPRL 780 Regenerative Visionary Project II: Action (6 doctoral units)

Year 3 – 28 doctoral units

Fall Quarter – 6 doctoral units

VPRL 790 Regenerative Visionary Project III: Reflection (6 doctoral units)

Winter Quarter – 7 doctoral units

VPRL 820 Collaboratorium I (1 doctoral unit)

VPRL 830 Writing the Dissertation I: Findings, Context, Insights (6 doctoral units)

Spring Quarter – 7 doctoral units

VPRL 840 Collaboratorium II (1 doctoral unit)

VPRL 850 Writing the Dissertation II: Recommendations, Proposals, Synthesis (6 doctoral units)

Summer Quarter – 8 doctoral units

VPRL 900 Residency III: Crossing the Threshold (1 doctoral unit)

VPRL 910 Writing the Dissertation III: Revision, Completion, Reflection, Launch (6 doctoral units)

VPRL 860 Collaboratorium III (1 doctoral unit)

Requirements for the Half-Time Pathway Toward Degree Completion

Duration: 21 quarters, 79 doctoral units

Year 1 – 13 doctoral units

Fall Quarter – 4 doctoral units

VPRL 600 Residency 1: Seeking (1 doctoral unit)

VPRL 610-2 Embodied Cosmology for Inquiry (3 doctoral units) **OR** VPRL 620 The Phenomenology of Visionary Practice and The Call to Serve (3 doctoral units)

Winter Quarter – 3 doctoral units

VPRL 630 Traditions of Native American Thought: New Minds & New Worlds (3 doctoral units) **OR** VPRL 640 Regenerative Leadership (3 doctoral units)

Spring Quarter – 3 doctoral units

VPRL 670 Roots and Streams: Finding Your Voice, Clarifying Your Vision, Mapping Your Influences (3 doctoral units)

Summer Quarter – 3 doctoral units

VPRL 651-2 Self-Directed Study and Scholarly Expression I: Writing and Citing (3 doctoral units)

Year 2 – 12 doctoral units

Fall Quarter – 3 doctoral units

VPRL 610-2 Embodied Cosmology for Inquiry (3 doctoral units) **OR** VPRL 620 The Phenomenology of Visionary Practice and The Call to Serve (3 doctoral units)

Winter Quarter – 3 doctoral units

VPRL 630 Traditions of Native American Thought: New Minds & New Worlds (3 doctoral units) **OR** VPRL 640 Regenerative Leadership (3 doctoral units)

Spring Quarter – 3 doctoral units

VPRL 681-2 Self-Directed Study and Scholarly Expression II: Writing and Citing (3 doctoral units)

Summer Quarter – 3 doctoral units

VPRL 660 Introduction to Research Methods: Pathways of Insight (3 doctoral units)

Year 3 – 14 doctoral units

Fall Quarter – 3 doctoral units

VPRL 720 Advanced Research Methods: Regenerative Inquiry (3 doctoral units)

Winter Quarter – 4 doctoral units

VPRL 710 Ethics: Embodied Social Justice Leadership for Vision & Regeneration (3 doctoral units)

VPRL 731 The Vessel: Exploring Historicity, Lineage, and Legacy (1 doctoral unit)

Spring Quarter – 4 doctoral units

VPRL 700 Residency II: Gathering & Grounding (1 doctoral unit)

VPRL 800 Preparing the Dissertation Proposal (3 doctoral units)

Summer Quarter – 3 doctoral units

VPRL 810 Dissertation Proposal Revision & Completion (3 doctoral units)

Year 4 – 19 doctoral units

Fall Quarter – 3 doctoral units

VPRL 770 Regenerative Visionary Project I: Planning (3 doctoral units)

Winter Quarter – 6 doctoral units

VPRL 780 Regenerative Visionary Project II: Action (6 doctoral units)

Spring Quarter – 6 doctoral units

VPRL 790 Regenerative Visionary Project III: Reflection (6 doctoral units)

Summer Quarter – 4 doctoral units

VPRL 820 Collaboratorium I (1 doctoral unit)

VPRL 830-A Writing the Dissertation I-A: Findings (3 doctoral units)

Year 5 – 17 doctoral units

Fall Quarter – 4 doctoral units

VPRL 840 Collaboratorium II (1 doctoral unit)

VPRL 830-B Writing the Dissertation I-B: Discussion and Insights (3 doctoral units)

Winter Quarter – 4 doctoral units

VPRL 860 Collaboratorium III (1 doctoral unit)

VPRL 850-A Writing the Dissertation II-A: Recommendations & Proposals (3 doctoral units)

Spring Quarter – 4 doctoral units

VPRL 870 Collaboratorium IV (1 doctoral unit)

VPRL 850-B Writing the Dissertation II-B: Synthesis (3 doctoral units)

Summer Quarter – 5 doctoral units

VPRL 900 Residency III: Crossing the Threshold (1 doctoral unit)

VPRL 880 Collaboratorium V (1 doctoral unit)

VPRL 910-A Writing the Dissertation III-A: Revision (3 doctoral units)

Year 6 – 4 doctoral units

Fall Quarter – 4 doctoral units

VPRL 910-B Writing the Dissertation III-B: Completion, Reflection, Launch (3 doctoral units)

VPRL 905 Collaboratorium VI (1 doctoral unit)

Optional as needed to complete the dissertation:

3 units VPRL 920 Dissertation Continuation

NOTE: Students must complete their dissertations within three years after completing all other program requirements.

GRADES & EVALUATION IN THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM

***Please see 2025-26 College Catalog for complete Institutional Policy & Procedures**

Doctoral Faculty-Student Overview

As a student-centric educational program, the doctoral program features a relationship between faculty and students characterized by the recognition of the inherent wisdom, connection, and purpose that students bring to their doctoral work. Faculty as experienced knowledge-carriers are committed to student growth and development. The underpinning of mutual respect shapes the capacity for deep engagement.

It is our goal to create a culture of deep listening as we anticipate differences of perspective and opinion as well as differences based in relational dynamics and/or conceptual worldviews. We do not shun these differences but embrace diversity as a necessity and a source for creating imaginal spaces of new possibility. Transdisciplinary inquiry invites the practice of flexibility and openness to new ideas and a willingness to adapt to new insights (Leavy, 2011, p. 30).

Students and/or faculty may initiate topics, panels, conversations, and related opportunities to bring students and faculty together to engage in areas of mutual interest and passion. The program would sponsor these events and invite all students and faculty to participate. These “synergy pop-ups” provide informal gatherings to spark emergence.

Apples-to-Apples

Aspects of our student-centric program include strategies to include diverse student learners through the ‘apples-to-apples’ approach, in which a student or students may suggest or recommend an alternative assignment of equivalent vigor and commitment in place of an assignment described in the course syllabus by the professor. Each faculty member is empowered to consider such apples-to-apples alternatives, make their decision, and/or enter into a meaningful consultation with the student or students presenting the alternative assignment.

Final Grades

Evaluations are given at the end of each quarter to indicate the quality of students' work. All work done by the student in courses and self-directed studies is evaluated by the course instructor and recorded on the permanent transcript as the final grade. The evaluation procedure is stated on the syllabus for each class.

Final grades for each course, including residencies, in the doctoral degree program are based on narrative evaluation. This is a pass/fail credit system. To receive credit for a doctoral course is the equivalent of receiving the letter B- or better. Letter grades are not used for final grades.

Students are required to achieve a P (Pass) in each course to be considered in good standing, continue in the program, and graduate. If a student fails a course, they may retake it the next time it is offered. They cannot move forward into courses for which the failed course is a pre-requisite until they Pass. All courses for graduation must be successfully completed prior to degree completion. Students cannot move onto candidacy without successfully completing all core courses.

Grades of C+ or below are considered failing and will be reflected in a F (Fail) and the course must be retaken. Students will no longer be considered in good standing and will be placed on Probation until they have retaken the course and received a P (Pass) (signifying B- or higher).

Credit and narrative evaluations are posted to Populi by the instructor no later than one week after the end of the class. They are available to students after submission of their own narrative evaluation, the course/instructor evaluation, and after the evaluation period has ended (usually no later than one week after the close of the quarter).

No course grades will be released if a student's account is financially delinquent.

Grades on Assignments

Faculty may employ letter grades on individual or small group assignments at their discretion. Faculty may also prefer a credit/no credit system on assignments.

Narrative comments by faculty on all student work is required whether or not letter grades or the credit/no credit system is used.

Faculty are advised that they must initiate an Academic Referral Form ideally by end of Week 5 within a quarter, if they feel a student is at risk of failing a class.

Class Participation

The criteria for class participation address the three areas of presentation of self, understanding of self, and capacity to contribute to group process. Faculty are required to use class participation as one of the major components for determining the final course grade. We value all forms of participation including, but not limited to verbal contributions, active listening, presence, and responsiveness.

The specific criteria include:

- Demonstrated responsibility to the educational experience, including:

- Class attendance
- Punctuality
- Class preparation
- Following instructors' guidelines and/or instructions
- Completing assignments on time
- Others as designated by the instructor
- Demonstrated ability to observe and reflect on one's own process as indicated by verbal articulation and behavior in the class.
- Demonstrated ability to self-disclose in a way that is appropriate to the classroom situation and that contributes to the learning process.
- Demonstrated ability to allow one's own experience to serve as a vehicle for teaching/learning within the laboratory of the classroom.
- Demonstrated ability to perceive the group dynamics of the class and interact with other students in a way that facilitates the learning process and shows empathic attunement.

At the discretion of the instructor, inadequate class participation may result in a failing grade for the course, regardless of other grading criteria as listed on the syllabus.

Feedback on Assignments and Discussions in Populi

Assignments

Different faculty utilize different combinations of modes and tools for conveying feedback. Depending on how the assignment is structured, students will be able to look in four kinds of places for feedback from instructors in Populi.

1. The first place to view feedback is that often instructors write overall comments in the comment box to the right of the assignment display.
2. Some instructors also insert "golden bubble" comments into the inline version of your document on the left side of the Populi assignment pane using the annotate tool. Click on each golden commentary bubble to view a text popup with feedback, questions, and encouragement.
3. Additionally, some instructors who utilize rubrics will type feedback related to specific rubric criteria directly into the rubric comment box to the right of each criterion. Click on the tic-tac-toe grid in the upper right of the evaluation space for the assignment in order to view the detailed rubric popup. If the rubric is fully utilized, you will see highlights within each range in the popup and be able to view any criterion-specific detailed commentary, coaching and feedback on the right of the rubric popup.
4. Occasionally, faculty will additionally indicate in the assignment comment box space that they have added comments to your work and then reuploaded for you to review. For example, some faculty might give detailed feedback using inline markup with track changes in Word, and/or through inserting comment function on the right margin in Word. These marked up documents will appear in the Right lower Assignment Comments flow as attachments along with a heads up that they are ready for viewing.

Thus, in addition to a score or Pass/Fail indication, there are multiple ways faculty support student learning through feedback. As regenerative designers, we value feedback cycles as critical to systems growth and evolution.

The following are rubrics students will encounter in multiple courses for assignments. This is not an exhaustive list. Please see each syllabus for details on which kinds of criteria or rubrics are going to be used to support student success for particular discussions and assignments.

Tune into the weekly Node Overview and Node Learning Objectives and sense how the week's intended learning ties into the overall Course Learning Outcomes. In this way, students can intentionally sense for and nurture the intended interweave of creative, critical, and compassionate consciousness and growth.

Key Assignment Rubric

Key Assignment Rubric 2022 Update

Criteria	Levels				Points
Content	25 - 23.01 points EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS (A+/A) Meets all of the requirements per the assignment instructions.	23 - 21.76 points MEETS EXPECTATIONS (A-/B+) Meets most of the requirements per the assignment instructions.	21.75 - 19.76 points DEVELOPING (B/B-) Meets some of the requirements per the assignment instructions.	19.75 - 0 points UNDEVELOPED (C=Failing) Does not meet or minimally meets the requirements per the instructions.	25
Format/Organization	25 - 23.01 points EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS (A+/A) Required format followed. No issues with organization and no errors in grammar, mechanics, and syntax.	23 - 21.76 points MEETS EXPECTATIONS (A-/B+) Required format followed. Some issues with organization and/or errors in grammar, mechanics, and syntax.	21.75 - 19.76 points DEVELOPING (B/B-) Significant issues with organization and/or errors in grammar, mechanics, and syntax.	19.75 - 0 points UNDEVELOPED (C=Failing) Major issues with organization and/or errors in grammar, mechanics, and syntax.	25
Reflection	25 - 23.01 points EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS (A+/A) Student expressed deep personal insight and was able to make new connections regarding own growth, learning and development.	23 - 21.76 points MEETS EXPECTATIONS (A-/B+) Student expressed some personal insight and was able to make some new connections regarding own growth, learning and development.	21.75 - 19.76 points DEVELOPING (B/B-) Student expressed limited personal insight and minimal new connections are made regarding own growth, learning and development.	19.75 - 0 points UNDEVELOPED (C=Failing) Student did not express any personal insights.	25
Conceptual Understanding	25 - 23.01 points Demonstrates an informed understanding of key concepts, ideas, topics, and/or theories as relevant to the assignment.	23 - 21.76 points Demonstrates some understanding of key concepts, ideas, topics, and/or theories as relevant to the assignment.	21.75 - 19.76 points Demonstrates a limited understanding of key concepts, ideas, topics, and/or theories as relevant relevant to the assignment.	19.75 - 0 points Demonstrates a significantly limited understanding or no understanding of key concepts, ideas, topics, and/or theories as relevant to the assignment.	25
Total					100

Academic Writing Rubric

(next page)

Academic Writing Rubric 2022 Update

For all academic writing assignments and research assignments. NOTE: See late paper policy for rules governing timely submission of assignments

