

Dissertation Research Topic Worksheet

Most dissertation students will have identified a research topic coming out of their Directed Research courses. Some may be advancing an idea from a core course. But occasionally students will find themselves in candidacy but without a particular research direction. This worksheet will help the school place you with a faculty advisor (who may or may not become the dissertation chair) to mentor your research efforts.

Once you have completed the worksheet, please email it to Academic Advising at cecadvising@nova.edu

Step 1: Please indicate your name and your program of study.

Step 2: In selecting a topic area, it is important to consider if you have both the capability and interest in working within the area and whether your area of interest can be supported by GSCIS faculty. As a starting point, think about the courses and assignments you liked and in which you did well. List the names of the top three courses in which you earned your highest grades along with the names of the professors who taught those courses.

Course	Professor	Grade
<i>Example: ISEC 765: Information Security Risk Management</i>	<i>Dr. Yair Levy</i>	<i>A-</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		

Step 3: Refer to those professors' Web pages to learn more about their research interests and expertise. Aim to find a match between your area of interest and expertise and that of the professor. List one to three professors in order of preference along with possible topics that match your interests and the expertise of that professor.

Professor	Topic(s)
<i>Example: Dr. Yair Levy</i>	<i>Cybersecurity</i>
1.	
2.	
3.	

Step 4a, 4b, 4c: Once you identify a general topic area, you will need to tighten the focus and identify a research-worthy problem. Research-worthy problems are significant challenges that researchers and practitioners encounter and there is no evidence in the peer-reviewed literature that a solution exists. Ideas for research-worthy problems may come from many sources including a core course, a review of the current literature in your field, professional conferences, your job, a discussion with a professor, a discussion with a colleague at your job, or a discussion with a fellow student. Regardless of the source, your research problem should be supported by the scholarly literature, be timely, have theoretical or practical significance and be able to be researched through collection and analysis of data.

For each research topic of interest listed in step two, identify at least three scholarly sources (e.g., articles, conference proceedings, dissertations) that pertain to the topic. Write a brief (150 words) annotation (not including the citation) about the source that includes:

1. full citation of the source in APA format,
2. what the source is about (a short summary),
3. why you selected the source, and
4. how the source serves as a starting point to identifying a research-worthy problem.