

# Dissertation Breakthrough: From Confusion to Graduation and Beyond

## Description and Purpose:



Perhaps you have no idea of what your topic is. Or too many ideas. Confusion about how to research and write about your topic. Worry about how broad or narrow the work seems to be getting. Lack of support during a lonely journey. Meanwhile, the dissertation clock is ticking...I have worked closely with dissertation students for nearly two decades. I've helped many students get unstuck and helped graduates publish and promote their important work. I also teach research and writing skills. Let's work together to clarify the way forward.

## Logistics and Etiquette:

- We will meet weekly via Zoom. I've scheduled an hour and a half for each meeting. The format will alternate between presentation, discussion, and practices to try out. I'll email you the Zoom link a few days before class begins.
- Camera on, please, unless you have a temporary event on your end to deal with. To decrease background noise, please remain muted until ready to speak. [Here is a guide](#) if you are new to Zoom.
- Recommendation: For the first session, show up five minutes early to make sure your tech is working. If you need to miss a live session, I'm recording them and can send you a link to the recording.
- Please be mindful of how you show up, including how much time you take when speaking. We want to be sure everyone gets a chance to participate.
- Keep an eye on your dreams throughout the course. We can make space for discussing why they are important.

## Schedule:

### Week 1: Clarity of Purpose

"Dissertation Breakthrough" goes a bit differently than my other lives classes: instead of me presenting a lot of material followed by Q and A, I will start each week with a brief summary of a key dissertation goal – in this case understanding why you are writing this topic this way – and then move right into the challenges you have brought. Our groups will be kept small so we can collaborate effectively.

### Week 2: The Academic Genre

Students don't think of academic writing as just another genre to master. When we write a haiku, for example, we tend not to complain about the syllabic arrangement of 5, 7, 5. That's just how you write haiku. Likewise, academic writing can be developed as one of your many writing voices and means of creative expression.

### Week 3: Writer's Block Reimagined

You're stuck. Now what? We will look into what – or who – might be trying to tell us something with that stuckness.

### Week 4: The Dissertation Defense

What can you expect at the defense? How do you best prepare for it? This topic is flexible and will depend on where everyone is in the class.

### **Instructor Bio:**

Craig Chalquist, PhD is a professor, graduate research and writing instructor, dissertation chair, former associate provost, former dissertation office director, former journal editor, and author of more than twenty books and various papers and book chapters. He and his students designed and launched [Terrapsychological Inquiry](#), the first Earth- and place-focused qualitative research methodology. He has worked with PhD students for twenty years. Visit his webpage at [Chalquist.com](#).

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