Criteria	Levels					Points
Write-up Page Count, Basic Writing Skills (i.e., grammar, syntax, punctuation, spelling) APA 7th ed.—formatting, headers, in-text citations, reference section, etc.	20 - 18.41 points EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS (A+/A) Write up is exemplary with minimal APA errors (<1-2 errors total). Writing skill includes correct use of syntax, grammar, punctuation, and readability (<1-2 errors). Abbreviations are explicitly stated and used appropriately. Length of paper adheres to requirements.	18.4 - 17.41 points MEETS EXPECTATIONS (A-/B+) Write up predominately adheres to correct APA formatting (<3-4 errors total). Writing skill includes correct use of syntax, grammar, punctuation, and readability (<3-4 errors). Abbreviations are minimal and mostly used appropriately. Length of paper is within 1 page of requirements	17.4 - 15.81 points DEVELOPING (B/B-) Write up adheres to correct APA formatting (<5-6 errors total). Writing skill is developing among syntax, grammar, punctuation, and readability (<5-6 errors). Abbreviations are minimal and appropriate. Paper is 75% less than required length	15.8 - 0 points UNDEVELOPED (C=Failing) Write up does not adhere to correct APA formatting (7 or more errors total). Writing skill includes incorrect use of syntax, grammar, punctuation, references (in-text and reference section), and readability (7 or more errors). Inappropriate or confusing use of abbreviations. Paper is 50% or more less than required length and will not be accepted.		20
Follows Specific Framework and/or Prompt of the Paper (See Syllabus and/or Instructor)	30 - 27.61 points EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS (A+/A) Paper clearly presents and connects all required components. Subject matter clearly relates to assignment topic.	27.6 - 26.11 points MEETS EXPECTATIONS (A-/B+) Paper meets requirements of presenting and connecting components. Subject matter relates to assignment topic. Subject matter relates to assignment topic.	26.1 - 23.71 points DEVELOPING (B/B-) Paper minimally presents connecting required components. Subject matter somewhat relates to assignment topic.	23.7 - 0 points UNDEVELOPED (C=Failing) Paper does not include one or more of the required connecting components. Subject matter not related to assignment topic.		30
Clarity and Organization in Expression of Ideas	20 - 18.41 points EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS (A+/A) Writing is exceptionally well organized; ideas and concepts are discussed with superior clarity. Paper demonstrates a solid synthesis of ideas. Integration of material in a coherent and creative way including a variety of perspectives, resources, or evaluative process. All ideas flow logically from one concept to the next.	18.4 - 17.41 points MEETS EXPECTATIONS (A-/B+) Writing is well organized; ideas and concepts are described clearly. Paper discusses a variety of perspectives, resources, or evaluative process. Paper demonstrates a clear synthesis of ideas and critique of information. Most ideas flow logically from one concept to the next.	17.4 - 15.81 points DEVELOPING (B/B-) Organization and clarity of paper needs improvement; can be followed or understood with effort. Paper demonstrates some synthesization and critique of information. Paper reflects little integration of a variety of perspectives, resources, or evaluative process. Discussion of material is vague, irrelevant, or redundant.	15.8 - 0 points UNDEVELOPED (C=Failing) Writing lacks clarity and organization; is difficult to follow or confusing. Paper demonstrates a little to no synthesization and critique of information. Paper fails to integrate a variety of perspectives, resources, or evaluative process. Discussion of material irrelevant, or redundant.		20
Selected Subject Relates to Course Material and content is supported by relevant sources Demonstrating Critical Thinking	30 - 27.61 points EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS (A+/A) Excellent demonstration of critical thinking—Ideas and opinions are supported by data and/or scholarly research. Relevant and meaningful in-text citations are exceptionally well-integrated and contextualized to support the content of the paper and provide a solid critique of information. Citations and references exceed required number, come from peer-reviewed scholarly journals or other academically sound sources, and reflect a mature and nuanced understanding of topic.	27.6 - 26.11 points MEETS EXPECTATIONS (A-/B+) Excellent demonstration of critical thinking—Ideas and opinions are supported by data and/or scholarly researched. Relevant and meaningful in-text citations are integrated to support the content of the paper. Citations and references meet required number, come from peer-reviewed scholarly journals or other academically sound sources, and reflect a clear understanding of topic.	26.1 - 23.71 points DEVELOPING (B/B-) Writing demonstrates some critical thought, with some support for ideas and opinions based in scholarly research and data. Sources meet required number, are academically sound, and reflect a general understanding of topic.	23.7 - 0 points UNDEVELOPED (C=Failing) Writing fails to demonstrate an ability to think critically and synthesize research. Writing is subjective with limited scholarly support for ideas and opinions. Sources do not meet required number, are mostly non-academic and reflect a limited understanding of topic.		30
Total						100

Online Discussions

The Populi platform offers multiple tools for students to gauge whether they are achieving depth, learning, and presence in online discussions. Please note the following:

- Many classes provide counters of post count and word count for initial posts (called “comments”) as well as for replies to others’ posts.
- Many classes additionally use other guidelines, rhythms, or practices to support quality in online discussions. Please see the Course Syllabus as well as Page 9 Online Discussion in the NODE.
- Many classes use a discussion rubric based on best-practice asynchronous online discussion design to help support quality in online discussions. When the rubric is used, it is included in the course syllabus.
- Many classes use both counters and rubrics for discussions to help students. (Please note that the counters alone in classes with rubrics are not conveying or reflecting all of the information and guidelines about the learning context or desired ways we can bring presence, depth, connection, and qualitative insight to our shared learning space.).

The qualitative process of online conversation and mutual growth invites grappling deeply and creatively with concepts, experiences, viewings, and readings; connecting thoughts, insights, and meaning across multiple beings and modes; catalyzing dynamic conversation over multiple days with fresh questions and response and noticing, generating collaborative immersion; and distilling synthesis by the end of each week. Many courses use both the discussion rubric in addition to the counters to support effective arcs of shared learning and deepening.

The following Discussion and Participation Rubric is one approach you will encounter in some classes to create the conditions for depth and learning to emerge.

Discussion and Participation Online Rubric

(next page)

Discussion and Participation 2022(online)

can be used for Hybrid.

Criteria	Levels				Points
Response (Timeliness)	14.2 - 13.07 points Initial response is posted early.	13.06 - 12.36 points Initial response is posted on time.	12.35 - 11.23 points Initial response is posted one day late.	11.22 - 0 points Initial response is posted two or more days late or not at all.	14.2
Initial Response Post (Content)	14.2 - 13.07 points EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS (A+/A) Initial response post is focused and clearly addresses the points or questions delineated in the prompt. Response goes beyond merely summarizing material and demonstrates original thought, critical thinking and reflection.	13.06 - 12.36 points MEETS EXPECTATIONS (A-/B+) Initial response post is focused and clearly addresses all or most of the points or questions delineated in the prompt. Response goes beyond merely summarizing material and demonstrates some original thought, critical thinking and reflection.	12.35 - 11.23 points DEVELOPING (B/B-) Initial response post is somewhat focused and addresses some of the points or questions delineated in the prompt.	11.22 - 0 points UNDEVELOPED (C=Failing) Initial response lacks focus and/or does not address (or minimally addresses) the points or questions delineated in the prompt.	14.2
Initial Response (Conceptual Understanding)	14.8 - 13.63 points Initial response demonstrates a solid understanding of the content as evidenced by explicit and relevant connections with and integration of the key ideas, concepts, and/or theories presented in the required readings to support response. In-text citations are included to support post.	13.62 - 12.89 points Initial response demonstrates some understanding of the content as evidenced by general connections with the readings and resources.	12.88 - 11.7 points Initial response demonstrates limited understanding of the content - connections with the readings and resources are not evident.	11.69 - 0 points Initial response demonstrates a lack of understanding of the content.	14.8
Responses to Classmate's Initial Posts	14.2 - 13.07 points EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS (A+/A) Responds thoughtfully and substantively to at least three classmate's initial posts. Responses demonstrate integration of the material and contribute additional and relevant insights, questions, and/or considerations that serve to enrich the discussion and elicit further dialogue.	13.06 - 12.36 points MEETS EXPECTATIONS (A-/B+) Responds thoughtfully to at least three classmate's initial posts. Responses demonstrate some integration of the material and/or contribute additional and relevant insights, questions, and/or considerations.	12.35 - 11.23 points DEVELOPING (B/B-) Responds to at least three classmate's initial posts. Responses demonstrate limited integration of the material. Responses do not contribute or (minimally contribute) additional and relevant insights, questions, and/or considerations.	11.22 - 0 points UNDEVELOPED (C=Failing) Does not respond to at least three classmate's initial posts or responses are superficial/ lack depth.	14.2
Participation/Interaction (Quantity)	14.2 - 13.07 points EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS (A+/A) Engages in ongoing and meaningful dialogue making a substantive contribution to the discussion. Interacts in the discussion on at least three different days during the time frame (Wednesday through Sunday), responding thoughtfully to replies to own initial response posts and following up on replies made to classmate's posts.	13.06 - 12.36 points MEETS EXPECTATIONS (A-/B+) Makes a contribution to the discussion by interacting in the discussion on at least two different days during the time frame (Wednesday through Sunday), responding to replies to own post and following up on replies made to classmate's posts.	12.35 - 11.23 points DEVELOPING (B/B-) Makes a limited contribution to the discussion - interacts on a single day or the last day of the discussion and does not respond to replies to own posts or does not follow up with replies made to classmates' posts.	11.22 - 0 points UNDEVELOPED (C=Failing) Makes a significantly limited contribution to the discussion - no interaction and engagement or minimal interaction and engagement.	14.2
Synthesis	14.2 - 13.07 points Posts a thoughtful and substantive synthesis by the deadline that identifies key learning, insights gained or take-a-ways from the discussion. Synthesis reflects an informed understanding of the material discussed as evidenced by the inclusion of key ideas, concepts, theories explored through the discussion and/or themes that emerged through the discussion.	13.06 - 12.36 points Posts a thoughtful and somewhat substantive synthesis that identifies key learning, insights gained or take-a-ways from the discussion. Synthesis reflects some understanding of the material discussed.	12.35 - 11.23 points Posts a synthesis that identifies key learning, insights gained or take-a-ways from the discussion. Synthesis reflects limited understanding of the material discussed.	11.22 - 0 points Does not post a synthesis or synthesis lacks detail and/or substance.	14.2
Format/Mechanics	14.2 - 13.07 points Writing is well organized, clear, concise and focused with no errors in grammar/mechanics/syntax.	13.06 - 12.36 points There are some issues with or errors in organization, focus, clarity, and/or grammar/mechanics/syntax.	12.35 - 11.23 points There are numerous issues with or errors in organization, focus, clarity and/or grammar/mechanics/syntax.	11.22 - 0 points There are numerous major issues with or errors in organization, focus, clarity, and/or grammar/mechanics/syntax.	14.2
Total					100

Late Paper Policy

Late papers will be marked down a ½ grade for each day late. A faculty member may give a different policy on the first day of class, in which case the faculty member's policy takes precedence.

Student Narrative Self-Evaluation

Students will submit a written narrative reflection and self-evaluation at the conclusion of every course, including each residency, by the Sunday following the end of the quarter, as indicated on the Academic Calendar.

Faculty will read student self-evaluations prior to writing their own evaluations of student work.

Faculty Narrative Evaluation of Students

Each faculty member will submit a written narrative evaluation of each student's work in every course. These are written following faculty reflection on the student's own self-evaluation of their work in that course. Faculty evaluations accompanied by clear indication of credit/no credit will be due by Sunday at 5 pm in the week following the completion of the quarter.

Faculty complete each course by reviewing students' written narrative self-evaluations, offering their own written narrative summarizing student learning, and providing a final grade of Credit/No Credit. The end-of-quarter faculty narrative evaluation of student work should be 1-2 paragraphs in length. Faculty use an appreciative inquiry frame and growth mindset for feedback. Each end-of-quarter narrative evaluation should include particular highlights and successes for the student. Faculty keep comments constructive and include at least one suggestion or resource for further development. Faculty are invited to relate evaluation of progress to the course learning outcomes and the success criteria in the rubrics and syllabus. Instructors' thoughtful coaching and words can continue to create a generative learning context for gentle development and transformation, appreciating the student's strengths and nurturing their growth. Faculty respect FERPA guidelines regarding avoiding inclusion of personal, medical, or other information about the student in their remarks.

Narrative evaluations should address:

1. Student learning in direct relationship to Course Learning Outcomes.
2. Student participation and contribution to the community of learners in the class.
3. Student accomplishment as demonstrated in major assignments.
4. The 'growing edge' or specific areas for further growth and development in skill acquisition, participation, and preparation for continued doctoral study.

Incomplete Policy for the Doctoral Program

Students can request an Incomplete on all courses except for residencies and advanced doctoral coursework.

No Incompletes on VPRL Residencies and Advanced Coursework Policy

Students cannot take Incompletes on Doctoral Residencies (VPRL 600, 700, 900) or advanced coursework, including the Dissertation Proposal and Dissertation Writing Course Series (VPRL 800, 810, 830, 830-A, 830-B, 850, 850-A, 850-B, 910, 910-A, 910-B, 920, etc.), the Regenerative Visionary Project Course Series (VPRL 770, 780, 790, etc.), and the Collaboratorium Series (VPRL 820, 840, 860, 870, 880, 905), except in the case where they have applied for and been granted a signed Program Exception initiated in a timely way, for extenuating or catastrophic circumstances.

Incomplete Request Process

For the other VPRL courses, students can *request* an Incomplete. Giving an Incomplete is the prerogative of the instructor. The instructor determines the circumstances of warranting an Incomplete grade in consultation with the student and the VPRL Director, as needed. Students requesting an Incomplete should speak with their instructor as soon as possible.

Incompletes may be approved due to extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances for the purpose of granting additional time to complete coursework include:

- death in the family
- serious accident or illness resulting in an inability to attend class or do the required work
- unusual circumstances surrounding the birth of a child
- visa problems for international students
- similarly, mitigating circumstances which could not have been prevented or anticipated by the student and were completely beyond their control.

A faculty member may initiate an incomplete in an emergency.

If a student is considering requesting an incomplete, they are strongly encouraged to consult with the Program Director prior to submitting a Petition for Incomplete. After meeting with the Program Director, a Petition for Incomplete may be submitted for approval by the faculty member. The student must communicate the extenuating circumstances that warrant an incomplete. Documentation may be required for full approval.

Requirements

- An incomplete is only granted if a student has completed 60% of the coursework and has met attendance requirements.
- If a student has an outstanding incomplete from a previous quarter, they cannot apply for an incomplete in the following quarter. For extenuating circumstances, a Petition for Program Exception may be submitted.
- If the student is receiving financial aid, they should check with the Financial Aid Administrator to determine how receiving an incomplete how/if receiving an incomplete affects funding.
- If the class the student is receiving an Incomplete in is a prerequisite for another class, the student will not be able to register for that class until they have completed the class and received a grade. [OBJ]

Deadlines and Grading

- *A Petition for Incomplete must be initiated prior to the last day of the quarter.*
- The deadline for submitting incomplete coursework will be agreed upon by the faculty member in consultation with the student. This deadline cannot exceed the last day of the quarter after the Petition for Incomplete is filed. If coursework is not completed by the agreed upon deadline, the student will be given the grade earned based on the work submitted.
- In some cases, incomplete work may be graded by the Course Leader or Program Leadership depending on the availability of the faculty member.

Extensions

- A request to extend the Incomplete beyond the agreed upon deadline may be submitted via filling out a new Petition for Incomplete and marking “extension” on the form. The Program Director, in consultation with program leadership, will review the request and notify the student of their decision.
- If the class the student is receiving an incomplete in is a prerequisite for another class, the student will not be able to register for that class until they have completed the class and received a grade.

Students Requesting an Incomplete Must Complete the Following

- Consult with the course Faculty.
- Consult with the Program Director.
- If an agreement is reached on an Incomplete grade, sign and complete the *Petition for Incomplete Form*.
- Pay the Incomplete Fee.

Appealing a Course Grade

The appeal form for a course grade must be submitted within 2 weeks of the final grade posting; otherwise, the final grade cannot be reconsidered and will remain as initially reported.

A student may appeal a failing final* course grade using the following procedure:

- Meet your instructor within 3 days of grade posting to request a grade change. If the instructor agrees to a grade change, they must submit a Grade Change Form to the Registrar.
- If the instructor does not agree to a grade change, the student may submit a Petition for Grade Appeal along with any supporting documentation, such as course work and rubrics. The form will go to the Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs who will consult with the Academic Programs Director, Instructor, and Academic Council as needed.
- The Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs will approve or deny the grade appeal, and if approved, they will send a grade change form to the Registrar. The Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs’ decision on the grade appeal is final.

*Students may not appeal an individual assignment grade.

DOCTORAL CREDITS

Credit Policy Statement – Doctoral Level of Study

Doctoral Quarter Hour Definition

Credit or quarter units for Doctoral courses will be assigned according to the definitions given below. Each doctoral unit is equivalent to 40 hours of required learning activity per quarter. All required learning activities must be explicitly stated in the course syllabus. The class Attendance Policy, which requires attendance for all scheduled classes, is used to count for seat-time when seat-time is used toward meeting learning activity total hours. The class meeting schedule is established in the Quarterly Course Schedule and is published on the course syllabus indicating times and dates for all scheduled class meetings.

Definitions for Doctoral Credit Policy

1. The Academic Year (AY) at SWC is defined according to a year-round academic schedule of four ten-week quarters with breaks between each quarter. The doctoral AY begins by early September and ends the following year before the end of August.
2. As the AY is divided into four quarters of equal length, a credit hour is therefore referred to as a quarter unit, to conform with national norms.
3. A single doctoral unit is defined as four hours per week or 40 hours over the course of the ten-week quarter. A three-unit class is defined as 12 hours per week or 120 hours over the course of the quarter. A six-unit class is defined as 24 hours per week or 240 hours over the course of the quarter.
4. A doctoral unit may consist of any of the following educational activities: reading, writing papers, small group teamwork, online discussion group participation, research, fieldwork, experiential activities, journaling, meditation or other visionary practices, online course work in the learning management system (Populi), seat time during class sessions, one-on-one meetings with faculty, etc.
5. As an example, a typical three-unit doctoral class includes three hours of weekly zoom synchronous class sessions, leaving 9 hours outside of class (class sessions are defined as seat time) for individual and group educational activities as suggested above. Course syllabi will specify what educational activities are required.
6. The doctoral program is aware that one size does not fit all. Students read, write, and conduct other educational activities in different ways that may require different periods of time. The doctoral unit is a general category that provides guidance to course designers. Students' complete assignments according to their learning styles and needs. All students are expected to complete assignments according to course syllabi expectations.

Definition of Full-Time and Half-Time for the Doctoral Program

Doctoral students will select at the onset of their program whether they intend to study full-time and complete the 76 doctoral units in the three-year program or enroll in the half-time, 21-quarter program and complete the 79 doctoral units required for half-time enrollment.

Students enrolling full- or half-time may apply for, and, if eligible, receive federal financial aid.

- Full-time attendance requires enrollment in a minimum of 6 doctoral units per quarter.
- Half-time attendance requires enrollment in 3-5 doctoral units per quarter.

When an Extension is Required for Degree Completion for the Doctoral Program

Students studying full-time or half-time who have not completed their dissertation within the required timeframe may extend their studies to complete the dissertation. Students may enroll in an additional 3 doctoral units each quarter following the completion of all other program requirements to finish the dissertation. Students must complete their dissertations within three years after completing all other program requirements. The optional course, as needed to complete the dissertation, is VPRL 920 Dissertation Continuation (3 doctoral units).

Expectations for Enrollment in Each Three-Doctoral-Unit Course

Most, though not all, VPRL courses are three doctoral units. This is defined as half-time enrollment. This definition, approved by the Department of Education, allows students to be eligible for federal financial aid and enroll in only one VPRL course per quarter. This is a special arrangement to ensure half-time students are eligible to receive federal financial aid.

Half-time doctoral students are expected to be able to dedicate a minimum of 12 hours per week on a three doctoral unit course for the ten-week quarter. Full-time students are expected to work 24 hours per week. Of course, students read and write, process information, attend experiential activities, etc., in different ways. So, the number of hours actually spent on class time will vary with each student.

Courses will also vary with the amount of work required in different stages of the class and/or for different assignments. It is understood that major assignments will take more time and are worth more points in the course. Some weeks there may be less to read and less to accomplish. Other weeks there will be a major assignment due. Students may select how to organize their time to accomplish major assignments. All major assignments with due dates are spelled out in the course syllabus which is made available to students upon registration for the course.

This means the hours per week is an approximate figure, but it provides a framework for busy people. Below are some further details.

Each unit is defined through a combination of ‘seat time’ and ‘outside of class’ time.

Seat time is defined as the time each student is present in class, whether the class is meeting in person during a residency or via zoom. Seat time includes in-class breaks, so even when there is

a ten-minute break, an hour is an hour. Most VPRL three doctoral unit classes meet via zoom for three hours per week.

Seat time may include:

- Faculty or student-led mindfulness practices, guided visualizations or journeys, creative and/or catalyzing activities, check-ins, etc.
- Creative and/or visionary practices engaged in together during class
- Skill-building activities
- Faculty-facilitated discussion of assigned reading, pertinent topics, course material, and reflections on learning
- Student-facilitated small group break-out discussions of assigned reading, pertinent topics, course material, and reflections on learning
- Student presentations - individual or small group
- Faculty presentations
- Guest speakers
- Reviewing past assignments and preparing for future assignments
- Q & A on class materials
- Faculty and students may determine other in-class activities as appropriate.

Weekly seat time is scheduled for three hours in most three-unit doctoral courses. This leaves 9 hours per week for outside-of-class engagement. Students fulfill this in a wide variety of ways, per the definition and descriptions of ‘outside of class’ time below.

Outside of class time is defined in multiple ways and represents different kinds of activities and assignments students may engage in as they explore course materials, methods, and experiences that directly pertain to that specific course description as stated in the VPRL Catalog and on the course syllabus. The purpose of assigned work is to give students ample opportunities to demonstrate their learning in direct relationship to the stated course learning outcomes in the syllabus.

Outside of class time may include any of the following activities/assignments. Faculty select the appropriate kinds of outside of class activities that best support the course learning outcomes for their course. Since faculty select assignments and activities for each course, the kinds of activities and assignments will vary. Faculty may select from any of the following:

- **Reading** assigned course materials; reading recommended books and articles; reading selected material connected to course material; and/or reading to explore more deeply and expand one’s knowledge about one’s own vision seed.
- **Research activity** can include attending to one’s own insights and dreaming; following intuitive pathways; making art or any creative expressive work utilized as part of arts-based research methods; planning, scheduling, and conducting interviews or focus groups; tracking down scholarly articles or archive materials; exploring and identifying library resources; reviewing and coding gathered qualitative material (data) collected from fieldwork and research notes; establishing time for quiet meditation and reflection in order to promote the ability to ‘notice one’s noticing’ or develop metacognitive skills of self-observation and self-awareness, as well as other research activity as defined by various methodologies.

- **Writing** in all of its forms, including: reflective writing, process writing, outlining, revising, journaling, songwriting, creative writing (poetry, prose, etc.), and academic writing. Writing can be a solo activity, or students may meet and write in pairs or groups, with other students, or with any others.
- **Small Group** activities include time in small group meetings, discussions, and completing assignments that require students to meet with each other outside of regularly scheduled class time.
- **Visionary Practices** – these include experiential assignments that require embodied engagement, hands-on, direct action, such as with a creative process, a meditative or mindfulness-based experience, keeping a creative journal, undergoing a pilgrimage, etc.
- **Regenerative Leadership** – these include experiential assignments that require time spent on planning, organizing, communicating with others outside of the school to carry out a project, fieldwork, or research initiative, and skill-building activities that support project management.
- **Online Discussions** generally include posting, responding to others, and a weekly synthesis. Faculty may assign other kinds of online discussion activities that engage students with each other in a discussion board space provided for the class.
- **Required Meetings** with faculty that take place outside of the regularly scheduled class time.
- **Field trips** that occur outside of regularly scheduled class time and require travel to and from off-campus or off-site destinations. Both the travel time and the time at the destination count toward the total hours for ‘outside of class’ time. This pertains to on-ground residences.
- **Other activities** – each course is unique, and faculty may provide additional outside of class assignments that do not neatly fit into any of the descriptions above.

Each course will combine various elements to engage students both during seat time and outside of class time to provide a learning environment that is both supportive and challenging, inviting new experiences, developing new skills, and creating a dynamic co-learning space to enhance and support the student’s doctoral journey.

For each week, the total combination of seat time and outside of class time constitutes the total expected student activity to earn the doctoral units. Since class is for three hours per week, the minimum outside of class time would be 9 hours. A student may seek to arrange their schedule to plan for how they will incorporate the outside of class time in a way that is sustainable over time. For example, a half-time student may identify three to four hours per day for four days (3 hours x 4 days = 12 hours) for a total of 12-16 hours; or a half-time student might prefer to spread the time out and identify two to three hours per day for six days (2 hours x 6 days = 12 hours) for a total of 12-16 hours. It is suggested that students establish a weekly rhythm that works for them, and that does not sacrifice meals, sleep, play, or other activities necessary to maintain wellbeing.

Please note that, to serve full-time students, all faculty teaching in the same quarter pay special attention to ensure their major assignment due dates do not occur at the same time. All faculty support this strategy to better support full-time students who generally enroll in two courses per quarter.

COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (POPULI) & TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Populi

All students are required to utilize Populi for their syllabi, communication, discussions, assignments, and submission. Additionally, all courses have weekly lessons (nodes), and each lesson (node) includes an entrance meditation, an overview with objectives, weekly flow of activities, course preparation activities for students, readings and resources, assignments (if applicable), and discussions (if applicable).

Technology Resources

Technology Services provides a variety of tools and services to support students, faculty, and staff. Your **SWC.edu** email account is needed to access any of these resources and services.

Current services include:

- Southwestern College Populi: permanent access to your academic records and class resources.
- Web-based email and software from Microsoft Office 365. NOTE: Forwarding SWC email to an external email account is not permitted.
- Software may be used as web-based tools
- More than 50 GB of cloud-based storage
- Collaborative spaces using SharePoint and OneDrive
- Shared campus calendar of events and important deadlines

Office software for PC, Mac, and mobile that may be downloaded on up to 5 personal devices:

- Adobe products for students using digital tools for art therapy
- Autodesk products for creativity
- Avast antivirus
- Assistance with configuration and troubleshooting personal devices by appointment.

For Technology Services policies, please see the Populi Files section.

THE WELLSPRING EPORTFOLIO

Purpose

The purpose of the WellSpring ePortfolio is to provide a meta-learning environment for students to document their growth and development in relationship to the VPRL doctoral program.

The definition of a *wellspring* is a ‘source of continual supply’ (Merriam Dictionary 2025). It was first used in the 12th century to reference the source of underground spring water welling up to provide life-giving water. The choice of this term for the purpose of the portfolio is to engage with learning as a continual supply – there is no end to learning – and like spring water flowing up from underground, learning provides connection with source and life.

The WellSpring ePortfolio serves as a portal for student documentation of their own learning. They reflect on their learning in direct relationship to the eight VPRL Program Learning Outcomes, tracking their learning journey beginning with their first quarter. This meta-learning process strengthens students' ability to evaluate and reflect on their own learning as they select specific examples from their own course work each quarter to upload into their ePortfolio and link to one of the eight Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs).

This reflexive process ensures a deepening awareness, understanding, and application of what each Program Learning Outcome signifies as part of their doctoral education. Students develop fluency about the meaning, purpose, direction and application of the VPRL program as defined by its PLOs.

In the quarter in which students enroll in VPRL 731 *The Vessel: Historicity, Lineage, & Legacy*, students reflect on their individual portfolios, tracking their learning and summarizing their growth. At this time students should have between 2-4 artifacts and linking statements per PLO for a total of 20 artifacts, linking statements, and mentor reflections. This first formal written reflection is called the Synthesis Essay (see more on Synthesis Essay below) and is part of the move toward Candidacy. In the Synthesis Essay students reflect on their own demonstrations of learning (artifacts) and LINKING statements. This demonstration drawn from their coursework documents their move toward fluency.

The WellSpring ePortfolio provides the framework to support student success in the vital move toward becoming PhD Candidates. After students become Candidates, they no longer contribute quarterly artifacts. Instead, as part of the final residency, students contribute final artifacts and write a Final Synthesis Essay. In this way, the WellSpring ePortfolio serves as a reflexive repository documenting personal learning from the beginning until the conclusion of the doctoral educational program.

Overview: What is the WellSpring ePortfolio?

The WellSpring ePortfolio is a digital space where students build a collection of their work throughout their doctoral program. Think of it as a developmental story of your learning journey, a living document that grows with you as you progress through your studies.

Unlike a traditional comprehensive exam, the ePortfolio replaces high-stakes oral and written examinations with a reflective process. You will collect meaningful artifacts (assignments) from your coursework, link them to Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), and ultimately write one synthesis essay in the move toward candidacy and a final essay near the time of completion. These essays provide meta-learning opportunities that demonstrate your growth and fluency as doctoral students.

Key Components

1. **Artifacts:** Selected assignments that demonstrate your learning (papers, projects, presentations, diagrams, videos, etc.)
2. **Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):** Eight core competencies you must demonstrate throughout your program
3. **Linking Statements:** One-page reflections explaining how each artifact demonstrates a

specific PLO

4. **Mentor Reflections:** Feedback from your mentor on each submission
5. **Synthesis Essays:** Two comprehensive essays – the first written for candidacy that synthesize your artifacts for each PLO and the second written as a final reflection prior to graduation.

Artifact Selection Requirements

Student Status	Artifacts per Quarter
Half-time students	2 artifacts
Full-time students	4 artifacts

***Tip:** Final synthesis/integration papers are excellent choices for artifacts as they typically demonstrate comprehensive learning, but this is NOT a requirement.*

Student Instructions

Initial Setup

1. **Access the Platform:** Navigate to the Watermark platform link provided: If you don't have login credentials, use your school email, and request a password reset through "Forgot Password" function.
2. **Create Your ePortfolio:** Navigate to "ePortfolios", click "Create ePortfolio," select "Create from template," and choose the "Ph.D. WellSpring ePortfolio" template.
3. **Name Your Portfolio:** Use the naming convention: *Ph.D. WellSpring ePortfolio - [Your Name]*
4. **Complete Your Bio Page:** The "About Me" page must include your name, photo, and a bio. This is your main area for creative expression—customize layouts, colors, and fonts using the "Design" tab.

Adding Artifacts to Your Portfolio

Each quarter, you will add artifacts to your portfolio following this process:

1. **Select Your Assignments:** Choose assignments from your coursework that exemplify the PLOs. Use your syllabus and the "crosswalk" curriculum map document to help map assignments to appropriate PLOs.
2. **Write Your Linking Statement:** Compose a one-page statement that explicitly explains how your artifact demonstrates learning in relation to the specific PLO. Begin with something like: "This artifact demonstrates my ability to..."
3. **Share with Your Mentor:** Send both the artifact and draft of your linking statement to your mentor for feedback before finalizing. Since the artifact was already submitted for a course and has already received a grade, the mentor is not reviewing the coursework separately. They are focused on how you articulate the relationship between the selected assignment/artifact and the selected PLO.
4. **Revise Based on Feedback:** Incorporate your mentor's suggestions and polish your linking statement.
5. **Upload to Your Portfolio:** Navigate to the appropriate PLO page and complete the required fields: Title of Artifact, Student Linking Statement, and Upload of Artifact.
6. **Notify Your Mentor:** Share your portfolio URL with your mentor so they can review

your final submission and write their reflection.

***Once your Mentor has submitted the reflection on the artifact, it is considered complete and no revisions will be accepted from the student.**

Handling Special File Formats

- **Video Files:** Forward class zoom link presentation with name and date, start and end time for your part in the class to Tech Support, or, if you are working with your own video, convert your video to MP4 format and send it to Tech Support (and/or techteam@swc.edu). They will upload it to the school's Vimeo account and provide you with an embeddable link.
- **PowerPoint Presentations:** Presentations with voice-overs may be uploaded directly. If you encounter issues, contact Tech Support (techteam@swc.edu) for assistance.

Portfolio Structure

Your portfolio contains specific pages with fixed structures:

- **About Me/Bio Page:** Your creative introduction with name, photo, and bio
- **PLO Pages (8 total):** Each page includes four places for you to add: Title of Artifact, Student Statement Linking, Upload of Artifact, and Mentor's Reflection
- **Synthesis Essay Page**
- **Final Reflection Essay Page**
- **Crosswalk Diagram of the Course Map and Program Learning Page**

Using the Watermark Platform

Key features to be aware of:

- **Timeline Feature:** The platform opens to a timeline that acts like a digital diary. Students can add entries with dates, text, and images that can be pulled into their portfolio.
- **Content Organization:** Content is organized within pages using multiple rows and sections, rather than creating separate pages for every item.
- **Design Customization:** Students can customize navigation bar position, fonts, and background colors.
- **Sharing:** Portfolios can be made public via a share button, but this should typically be done at the end of the creation process.

Quarterly Submission Workflow

Follow this workflow each quarter to ensure smooth collaboration between students, mentors, and faculty:

Step	Owner	Action
1	Student	Select an assignment that exemplifies a PLO
2	Student	Write a linking statement connecting artifact to PLO
3	Student	Share draft artifact and linking statement with mentor

4	Mentor	Provide feedback on draft materials with focus on the clarity of the Linking Statement
5	Student	Revise Linking Statement based on mentor feedback
6	Student	Upload final artifact and statement; share URL with mentor
7	Mentor	Review submission and write reflection; send to VPRL Program Coordinator as Word/PDF
8	Tech + Student	Partner to upload mentor's reflection to portfolio

Mentor Instructions

As a mentor, you play a critical role in guiding students through their portfolio development. Your feedback helps shape their understanding and reflection on their learning.

Mentor Responsibilities

1. **Review Draft Materials:** When students share their draft artifacts and linking statements, provide constructive feedback that helps them strengthen their work and deepen their reflections.
2. **Evaluate Final Submissions:** Review the final uploaded artifact and linking statement for clarity, completeness, and demonstration of the PLO. Clarity of the linking statement is key.
3. **Write Mentor Reflections:** Compose a thoughtful reflection on the student's work that acknowledges their growth and provides guidance for continued development.
4. **Submit to Tech Support:** Send your completed reflection as a Word or PDF document to Tech Support (techteam@swc.edu), who will work with the student to upload it to the appropriate section of their portfolio.

Support & Resources

For technical assistance with the Watermark platform, video uploads, or any other platform-related issues, contact Tech Support (techteam@swc.edu). For questions about artifact selection, linking statements, or mentor reflections, consult with your mentor or the VPRL Program Director.

Additional support is available in this Populi Group: PhD ePortfolio Resources and Discussion. More tips and tricks are located there under Discussion and under Files.

Tips for Success

1. **Start Early:** Begin selecting artifacts and writing linking statements as soon as you complete assignments, don't wait until the end of the quarter.
2. **Be Intentional:** Choose artifacts that genuinely demonstrate your learning, not just your best grades. The portfolio is about growth, not perfection.
3. **Reflect Deeply:** Your linking statements are where the "meta-learning" happens. Take time to articulate not just what you did, but what you learned and how it changed your thinking and/or understanding. This is a developmental learning process, so it is okay to develop greater understanding and application of the eight PLOs over time. What you

come to understand about what each PLO means can and should change over time.

4. **Use your Course Syllabi:** In your course syllabus, each assignment in every course is mapped to the Course Learning Outcomes. The Course Learning Outcomes are mapped to the eight Program Learning Outcomes. This mapping will help you connect your assignments with the PLOs.
5. **Use the Crosswalk:** The crosswalk curriculum map in the Student Handbook and in your ePortfolio is your guide for mapping assignments to PLOs. Consult it regularly to ensure you're covering all outcomes.
6. **Communicate with Your Mentor:** Regular communication ensures you receive timely feedback and stay on track with your portfolio development.
7. **Back Up Your Work:** Keep copies of all artifacts and linking statements in your own files, don't rely solely on the platform.
8. **Ask for Help:** If you encounter technical issues, reach out to Tech Support (techteam@swc.edu) promptly. They are there to help you succeed.

WellSpring ePortfolio Timeline Requirement

Students may upload their coursework (artifacts) and linking statements at any time throughout their enrollment. They do not have to wait until the end of the quarter. However, there is a final due date posted for each quarter. Students must complete WellSpring ePortfolio submission uploads and linking statements by or before the Friday following the end of each quarter. They should immediately send the url to the Faculty Mentor who also has one week to respond with their final reflective statements.

The first late submission will result in a required meeting with the Program Director. The second late submission may result in an Academic Concern. Repeated lateness may result in Academic Probation.

Demonstrating Program Learning Outcomes with Key Assignments

The curriculum map (see below) indicates faculty understanding of which courses are designed to address which Program Learning Outcomes and at what level (beginning, intermediate, or advanced).

Though students are provided with the curriculum map as a guide, they are not limited to the linkages indicated on the curriculum map. They may select any assignment from any class to use as a demonstration of their learning in relationship to any Program Learning Outcome.

Each assignment uploaded into the ePortfolio must indicate which class it is from and provide a brief description of the assignment. Students may select coursework from core courses, Self-Directed Study courses, courses directed toward fieldwork, research, writing the dissertation, etc. In other words, they can use any assignment from any course as evidence and demonstration of their learning in relationship to the eight Program Learning Outcomes. Ultimately, they will have multiple assignments (between 2-4) linked as artifacts to each of the PLOs.

Examples of the kinds of coursework that students can upload:

- any completed course assignment
- written papers
- original art created for a class
- excerpts of required course journals or fieldwork journals
- recorded presentations, such as PowerPoint presentations
- video files
- audio files

Linking Statements

In the WellSpring ePortfolio, students will write a linking statement (not more than one page) explicitly connecting their coursework to the selected PLO.

Linking statements must include:

1. Student's name, course number and title, a brief description of the assignment.
2. Describe how the specific coursework (artifact) explicitly addresses the program learning outcome. By completing this assignment, what do you now understand about that Program Learning Outcome?
3. And/or describe how the process of creating or completing the assignment explicitly addresses the program learning outcome.
4. And/or describe how the coursework demonstrates new learning in relationship to the program learning outcome.
5. And/or describe how this assignment demonstrates your ability to apply this learning outcome.

Here is an abbreviated example of a completed Linking Statement:

1. Student's name
Kris Smyth
2. The number and name of the course for which they did the assignment
VPRL 600: Residency I: Seeking
3. A description of the assignment:
The artifact is the required final written reflection on my individual learning experiences during Residency I: Seeking
 - a. An explanation of how this assignment links to the PLO:
My final reflection on my learning and participation in Residency I exemplifies the beginning of my ability to fulfill PLO #8 which asks students to,

“Catalyze, inspire, expand and deepen their work and lives through purposeful self-reflection and self-evaluation.” As stated in my artifact, I became more keenly aware of my role in groups. In the past, my typical mode of involvement in teams and group learning experiences is to be an observer. I often sit back and watch and wait to engage. Maybe I do this to protect myself, waiting to see how the group functions, and whether I feel safe enough to be vulnerable and make a meaningful contribution. In the residency experience I pushed myself past my comfort zone to actively engage and even to tentatively test out providing a leadership role in group interaction and group projects. I found I was truly welcomed by my peers. This has greatly enhanced my comfort and ability to share my knowledge as well as learn from others. It has utterly changed the way I participate in class. I now see myself as a collaborative learner who can both give and receive. I can follow, and I can lead. Through the self-reflective process (PLO #8) I became more aware of my growth in group engagement and continue to track myself as an eager participant who is willing to be vulnerable. This is also helping me to understand a little bit more about what it might mean to be a ‘regenerative leader.’

Faculty Mentor Reflection Statements

Mentor Reflection Statements should include a thoughtful response to the student artifact and linking statement using appreciative inquiry as the model. Two examples of ways to organize the Mentor Reflections are given below.

Example 1:

1. INTRO: offer a summative sentence about the student LINKING statement as an artifact demonstrating the PLO.

Chris clearly links his final reflection for Residency I to PLO 8 by sharing their increased self-awareness resulting from writing a formal final reflection for the residency course.

2. EVALUATE - offer one or more insights about how the ARTIFACT demonstrates that PLO. Include salient details about the LINKING of that Artifact to that PLO.

By tracking their own internal change process from that of an observer in collaborative learning environments to an active participant, the benefit of formal self-reflection is clearly highlighted. This will make an enormous difference as Chris continues in our VPRL program that emphasizes collaboration over competition for mutual learning.

3. SUGGEST - include suggestions, possible resources, and/ or areas for growth.

Chris could further contextualize their own experience by exploring the work of psychology researcher Brené Brown who has linked courage to vulnerability and further identified both the ability to be vulnerable and the capacity to express courage as key attributes of regenerative leaders.

4. CONCLUDE - conclude with an appreciative inquiry style encouragement.

I believe the pairing of this assignment with PLO 8 is a perfect example of the power of deepening one's life and work through formal self-reflection.

Example 2: The Four Chambered Love Note

The Four Chambered Love Note refers to a feedback structure used in some VPRL courses. It asks the respondent to honestly engage with student work and provide feedback in the following four ways:

2. What moves you - what do you appreciate?

I appreciated the honesty with which Chris identified his former pattern of sitting back in group learning contexts, and how during Residency I, they noticed and became aware of a major shift occurring in how they participate.

3. What are the connections you are making with this?

Collaborative learning is an expectation of the VPRL doctoral program and a characteristic supported by the defined qualities stated in the doctoral dispositions. I see how the process of formal written self-reflection invited this insight to be articulated in a manner that Chris may now continue to notice how they engage in collaborative learning.

3. What questions could you offer to deepen student awareness or knowledge in relationship to this?

As Chris continues to participate in both large and small groups inside and outside of class including participation in student teams that fulfill requirements together, I wonder what kinds of leadership roles may emerge from deeper engagement with co-learning, co-writing, and co-presenting with others?

- b. What else could you recommend to further student growth?

I encourage Chris to further contextualize their own experience by exploring the work of psychology researcher Brené Brown who has linked courage to vulnerability and further identified both the ability to be vulnerable and the capacity to express courage as key attributes of regenerative leaders. Courage and vulnerability are also VPRL doctoral dispositions.

Iterative Review and Successive Coverage and Competency

The WellSpring ePortfolio is intended to document growth and development over time. Students do not go back and change artifacts and/or linking statements unless required to do so during the formal review processes described below.

By the final review prior to graduation, students will add an additional four artifacts and write a Final Synthesis Essay that reflects upon the entire doctoral journey. This essay, along with the

four final artifacts, will complete the portfolio and form the complete record of student learning and growth in the program.

In this way, students build and develop their WellSpring ePortfolio over the period of their enrollment in the program.

Formal Review Cycles

The WellSpring ePortfolio will be formally reviewed by faculty at the following times:

1. At the conclusion of each quarter the Faculty Mentor will review student artifacts and LINKING statements and write a Reflection Statement to be included in the WellSpring ePortfolio along with each artifact.
2. During the required course, VPRL 731 *The Vessel: Exploring Historicity, Lineage, and Legacy*. This review is conducted by an outside reviewer.
3. Following the third and final residency, VPRL 900 *Crossing the Threshold*. This final review is conducted by the Midwife/Coach and Program Leadership as part of fulfilling requirements toward the doctoral degree.

At each review, faculty will provide feedback acknowledging student learning, providing support for deeper engagement with the PLOs, and making any relevant suggestions for improvement.

The WellSpring ePortfolio and the Shift to Candidacy

To note, three accomplishments in relationship to the WellSpring ePortfolio mark the shift to PhD Candidate: (1) completion of all core coursework; (2) the satisfactory review and approval (and any remediation) of artifacts and Linking Statements across all Program Learning Outcomes; and (3) the finalization and any remediation until completion and upload of the first Synthesis Essay.

The ePortfolio is a key component of advancing to candidacy (and earning the status of ABD: All But Dissertation). Here's what to expect:

- The move to candidacy begins during enrollment in VPRL 731 *The Vessel: Historicity, Lineage & Legacy* and is completed during VPRL 700: *Residency II: Gathering & Grounding*.
- Prior to enrolling in VPRL 731, you must have at least two artifacts for every PLO. You should have 20 total artifacts with linking statements and mentor reflections.
- During VPRL 731, your ePortfolio will be reviewed in its entirety by the same outside reviewer who will read your Synthesis Essay. Any questions or suggestions regarding your Linking Statements will need to be addressed at this time.

The Review Process

Unlike traditional comprehensive exams, the Candidacy review is a supportive dialogue with faculty. You will have the opportunity to discuss your learning journey, receive feedback, and refine your Synthesis Essay. The goal is to help you articulate and demonstrate your fluency of the Program Learning Outcomes.

Synthesis Essays

Two Synthesis Essays are required. The first will be required as part of coursework in VPRL 731 *The Vessel: Exploring Historicity, Lineage, & Legacy*, which is completed in the quarter before the second residency. Students complete a Final Synthesis Essay (Final Essay) after the third residency.

Students will write the first Synthesis Essay exploring how the artifacts they have identified and uploaded in their WellSpring ePortfolio in composite demonstrate depth and breadth in achieving the program's eight Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs).

Each Synthesis Essay is a meta-reflection across the scope and sweep of the WellSpring ePortfolio and program accomplishments, cogently arguing readiness to move to the next phase of the program. These Synthesis Essays mark major achievements in the growth of the VPRL student's capacities.

What the Synthesis Essay and WellSpring ePortfolio Review Replaces

The initial Synthesis Essay and WellSpring ePortfolio replaces comprehensive exams that are formal gating processes for the doctoral student at other institutions.

This VPRL requirement replaces sitting for oral and written comprehensive exams with a panel of three judges who have PhDs. If the student does not pass, they do not proceed in the program. Instead of this approach, the VPRL program structures iterative compilation of artifacts and reflections across the duration of study, with the support of the Faculty Mentor, and supports the distillation of a Synthesis Essay. This places the student in the authoritative role of reflecting cogently on their own learning and articulating their preparation for the next phase of the doctoral journey.

Original Writing and Synthesis

The Synthesis Essays are an art form of distillation and meaning making, representing at least 8-10 pages of new writing. Students do not cut and paste from their WellSpring ePortfolio linking statements to create these essays, though they may include quotes from them when illustrating a point of understanding or new learning. Rather, the Synthesis Essay is an original work, representing original thoughts on the evolution and progression of the doctoral journey of learning and transformation, across the artifacts and reflections. The initial essay should speak to student readiness to do original doctoral research. New thoughts are brought to bear. Students find it helpful to either structure their Synthesis Essays along three or four themes, or through the flow of the eight Program Learning Outcomes.

Synthesis Essay Guidelines

Here are some guidelines to help students formulate their Synthesis Essay, the purpose of which is to demonstrate that the student is ready to conduct independent research as a visionary practitioner and regenerative leader and that they have competency in scholarly research and writing and sensemaking to be ready to undertake dissertation writing.

The essay should demonstrate vibrant/best practices in essay-writing and might: adopt a pattern of telling a story, describe and substantiate an arc of learning, utilize a central image with elaborated details, utilize a sustained metaphor or recursive point, or leverage one or more ecofractal patterns. For example, a helpful metaphor might be a cinematic one. The Synthesis Essay zooms out, showing a wide angle of the student's learning journey as if from above, then in a series of discrete scenes the essay selects the major, significant moments of the learning journey that have been told in the WellSpring ePortfolio, incrementally, scene by scene (example by example).

Another metaphor might be weaving, in which the Synthesis Essay communicates the warp or major vertical threads (the eight Program Learning Outcomes) and then weaves the weft as threads across, with specific examples of assignments that epitomized learning drawn from the WellSpring ePortfolio. The Synthesis Essay is thus a final completed weaving which makes the case for how the student's body of work demonstrates satisfaction and embodiment of the PLOs and readiness to proceed.

The Synthesis Essays are written in APA style, should use organizing headings, and offer contexting details as the essay reviewers are not necessarily familiar with the unique terminology of the VPRL curricula. Each Synthesis Essay should cite and reference at least 10-20 diverse scholarly resources using appropriate citations.

Here are the kinds of things the Synthesis Essay can help articulate and demonstrate, that the student as emerging inquirer can:

- write cogently in a scholarly way
- offer context and motivation
- understands and engages the motivation(s) of reader/audience and the self/the universe flowing through
- draw in and be in conversation with the insights of others (summarizing and paraphrasing; wrapping own thoughts; robust citations with parallel references)
- drive the discursive narrative (impetus and clarity to make a particular, clear point, and then designing text to support that, and across paragraphs, towards the overall goal/story/painting)
- express with clarity
- write with ease in voice (using person, including first person, with comfort and ease; avoiding passive voice, really really)
- honor and respect (rather than wasting or distracting from) the reader's time and attention (using Grammarly, including exact locational information – e.g., page number— for each quote, including careful citations; use “30+ things checklist,” etc.)
- introduce, describe and argue and substantiate, and conclude (with transitions)
- articulate a clear thesis and have clearly marked subsections that support the overall thesis
- have each paragraph in a section support the flow of argumentation with clear topic sentences, compelling substantiation, and flowing synthesis and transition in the next paragraph
- substantiation (rich thick description)
- link related items and forge fresh connections

- demonstrate meaning making
- wonder and hypothesize
- inspire and regenerate possibility
- articulate significance (so what) - let the reader care about what this means for them
- pull together well-formatted references
- demonstrate the arc of growth, depth, and transformation that the student's growing body of work represents

Students are encouraged to take a perspective on their own trajectory of growth, clarification, and transformation.

Review Process for the First Synthesis Essay and WellSpring ePortfolio

An independent reviewer reviews the WellSpring ePortfolio and Synthesis Essay during VPRL 731. One of three statuses will be assigned to the WellSpring ePortfolio and to the Synthesis Essay: Pass, Revise, or Rewrite. (Note that the parallel review statuses in journal publishing are Accept, Revise, or Rewrite).

- **Pass** signifies no further work is needed. The work passes and the student has achieved completion with this dimension of the WellSpring ePortfolio and Synthesis Essay Review. This is signified as a Pass in Populi.
- **Revise** signals that revisions are needed. The student should take care with the requested revisions. The requested revisions will be reviewed by the Reviewer. The work does not yet pass the WellSpring ePortfolio and Synthesis Essay Review.
- **Rewrite** conveys that major revisions are needed. Student should take care with requested major revisions. The requested revisions and rewrites will be reviewed by the Reviewer. The work does not pass the WellSpring ePortfolio and/or Synthesis Essay Review.

Iterative review and coaching continue as the student clarifies and hones their demonstrations and articulations of their significant learning accomplishments. The student cannot progress in the program unless and until they receive a PASS on both the WellSpring ePortfolio and the Synthesis Essay. Note: Students who do not receive a PASS before the last week of classes in VPRL 731 should file for an Incomplete after consulting with the Reviewer on agreed-upon dates of completion which must be stated on the Incomplete form. Please note the date by which you must submit the Petition for Incomplete Form.

Final Synthesis Essay

The Final Synthesis Essay is due following the third and final residency, VPRL 900 *Crossing the Threshold*. It has two parts – a look back and a look forward.

In preparation for the final Synthesis Essay, doctoral candidates add at least four additional artifacts from work they have completed after the initial Synthesis Essay. This can include research memos, fieldwork notes, dissertation chapters, etc.

Looking back, doctoral candidates reflect across their entire curricular journey, from the initial residency through near-completion, including fieldwork and dissertation writing,

to identify key turning points or moments of transformation. The focus is on articulating the stages and phases of learning, including the specific experiences, assignments, conversations, classroom or Wisdom Council discussions, feedback, and/or readings that helped crystallize new awareness and shaped the direction of the work. Specific examples from the ePortfolio should be integrated into the final Synthesis Essay and a summary of learning in relationship to each of the 8 PLOs.

Looking forward, doctoral candidates will anticipate the successful conclusion of their dissertations leading to graduation. They can share their new networks, plans, ideas, and directions post-graduation. They should describe how the doctoral learning journey has prepared them to undertake these new directions.

No references are required, but citations and references can be included at the student's discretion.

The Midwife and VPRL Director will serve as readers for the Final Synthesis Essay.

Multiple Purposes

The student WellSpring ePortfolio materials actually serve two purposes: a) providing clear indication of student progress through the program which enables faculty reviewers to evaluate individual student progress, and b) ePortfolio materials will be reviewed collectively and anonymously as the central student learning outcome assessment process and will provide data for insights that Faculty and Program Leadership will use for ongoing program improvement.

Curriculum Map and Program Learning Outcomes

The following diagram details the progression of demonstration of core program learning outcomes by course. The letters in the grid describe a movement from beginning, to intermediate, to advanced skill and demonstration of the eight program learning outcomes of the doctoral program. B signifies Beginning demonstration. M signals Intermediate demonstration. And A indicates Advanced demonstration. Bolded letters signal that building that skill is intended to be a special focus for the class.

Students might find these mappings helpful when considering how their key course materials in response to assignments might map to the program learning outcomes for their WellSpring ePortfolios. Students are also encouraged to identify emergent trends and mappings in their own learning that might differ from these. We acknowledge the kaleidoscopic quality of emerging scholarship across the many diversities of learners and learning collectives can form a deep diversity of mappings.

Diagram: Visionary Practice and Regenerative Leadership Doctoral Program Core Program Outcomes Progression by Course

Visionary Practice and Regenerative Leadership Doctoral Program								
Core Program Outcomes Progression By Course	1. Innovate, originate, and apply visionary and regenerative practices.	2. Select and actualize appropriate research methods.	3. Engage decolonizing and Indigenous practices and methods.	4. Curate and synthesize selected theoretical frameworks.	5. Develop collaborative, innovative leadership skills.	6. Utilize project management skills in order to move from vision/idea to embodiment/implementation.	7. Interpret data to sense connection, make meaning, and formulate recommendations.	8. Catalyze, inspire, expand, & deepen their work and lives through purposeful self-reflection & self-evaluation.
B – Beginning								
M – Intermediate								
A – Advanced								
Bolded indicates strength								
VPRL 600 Residency I: Seeking	B				B			
VPRL 610 Embodied Cosmology							B	B
VPRL 620 The Phenomenology of Visionary Practice and the Call to Serve	B							B
VPRL 630 Traditions of Native American Thought: New Minds and New Worlds			B	B				
VPRL 640 Regenerative Leadership				B	B	B		
VPRL 651-2 Self-Directed Study & Scholarly Expression: Writing & Citing I				B				
VPRL 660 Introduction to Research Methods: Pathways of Insight		B	B					
VPRL 670 Roots and Streams: Finding Your Voice, Clarifying Your Vision, Mapping Your Influences				B			B	
VPRL 681-2 Self-Directed Study & Scholarly Expression: Writing & Citing II				M				
VPRL 700 Residency II: Gathering and Grounding	M						M	
VPRL 710 Ethics: Embodied Social Justice Leadership for Vision and Regeneration					M			M
VPRL 720 Advanced Research Methods: Regenerative Inquiry		M	M					
VPRL 730/731 The Vessel: Exploring Historicity, Lineage, and Legacy			M		M			M
VPRL 770 Regenerative Visionary Project I: Planning	M					B		
VPRL 780 Regenerative Visionary Project II: Action		A	A		A	M		
VPRL 790 Regenerative Visionary Project III: Reflection								M
VPRL 800 Preparing the Dissertation Proposal		M		M		B	M	
VPRL 810 Dissertation Proposal Revision & Completion		M		M		M		
VPRL 820 Collaboratorium I	M							
VPRL 830 Writing the Dissertation I: Findings, Context, Insights		A	A	A			M	
VPRL 840 Collaboratorium II						A		
VPRL 850 Writing the Dissertation II: Recommendations, Proposals, Synthesis	A				A		A	
VPRL 860 Collaboratorium III								A
VPRL 870 Collaboratorium IV							A	
VPRL 880 Collaboratorium V					A			
VPRL 900 Residency III: Crossing the Threshold	A							A
VPRL 905 Collaboratorium VI						A		
VPRL 910 Writing the Dissertation III: Revision, Completion, Reflection, Launch				A	A	A		
VPRL 920 Dissertation Continuation							A	

RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Southwestern College maintains an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to review all doctoral research projects. The IRB might also at times provide ethical consideration of review for faculty or other college research projects. The purpose of the IRB review is to evaluate and provide a gating function for ensuring ethical considerations in research. This review process aligns closely with VPRL Program Learning Outcomes 2 and 3, to select and actualize appropriate research methods while engaging in decolonizing practices and methods. It is intended to help address the considerable harm that Western research has wrought and persists in wreaking in the name of progress and science. The IRB process compassionately invites vigor, raises consciousness in interconnected, intersectional, and multispecies dimensions of research ethics, and deepens the reach of regenerative principles in inquiry design.

The IRB meets periodically, during at least one to two quarters per year, to review research proposals. The IRB consists of faculty and staff with a wide range of experience in research design and a caring attitude about ethical inquiry resonant with the Visionary Practice and Regenerative Leadership ethos and Southwestern College values.

The Pathway to Proposal

Students become certified by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) for foundational ethics in social, behavioral, and educational qualitative research during VPRL 720, Advanced Research Methods: Regenerative Inquiry. This training includes topics such as risk, informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, working with vulnerable populations, unanticipated problems in research, and conflicts of interest. Students additionally engage with peers to grapple with ethical considerations, including dimensions of working with the more than human, as part of their pathway to designing their research. Students will usually finalize their Institutional Review Board artifacts, instruments, and proposals and undertake the formal IRB review process during the quarter they are enrolled in VPRL 810, Revising the Dissertation Proposal. Each student is required to include others in their research in some way and to undertake Institutional Review and approval of their research design. The related policy:

Doctoral Student Inclusive Research Design and Institutional Review Proposal Requirement

Every student will include others in their research in some way and will complete and submit an Institutional Review Board (IRB) research proposal and receive approval.

The Review Process

Students work, in consultation with their Wisdom Councils and Midwives, to submit their proposals with all appendices to the IRB during a quarter the IRB is meeting. Students will hear back within one calendar month. Students do not attend the IRB review meeting. The IRB review meeting produces one of four results:

1. Approval – Approved as proposed
2. Conditional Approval – The IRB team provides a clear list of relatively minor changes

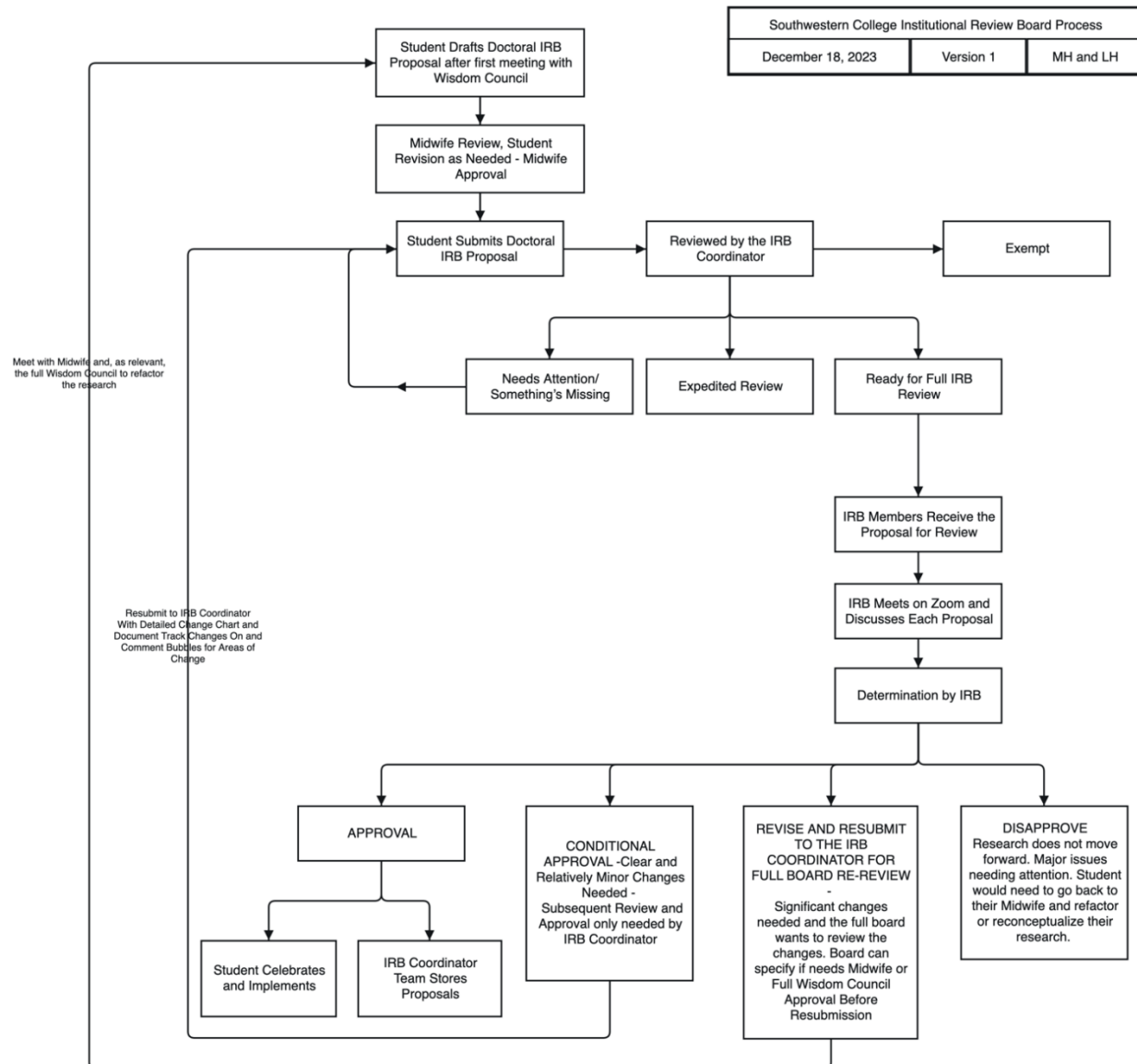
needed, with subsequent review and approval of changes only needed by IRB Coordinator or their designee

3. Revise and Resubmit for Full Board Re-Review – When significant changes are needed and the full board wants to review the changes. The IRB can specify whether changes to the proposal need Midwife or full Wisdom Council approval before resubmittal
4. Disapproval – In this situation, the research proposed does not move forward. Major changes need attention. The student needs to go back and work with their Midwife to refactor or reconceptualize their research.

Students cannot begin recruiting for or implementing their research or fieldwork until the IRB approval. IRB Members rotate into the role of helping coach and iteratively reviewing the work of researchers who earn a “Conditional Approval” or “Revise and Resubmit” status on their proposals. The following diagram overviews the process of proposing and responding to feedback from the Institutional Review team.

Southwestern College Institutional Review Board Process Diagram

We are committed to nurturing and sustaining doctoral student success. Visionary Practice and Regenerative Leadership Program students grow their gifts for vibrant communication,



participation, and presence. The program supports VPRL students unfurling their emergent capacities and dispositions, such as cultivating awareness of self and system, regenerating capacities that nurture depth, and expanding their sense of the possible, while creating conditions for collective flourishing.

Expectations for Doctoral Students

Communication

Doctoral students are expected to be proactive and to initiate communication with their Faculty Mentors in the initial year and with their dissertation committee members subsequently.

If doctoral students have concerns or questions about the program, they should reach out to the Director for discussion, clarification, and/or gain support in getting their needs met in a timely way.

Participation

Doctoral students are expected to actively participate (see participation rubric) in residency and class activities, including attendance at all scheduled residency sessions and required Zoom sessions for classes.

Attendance

More than one unexcused absence may result in no credit.

Excused absences must be discussed prior to the absence and approved by the course instructor, including missing any individual scheduled session during a residency. Students missing a zoom class will be required to watch the recording. Substitute work must be identified and agreed upon by the student and instructor if missing a zoom class or residency session.

See the formal Attendance Policy in the Course Catalog for more details.

Doctoral Dispositions

Context

In Spring 2024, VPRL students and faculty gathered in a series of meetings to evolve the doctoral dispositions. VPRL students and faculty identified and described the following doctoral dispositions to express the aspirational qualities, characteristics, attitudes, ways of being, and approaches to doing that might best support visionary practitioners and regenerative leaders.

We understand these doctoral dispositions to be developmental in nature, meaning that we can develop and refine them over time, with guidance, support, reflection, and clarification. We also understand that these dispositions are expressed through relationships and not in isolation.

These dispositions apply to everyone in the VPRL program, including students, staff, administrators, faculty (Faculty Mentors, Classroom Faculty, Self-Directed Study Faculty) and Wisdom Council members.

Four Spirals for Visionary Practitioners and Regenerative Leaders

We have identified four spirals that activate our awareness about the processes involved as we seek to become exemplars of visionary practice and regenerative leadership. Each spiral is supported by five dispositions, characteristics, aspirational qualities, or attributes, that we seek to embody and express

These are the names of the four Spirals:

- **Spiral 1 - Catalyzing Self/System Awareness**
- **Spiral 2 - Regenerating Capacities**
- **Spiral 3 - Expanding the Possible**
- **Spiral 4 - Cultivating Community & Connection**

Each of the Four Spirals is supported and defined by five dispositions. These doctoral dispositions are detailed on the following pages. They serve as guiding characteristics and aspirational qualities that describe ways of being, knowing, and doing that exemplify our understanding of visionary practitioners and regenerative leaders. Throughout the VPRL program, we seek to support the developmental arc of learning to embody and express these dispositions in our work with each other and in our lives.

Spiral 1 - Catalyzing Self/System Awareness

Definition: Developing deeper system- and self-awareness

- **Humility:** The awareness that no matter how much one does know, one cannot know everything; cultural humility is the awareness that one is rooted in one's own cultural experience, which does not automatically extend to knowing or understanding others' cultural experiences. Humility is expressed as the willingness to embrace continuous learning from other's experiences as well as one's own experiences.
- **Cultural Awareness & Sustenance:** The capacity to understand one's own cultural patterns and reality systems and be able to recognize and respect different cultural patterns and reality systems in others. The capacity to nurture and unleash the unique genius and cultural wealth of a multitude of intersectional situated contributors, in culturally sustaining ways.
- **Context- and Place-Based Awareness** – We exist within complex adaptive systems and are often unaware of how we are implicated in, interdepending with, and contributing towards our mutual co-arising with others, including place and the more-than-human. We are committed to developing greater understanding of our co-creativity, co-generation, and embedded co-existence. We express caring and reciprocity with the well-being and love of self and other, of the Earth, family, home, community, people, and more-than-human beings.
- **Reflection:** The ability to reflect on and make meaning from personal and collective experiences, whether perceived as good or bad, positive or negative; to use everything for learning and growth. To become aware of and move beyond reactivity and resistance. Cultivating the reflective capacity to take a perspective on oneself, perceive projections, and to sense for developmental shadows and possibilities in self, other, and collectives.
- **Feedback:** As part of adaptive cycles of evolution and growth, we nurture the ability to listen and integrate other's input or feedback into our own work. We receive both praise

and critique from others as well as the capacity to communicate clearly and directly when providing feedback. We cultivate the understanding that the goal of feedback is to support improvement and strengthen effectiveness while embracing personal growth and transformational processes.

Spiral 2 - Regenerating Capacities

Definition: Revitalizing capabilities that nurture depth

- **Motivation & Focus:** The capacity to balance challenge, risk-taking, new learning, and keep us in motion allows us to continue along a self-directed path independently.
- **Integrity & Ethics:** Recognizing the contributions of others to our own work; communicating honestly and acting with a commitment to excellence. We cultivate philosophical ethical clarity and authenticity. Integrity is enacted by following through on commitments and honoring the commitments of others.
- **Presence:** Presence means to listen deeply and take responsibility for one's own inner harmony. It means to carry an awareness of the important role we each play in the collective based on an understanding that everyone's presence matters to the whole. One's words, actions, thoughts, and emotions impact others, and we each carry some responsibility for the impact we have on others. Presence includes the ability to show up consistently and to clearly communicate when one cannot attend a scheduled class, small group meeting, mentor meeting, etc.
- **Respect & Compassion:** Respect arises from the recognition of the intrinsic value and inalienable rights of all living beings, human and more-than-human and compassion extends respect through empathy for self and other.
- **Courage:** The ability to stand in relationship to one's own values and act consciously on one's values and vision for the world. The ability to speak one's truth as well as listen to others' truths. Courage is developed through actions that express inner empowerment, inner capacity, and a commitment to continue to express oneself and engage meaningfully with the expression of others.

Spiral 3 - Expanding the Possible

Definition: Orienting toward vibrancy

- **Openness to Inquiry:** Willing to be challenged and stimulated through the exchange of ideas and information. Curious, open, and rooted in a desire to learn, grow, change, and evolve. Open to gaining new skills, including skill in scholarly writing and organizational skills. Willing to try out new tools, networks, technologies, and creative endeavors. Willing to engage with new contexts and new materials while cultivating a sense of wonder.
- **Generosity:** The desire to share information, resources, experiences, and support. Values reciprocity and the exchange of give and take. Expresses gratitude for the generosity of

others who are sharing information, resources, experiences, and support. Allows the miraculous flows of cosmos, collective, selves, and land to nurture and bathe our souls so that we in turn may flow back into and contribute to the sustaining cycles and spirals of life.

- **Possibility Sensing:** Cultivating fluid intuition through porous listening that creates space for mystery by engaging a more-than-human and non-dominant, whole bodied somatic approach to sensing the subtle, emergent unknown.
- **Creativity:** Expressed as an empowered relationship with one's own imagination and the imaginations of others. Honors and encourages the imaginative, generative, unique ability of each one to expand the possibilities of knowing, doing, and being through creative expression. Willing to take risks. Willing to dream and envision. Willing to respond authentically to the creativity of others. Accesses and sustains states of creative flow. Sources from and collaborates with the living spirit of creation: self, place, earth, and cosmos.
- **Adaptive Emergence:** Expressed as demonstrating the ability to recognize and adapt to dynamic circumstances with grace and resilience. Change is the only constant, and one can develop the capacity to perceive and design for emergence by cultivating conditions for what is arising to breakthrough. Providing for and studying feedback loops, self- and system evaluation, pattern detection, and related strategies can promote adaptive emergence. The status quo is not sufficient.

Spiral 4 - Cultivating Community & Connection

Definition: Creating conditions for collective flourishing

- **Vulnerability:** A willingness to reveal one's inner self, to risk expressing one's emotional truth in the service of compassion and connection with others.
- **Perspective-Taking:** Ability to consider and engage with multiple perspectives alongside one's own perspective without needing to determine which perspective is right and which is wrong. Tolerance for accepting a breadth of perspectives simultaneously. Gaining nimbleness in perceiving and consciously moving across diverse perspectives. Ability to move from *either/or* to *both/and* frames. Capacity to perceive relationality and reciprocity in mutual co-arising.
- **Ability to be Comfortable with Discomfort:** When new material, new opinions, new perspectives, or divergent material, opinions, and perspectives are presented one takes responsibility for one's responses instead of reacting with blaming and/or shaming describing others as the cause of the discomfort. Recognizes that one is responsible for one's inner states of being and reactions/responses. Is able to reflect when relational tension arises and take personal responsibility. Believes in the power of sustained

engagement that may cultivate transformation. Recognizes that lifelong learning and growth is not always easy

- **Equity:** Commitment to justice that upholds the right of all persons and groups to have access to resources, opportunities, expression, and the capacity to impact and evolve decision-making structures and processes. Equity implies an awareness of historic, systemic, and persistent patterns of unequal social and economic power. Equity also implies a willingness to examine and transform one's own assumptions, biases, prejudices, and blind spots based on cultural, familial, and personal experiences.
- **Willingness to Repair:** Disagreements or differences in understanding are likely to occur in interactive relationships. Willingness to repair refers to meeting honestly and openly when there has been a rupture or breakdown in communication. Repair can be facilitated by another or engaged in directly. The desire to repair when a rupture occurs is a hallmark of regenerative leaders. Our willingness to repair is our willingness to be healed.

Student Conduct and Support for Success

***Please see College Catalog for complete Institutional Policy & Procedures**

The purpose of the Doctoral Student Support and Faculty Referral system is to support our students in undertaking corrective action and to encourage a process of self-transformation. Our mission, Transforming Consciousness through Education, is carried out through the work we do with our students every day in residencies, the virtual classroom, fieldwork, and the dissertation. As part of this transformational process, we ask our faculty to attend to our students with exquisite attention and positive regard.

The faculty offers students the opportunity to experience personal transformation through engagement with course material, classroom processes, and fieldwork. However, it is also our responsibility to note when students need greater assistance. If a faculty member has any concerns regarding a student's behavior, attitude, skill, or ability to do the work required of them, they complete a Student Support Referral, an Academic Referral, or a Dispositional Referral. Students may also fill out a Student Support Referral for themselves. The purpose of noting this early is to provide the assistance that we can to help each student succeed. Please see the 2025-2026 SWC Catalog.

Core Values

One of the core values at SWC is that of loving awareness of self and other. The deeper challenges of connecting with and holding loving awareness are not found only when working with research participants or those we lead and serve. Rather, it is manifesting this loving awareness in our daily interactions.

Though some level of tension between members of our community may be unavoidable, we can strive as a community to manage conflict effectively and with compassion.

In short, this can be conveyed as a reciprocity recasting of “The Golden Rule” offers: Relate with others the ways you would like others to relate with you. It is this principle that, regardless of the interaction, should inform the ways we treat all we are in contact with.

The community is strengthened by maintaining an awareness of the integrity of each person and treating all with consideration, love, and respect. We have developed the following descriptions of twenty doctoral dispositional qualities, in four spirals, that are the generative fount of creating conditions for bringing our values to life (see the Doctoral Dispositions Section above for further elaboration).

The dimensions of doctoral disposition include:

- **Spiral 1 - Catalyzing Self/System Awareness** (humility, cultural awareness and sustenance, context- and place-based awareness, reflection, and feedback)
- **Spiral 2 – Regenerating Capacities** (motivation and focus, integrity and ethics, presence, respect and compassion, and courage)
- **Spiral 3 – Expanding the Possible** (openness to inquiry, generosity, possibility-sensing, creativity, adaptive emergence)
- **Spiral 4 – Cultivating Community and Connection** (vulnerability, perspective-taking, comfort with discomfort, equity, and willingness to repair).

Students will explore, savor, and deepen their skills and abilities in relation to these qualities at various points along their learning journey. In addition, students will have many opportunities to receive and integrate feedback throughout the program.

Doctoral Dispositional Referral

A VPRL Dispositional Referral is completed by a faculty member when they have concerns about a student’s ability to embody one or more of the Southwestern College doctoral dispositional qualities essential for visionary practice and regenerative leaders. These dimensions of doctoral disposition include

Spiral 1 - Catalyzing Self/System Awareness (humility, cultural awareness and sustenance, context- and place-based awareness, reflection, and feedback);

Spiral 2 – Regenerating Capacities (motivation and focus, integrity and ethics, presence, respect and compassion, and courage),

Spiral 3 – Expanding the Possible (openness to inquiry, generosity, possibility-sensing, creativity, adaptive emergence), and

Spiral 4 – Cultivating Community and Connection (vulnerability, perspective-taking, comfort with discomfort, equity, and willingness to repair). The faculty member completes the Dispositional Referral Request and submits it to the VPRL Program Leadership Team. Someone from the VPRL Program Leadership Team (which includes the VPRL Director, and, as needed, the Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs) provides the student with a copy of the Dispositional Referral Request and meets with the student to develop a support plan. Other VPRL Faculty (for example, the Faculty Mentor or Wisdom Council Midwife/Coach) may be included if additional feedback and/or consultation is needed.

A support plan will be developed that may include, but are not limited to:

- required student success coaching
- slowing down the pace of the student's program
- retaking a class
- recommendation to pursue other supports, including mental health or wellbeing services
- fieldwork or research ethics coaching
- taking a leave of absence

The student is asked to sign the form indicating that they understand and agree to the support plan.

PHD FACULTY DEFINITIONS

The Visionary Practice and Regenerative Leadership (VPRL) doctoral program includes several kinds of faculty.

Administrative Faculty

Administrative Faculty primarily serve as academic program leaders, residency planners, course schedulers, admissions reviewers, and hold key responsibility for the overall growth and direction of the PhD program as well as its administrative processes and policies. Administrative Faculty must have a PhD, years of higher education experience, a passion for advanced learning, a relationship as staff employees within Southwestern College, and serve as exemplars of the mission and the experiential, transformational model of teaching and learning.

Administrative Faculty are governed by the SWC Staff Handbook, participate in annual performance evaluation, work under a formal job description, and though they may hold teaching duties governed by the PhD Faculty Handbook, the terms of their employment, including benefits, etc. are described in the Staff Handbook.

Classroom Faculty

Classroom Faculty serves as the teachers of the core curriculum. Classroom Faculty must have a PhD, a passion for advanced learning, expertise in a content area related to their teaching, an ongoing relationship with Southwestern College, including an appreciation for its mission and its experiential, transformational model of teaching and learning. All classroom faculty report to the VPRL Program Director.

Faculty Mentors

Faculty Mentors serve as thought partners for doctoral students. These relationships are initiated during or soon after the annual Synergy Day during VPRL 600: Residency I: Seeking. These relationships conclude as the students complete their initial WellSpring ePortfolios and move toward Candidacy. At that time students form their Wisdom Councils and shift primary contact and conversation from the Faculty Mentor to the Wisdom Council Midwife/Coach.

Faculty Mentors meet a minimum of three times per quarter with their mentees or a maximum of six biweekly meetings. These meetings can be in person or via Zoom.

Faculty Mentors partner with their mentees on two aspects of their doctoral learning journey:

1. They assist with identifying and defining the Self-Directed Study course. See SDS for more on this.
2. They assist with identifying and responding to student artifacts uploaded into the WellSpring ePortfolio. See WellSpring ePortfolio for more on this.

Self-Directed Study Faculty

Self-Directed Study Faculty serve as teachers for doctoral students' independent Self-Directed Study courses. Self-Directed Study Faculty must have a PhD or other doctoral terminal degree. Students can apply for a Program Exception if they would like to work with a Self-Directed Study Faculty who does not have a doctoral degree. For example, a student can apply for a Program Exception and make a rationale to work with someone who does not have a doctoral degree and is a traditional elder or who has deep involvement and comparable expertise with the specific course content. Students must make such requests prior to their SDS course approval. See SDS for more details.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. SWC Rubric for Transformational Learning

Appendix B. SWC Doctoral Synchronous Online Course/Teaching Rubric

Appendix C. SWC Doctoral Norms and Guidelines

Appendix D. SWC Doctoral Course Vibrant Practices

Appendix E. PhD Academic Calendars 2025-2030

Appendix A. SWC Rubric for Transformational Learning

	1 Undeveloped	2 Developing	3 Meets Expectations	4 Exceeds Expectations
Ability to Engage Students	Boring, dull, unenthusiastic, disconnected. May deliver content but in a unidirectional didactic manner through lecture or PowerPoint. Not relational. Not engaged with students as individuals nor with the class as a group setting.	Encourages some participation, allows for very formal relationships, but is rigid about course activity resulting in a teaching style which is very conventional with the teacher delivering content uni-directionally. (i.e., The ‘empty vessel’ model of education.)	Teacher is relational & responsive to what comes up during the class period; engages students both as individuals and as members of an active group. Students are engaged in a variety of ways including provocative questions; lively discussion that encourages multiple perspectives; role-playing; teamwork; creative projects; honesty; in-class activity; problem-solving; dyad or triad work; sharing.	Teacher is highly relational. Utilizes multiple strategies to promote student engagement in an integrated way; inspires students; is an excellent communicator. Demonstrates the ability to facilitate the co-creation of a learning community in which students are deeply engaged and express ownership of course material and their own learning.
Promotes Transformational Learning	Distracted, unresponsive, disorganized, confused; poor classroom management skill; poor time management; has a negative attitude toward students’ ability to grow and change.	Sincere desire to promote transformational learning but nervous, unsure, and/or doubtful about ability to provide a safe yet flexible learning environment. Learning how to deliver course content, respond to what comes up in class & manage time for experiential activities.	Effectively manages classroom dynamics and time. Ability to be flexible, relaxed responsive to what students present in the moment. Uses what comes up during class as ‘teachable moments. Expresses both humility and curiosity. Responds to the collective wisdom of the class participants.	Facilitates a container for transformational learning within which students feel open yet safe to be witnessed as they undergo their own individual transformative processes. Trusts and engages with the collective wisdom of the class participants and each student as a partner in the learning process.
Authenticity in Delivering Course Content	Declares no familiarity with the course material or syllabus. Conversely declares oneself the only master of all course content.	Openly shares knowledge of course content and expresses enthusiasm for personal learning curve in relationship to the syllabus.	Deeply familiar with syllabus & course content; shares from experience; engages current theories/practices; demonstrates willingness to keep learning; invites collective inquiry.	Inhabits course content and balances delivery with inspiration of students’ learning; provides leadership in developing theories, practices, and pedagogy congruent with course content.

Appendix B: SWC Doctoral Synchronous Online Rubric

Criteria	Met	Developing	Not/Met
Organization	Follows Template - Course organization is clear, consistent and supports ease of navigation.	Some elements of the template are absent or there are issues with the organization of the course that may present issues with student navigation.	Course does not follow template or there are significant issues with the organization of the course.
Curricular Norms	Course demonstrates all curricular norms/guidelines for doctoral courses	Course demonstrates only some curricular norms/guidelines for doctoral courses	Minimal or no curricular norms/guidelines demonstrated
Variation of Instructional Tools	Multiple tools are leveraged for student, interaction, engagement and learning, and to empower student voice (e.g., use of interactive tools and apps, breakout groups, frequent check-ins, videos, podcasts, use of visuals, graphic organizers, infographics, PowerPoints, etc.), including multiple strategies from the Vibrant Practices list	Limited tools are leveraged to enhance student interaction, engagement and learning, and to empower student voice (e.g., use of interactive tools and apps, breakout groups, frequent check-ins, videos, podcasts, use of visuals, graphic organizers, infographics, PowerPoints, etc.)	Minimal or no tools are leveraged to enhance student interaction, engagement, learning and to empower student voice.
Variation of Instructional Strategies	Multiple instructional strategies are used to support interaction, engagement, and learning and to meet the diverse learning styles and needs of students (e.g., whole group discussions, small group discussions, online discussions, dyads, experientials/creative directives, student-led activities, presentations and sharing, art-based activities, etc.), including multiple strategies from the Vibrant Practices list	Limited instructional strategies are used to support student interaction, engagement and learning and to meet the diverse learning styles and needs of students (e.g., whole group discussions, small group discussions, online discussions, dyads, experientials/creative directives, student-led activities, presentations and sharing, art-based activities, etc.)	Minimal or no variation of instructional strategies to support student interaction, engagement and learning and to meet the diverse learning styles and needs of students
Community & Connection	Meaningful opportunities for students to interact with each other and the instructor in between classes that serve to foster community, collaboration, and connection are provided. Examples include virtual office hours (including availability before or after class), sharing college resources and opportunities with students, and asynchronous components (e.g., online discussions, bulletin board announcements, wikis, blogs, etc.)	Limited opportunities for students to interact with each other and the instructor in between classes that serve to foster community, collaboration, and connection are provided.	Minimal or no opportunities for students to interact with each other and the instructor in between classes that serve to foster community, collaboration, and connection are provided.

Appendix C. SWC Doctoral Course Norms & Guidelines

Diversity in Reading and Viewing Sources

Readings and viewings: at least 50% diverse voices to include queer, trans, Black, Indigenous and People of Color (QTBIPOC) voices

- Work with support to enhance diverse voices at the core of the curriculum

Workload Expectations

A 3-unit doctoral course is expected to have 5 hours of work per week per unit. Thus, a three-unit doctoral course involves 15 hours per week of student engagement in reading, writing, online discussion, Zoom meetings, etc.

Hybrid Zoom Synchronous Class Format, with Live Meetings

Zoom Synchronous course meet from 3-10 times during the quarter. Course meetings can be on Zoom weekly for 3 hours, with 12 hours of related reading and writing over the week before and after meeting - or might involve other rhythms.

- Design some slides, some quotes, and other ways to catalyze dynamic and interactive means
- Most classes will also feature continued engagement through online discussion(s) and activities before and after the Zoom meeting

Aligned Purpose

Course learning outcomes align and are mapped to program learning outcomes, and represent building capacities across the program trajectory, evidenced in the program summary chart. These learning outcomes flow into the weekly lesson/node learning outcomes.

Course Ethos

- Each instructor selects a mythical figure or process to help inspire course development
- Instructor develops a Course Ethos section for the syllabus
- Each lesson features an entrance meditation in addition to the usual course elements

Collaborative Course Flows

Work with your course corequisite designer to optimize flow and pacing across the courses for full time students. For example, avoid all courses having things build to a final huge deliverable. Can one class have deliverables alternating or flowing into/building on the work in the corequisite course that the full-time students will also be taking, while maintaining flexibility for the half-time students who may take the corequisite at a different time?

Vibrant Design

Each lesson should feature one or more of the approaches from the following “Vibrant Practice” list (Attachment D)

- Use padlets, menti’s, chat poetry, and other dynamic opportunities to create dynamic elements

Additional Elements

PhD courses have additional dimensions from the general course structure training you will receive. Instructors are expected to:

- Create at least one mini-briefing (written) with citations for each of their course nodes.
- Provide APA 7 listings (with augmentation to list full first name) for all required materials
- We use the language of nodes to signify a multi-connective web in curricular design. Each node is like a lesson.

Appendix D. SWC Doctoral Course Vibrant Practices

Please share ideas to add to this living list of best or vibrant practices for online hybrid zoom synchronous course design. Let us embody the principles of our doctoral program in how we design and catalyze the genius of our students.

- Find ways to have weekly work scaffold and build into end-of-quarter assignments
- Break out of traditional models of read, discuss, write
- Flip the curriculum so that you might create a talk or video or briefing at the start of the week. Then have students grapple with the materials BEFORE coming to a Zoom class. Then in the class, have them interact in dynamic ways. This greatly enhances the activation and lived grappling with the material.
- Disrupt the model of hierarchical learning where the teacher is the knower/transmitter and the learners are the recipients. -> Create ways for the students to become co-creators, co-designers, and engaged in the learning
- Encourage multiple ways of knowing within each lesson and meeting and across activities to model what the program is teaching in process AND content - this includes embodiment, somatic, sensory, kinesthetic, arts-based, intuitive, and other ways of knowing
- Nurture and enhance “group genius” and collaborative learning opportunities - partnership model - collaborative emergence. These can include:
 - “Jigsaw” of reading and viewings - students read different sections of the same text or texts and share back highlights, creating teaching and learning materials or briefings, using creative materials - this helps students gain familiarity with a topic without having to read a whole text; allowing them to select a case study or focus area resonant with something in their visionary project or possible research topic
 - “Sleuth-outs” - students select from a list of concepts and research (sleuth-out) and share back summaries and highlights, including visual materials, videos
 - Students co-design activities or lessons within the class
 - Students working on teams or in peer review with each other
 - Creative extended annotations using multimedia to distill key concepts and share with course colleagues - perhaps using Prezi
 - Create a poster presentation on a team topic
 - Students curate information by creating an infographic - Vengage, Canva
 - Use a Padlet or Mindmap with dynamic post it notes to organize information
- Experiential Learning - How can we optimize somatic, experiential, and embodied integration of the learning? Include meditations, journaling, and depth experiential dimensions to activate and model visionary practice and regenerative opportunities
- Dynamic and relational learning
 - Have students work in dyads, triads, or small teams
 - Leverage Zoom Breakouts
- Students are knowledge producers - can they create a website, a video, a podcast, a blog or vlog about what they are researching and learning. Can they conduct interviews, mini-research, or collectively author an article (for something like the *Journal of Sustainability Education* or *Kosmos*) or photo-essay. What about a children’s book or recipe book or art contest or zine... this and more is possible.
- Design reciprocity practices into the curriculum - share examples. Can the student projects or teams create a give-back project to share out the learning in some way? What might land reciprocity look like, depending on the nature of the course? How might abolition, alliance, accomplishing, reparations, and/or restorative justice be relevant?

Appendix E. PhD ACADEMIC CALENDARS, 2025-2030

PHD PROGRAM ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2025-2026

Dec 8, 2025, Winter Break Begins

December 22 – 26, 2025 Holiday Break – College is closed

Jan 1, 2026, New Years Day – College is Closed

Jan 2, 2026, Winter Break Ends

WINTER QUARTER 2026

Jan 5, 2026, First Day of Winter 2026 Quarter

Winter Registration: Monday, November 24 and Tuesday, November 25, 2025

Jan 4, 2026, VPRL Classes Begin

January 31, 2026, SDS Proposals due

Jan 19, 2026, Martin Luther King Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Feb 16, 2026, Presidents Day - Classes in session/ Offices may be closed

Mar 15, 2026, VPRL Last Day of Classes

Mar 15, 2026, Last Day of Winter 2026 Quarter (10 Weeks)

Mar 16, 2026, Narrative Reflections due

Mar 20, 2026, WellSpring ePortfolio due

SPRING QUARTER 2026

Mar 24, 2026, First Day of Spring 2026 Quarter

Spring Registration: Monday, March 2 and Tuesday, March 3, 2026

Mar 26-29, 2026, VPRL Residency II

Mar 30, 2026, VPRL Classes Begin

April 30, 2026, SDS proposals due

May 25, 2026, Memorial Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Jun 7, 2026, VPRL Last Day of Classes

Jun 8, 2026, Last Day of Spring 2026 Quarter (11 Weeks)

June 8, 2026, Narrative Reflections due

June 12, 2026, WellSpring ePortfolio due

SUMMER QUARTER 2026

Jun 16, 2026, First day of Summer 2026 Quarter

Summer Registration: Monday, May 25 and Tuesday May 26, 2026

Jun 18-21, 2026, VPRL Residency III

Jun 19, 2026, Juneteenth – College is closed

Jun 22, 2026, VPRL Classes Begin

Jul 4, 2026, Independence Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Aug 30, 2026, VPRL Classes End

Aug 31, 2026, Last Day of Summer 2026 Quarter (11 Weeks)

Aug 31, 2026, Narrative Reflections due

Sept 4, 2026, WellSpring ePortfolio due

PHD PROGRAM ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2026-2027

FALL QUARTER 2026

Fall Registration: Monday, August 17 and Tuesday August 18, 2026

Sep 7, 2026, Labor Day – College is closed

Sep 15, 2026, First day of Fall 2026 Quarter

Sep 14, 2026, VPRL Orientation

Sep 15-20, 2026, VPRL Residency I

Sep 21, 2026, VPRL Classes Begin

Oct 12, 2026, Indigenous Peoples Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Nov 11, 2026, Veterans Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Nov 26-27, 2026, Thanksgiving – College is closed

Dec 6, 2026, VPRL Classes End

Dec 7, 2026, Last Day of Fall 2026 Quarter (12 Weeks)

Dec 7, 2026, Narrative Reflections due

Dec 11, 2026, WellSpring ePortfolio due

Dec 7, 2026, Winter Break Begins

December 21 – 25, 2026 Holiday Break – College is closed

Jan 1, 2027, New Year's Day – College is closed

Jan 2, 2027, Winter Break Ends

WINTER QUARTER 2027

Jan 4, 2027, First Day of Winter 2027 Quarter

Winter Registration: Monday, November 30 and Tuesday December 1, 2026

Jan 4, 2027, VPRL Classes Begin

Jan 18, 2027, Martin Luther King Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

January 31, 2027, SDS proposals due

Feb 15, 2027, Presidents Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Mar 14, 2027, VPRL Classes End

Mar 14, 2027, Last Day of Winter 2027 Quarter (10 Weeks)

Mar 15, 2027, Narrative Reflections due

Mar 19, 2027, WellSpring ePortfolio due

SPRING QUARTER 2027

Spring Registration: Monday, March 1 and Tuesday March 2, 2027

Mar 23, 2027, First Day of Spring 2027 Quarter

Mar 25-28, 2027, VPRL Residency II

Mar 29, 2027, VPRL Classes Begin

April 30, 2027, SDS proposals due

May 31, 2027, Memorial Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Jun 6, 2027, VPRL Classes End

Jun 7, 2027, Last Day of Spring 2027 Quarter (11 Weeks)

June 7, 2027, Narrative Reflections due
June 11, 2027, WellSpring ePortfolio due

SUMMER QUARTER 2027

Summer Registration: Week of Monday, May 24, 2027

Jun 15, 2027, First Day of Summer 2027 Quarter

Jun 15 -20, 2027, VPRL Residency III

Jun 18, 2027, Juneteenth – College is closed

Jun 21, 2027, VPRL Classes Begin

Jul 5, 2027, Independence Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Aug 29, 2027, VPLR Classes End

Aug 30, 2027, Narrative Reflections due

Aug 30, 2027, Last Day of Summer 2027 Quarter (11 Weeks)

Sept 3, 2027, WellSpring ePortfolio due

PHD PROGRAM ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2027-2028

FALL QUARTER 2027

Fall Registration: Week of Monday, August 16, 2027

Sep 14, 2027, First day of Fall 2027 Quarter

Sep 6, 2027, Labor Day – College is closed

Sep 13, 2027, VPRL Orientation

Sep 14-19, 2027, VPRL Residency I

Sep 20, VPRL Classes Begin

Oct 11, 2027, Indigenous Peoples Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Nov 6, 2027, Commencement

Nov 11, 2027, Veterans Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Nov 25-26, 2027, Thanksgiving – College is closed

Dec 5, 2027, VPRL Classes End

Dec 6, 2027, Last Day of Fall 2027 Quarter (12 Weeks)

Dec 6, 2027, Narrative Reflections due

Dec 10, 2027, WellSpring ePortfolio due

Dec 6, 2027, Winter Break Begins

December 20 – 24, 2027 Holiday Break – College is closed

Dec 31, 2027, New Years Day – College is closed

Jan 2, 2028, Winter Break Ends

WINTER QUARTER 2028

Winter Registration: Week of Monday, November 29, 2027

Jan 10, 2028, First Day of Winter 2028 Quarter

Jan 10, 2028, VPRL Classes Begin

Jan 17, 2028, Martin Luther King Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Jan 31, 2028, SDS proposals due

Feb 21, 2028, Presidents Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Mar 19, 2028, VPRL Classes End

Mar 19, 2028, Last Day of Winter 2028 Quarter (10 Weeks)

Mar 20, 2028, Narrative Reflections due

Mar 24, 2028, WellSpring ePortfolio due

SPRING QUARTER 2028

Spring Registration: Week of Monday, March 6, 2028

Mar 28, 2028, First Day of Spring 2028 Quarter

Mar 30- Apr 2, 2028, VPRL Residency II

Apr 3, 2028, VPRL Classes Begin

Apr 30, 2028, SDS proposals due

May 29, 2028, Memorial Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Jun 11, 2028, VPRL Classes End

Jun 12, 2028, Narrative Reflections due

Jun 12, 2028, Last Day of Spring 2028 Quarter (11 Weeks)

Jun 16, 2028, WellSpring ePortfolio due

SUMMER QUARTER 2028

Summer Registration: Week of Monday, May 29, 2028

Jun 20, 2028, First Day of Summer 2028 Quarter

Jun 22-25, 2028, VPRL Residency III

Jun 19, 2028, Juneteenth – College is closed

Jun 26, 2028, VPRL Classes Begin

Jul 4, 2028, Independence Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Sep 3, 2028, VPRL Classes End

Sep 4, 2028, Narrative Reflections due

Sep 4, 2028, Last Day of Summer 2028 Quarter (11 Weeks)

Sep 8, 2028, WellSpring ePortfolio due

PHD PROGRAM ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2028-2029

FALL QUARTER 2028

Fall Registration: Week of Monday, August 21, 2028

Sep 4, 2028, Labor Day – College is closed

Sep 12, 2028, First Day of Fall 2028 Quarter

Sep 11, 2028, VPRL Orientation

Sep 12 - 17, 2028, VPRL Residency I

Sep 18, 2028, VPRL Classes Begin

Oct 9, 2028, Indigenous Peoples Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Nov 4, 2028, Commencement

Nov 10, 2028, Veterans Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Nov 23-24, 2028, Thanksgiving – College is closed

Dec 3, 2028, VPRL Classes End

Dec 4, 2028, Narrative Reflections due

Dec 4, 2028, Last Day of Fall 2028 Quarter (12 Weeks)

Dec 8, 2028, WellSpring ePortfolio due

Dec 4, 2028, Winter Break Begins

December 25 – 29, 2028 Holiday Break – College is closed

Jan 1, 2029, New Years Day – College is closed

Jan 5, 2029, Winter Break Ends**WINTER QUARTER 2029**

Winter Registration: Week of Monday, November 20, 2028

Jan 8, 2029, First Day of Winter 2029 Quarter

Jan 8, 2029, VPRL Classes Begin

Jan 15, 2029, Martin Luther King Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Jan 31, 2029, SDS proposals due

Feb 19, 2029, Presidents Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Mar 18, 2029, VPRL Classes End

Mar 18, 2029, Last Day of Winter 2029 Quarter (10 Weeks)

Mar 19, 2029, Narrative Reflections due

Mar 23, 2029, Wellspring ePortfolio – All Reflections due

SPRING QUARTER 2029

Spring Registration: Week of Monday, March 5, 2029

Mar 27, 2029, First Day of Spring 2029 Quarter

Mar 29-Apr 1, 2029, VPRL Residency II

Apr 2, 2029, VPRL Classes Begin

April 30, 2029, SDS proposals due

May 28, 2029, Memorial Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Jun 10, 2029, VPRL Classes End

Jun 11, 2029, Last Day of Spring 2029 Quarter (11 Weeks)

Jun 11, 2029, Narrative Reflections due

Jun 15, 2029, WellSpring ePortfolio due

SUMMER QUARTER 2029

Summer Registration: Week of Monday, May 28, 2029

Jun 19, 2029, Juneteenth – College is closed

Jun 19, 2029, First Day of Summer 2029 Quarter

Jun 21 - 24, 2029, VPRL Residency III

Jun 25, 2029, VPRL Classes Begin

Jul 4, 2029, Independence Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Sep 2, 2029, VPRL Classes End

Sep 3, 2029, Last Day of Summer 2029 Quarter (11 Weeks)

Sep 3, 2029, Narrative Reflections due

Sep 7, 2029, WellSpring ePortfolio due

PHD PROGRAM ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2029-2030

FALL QUARTER 2029

Fall Registration: Week of August 20, 2029

Sep 3, 2029, Labor Day, College is closed

Sep 11, 2029, First Day of Fall 2029 Quarter

Sep 10, 2029, VPRL Orientation

Sep 11-16, 2029, VPRL Residency I

Sep 17, 2029, VPRL Classes Begin

Oct 8, 2029, Indigenous Peoples Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Nov 3, 2029, Commencement

Nov 11, 2029, Veterans Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Nov 22-23, 2029, Thanksgiving – College is closed

Dec 2, 2029, VPRL Classes End

Dec 3, 2029, Last Day of Fall 2029 Quarter (12 Weeks)

Dec 3, 2029, Narrative Reflections due

Dec 8, 2029, WellSpring ePortfolio due

Dec 3, 2029, Winter Break Begins

December 24 – 28, 2029 Holiday Break – College is closed

Jan 1, 2030, New Years Day – College is closed

Jan 4, 2030, Winter Break Ends

WINTER QUARTER 2030

Winter Registration: Week of Monday, November 19, 2029

Jan 7, 2030, First Day of Winter 2030 Quarter

Jan 7, 2030, VPRL Classes Begin

Jan 21, 2030, Martin Luther King Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Jan 31, 2030, SDS proposals due

Feb 18, 2030, Presidents Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Mar 17, 2030, VPRL Classes End

Mar 17, 2030, Last Day of Winter 2030 Quarter (10 Weeks)

Mar 18, 2030, Narrative Reflections due

Mar 22, 2030, Wellspring ePortfolio due

SPRING QUARTER 2030

Spring Registration: Week of Monday, March 4, 2030

Mar 26, 2030, First Day of Spring 2030 Quarter

Mar 28-31, 2030, VPRL Residency

Apr 1, 2030, VPRL Classes Begin

Apr 30, 2030, SDS proposals due

May 27, 2030, Memorial Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Jun 9, 2030, VPRL Classes End

Jun 10, 2030, Last Day of Spring 2030 Quarter (11 Weeks)

Jun 10, 2030, Narrative Reflections due

Jun 14, 2030, WellSpring ePortfolio due

SUMMER QUARTER 2030

Summer Registration: Week of Monday, May 27, 2030

Jun 18, 2030, First Day of Summer 2030 Quarter

Jun 19, 2030, Juneteenth – College is closed

Jun 20-23, 2030, VPRL Residency III

Jun 24, 2030, VPRL Classes Begin

Jul 4, 2030, Independence Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Sep 1, 2030, VPRL Classes End

Sep 2, 2030, Labor Day, College is closed

Sep 2, 2030, Narrative Reflections due

Sep 2, 2030, Last Day of Summer 2030 Quarter (11 Weeks)

Sep 6, 2030, WellSpring ePortfolio due

PHD PROGRAM ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2030

FALL QUARTER 2030

Fall Registration: Week of Monday, August 19, 2030

Sep 10, 2030, First Day of Fall 2030 Quarter

Sep 11, 2030, VPRL Orientation

Sep 12-15, 2030, VPRL Residency I

Sep 16, 2030, VPRL Classes Begin

Oct 14, 2030, Indigenous Peoples Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Nov 9, 2020, Commencement

Nov 11, 2030, Veterans Day - Classes in session/Offices may be closed

Nov 28-29, 2030, Thanksgiving – College is closed

Dec 1, 2030, VPRL Classes End

Dec 2, 2030, Last Day of Fall 2030 Quarter (12 Weeks)

Dec 2, 2030, Narrative Reflections due

Dec 6, 2030, WellSpring ePortfolio due

Dec 2, 2030, Winter Break Begins

December 23 – 27, 2030 Holiday Break – College is closed

Jan 1, 2031, New Years Day – College is closed

Jan 5, 2031, Winter Break Ends