

**Denver Area Council**  
**College of Commissioner Science**

**Doctorate of Commissioner Science Degree**  
**Guidelines**



**BOY SCOUTS  
OF AMERICA®**  
DENVER AREA COUNCIL

*Prepared by the*

**Denver Area Council**  
**Boy Scouts of America**

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## SUMMARY OF CHANGES

Date	Summary of Changes
01/08/12	Initial release

## SOURCE DOCUMENTS

Several source documents were used to prepare these guidelines:

- Boy Scouts of America, *Administration of Commissioner Service*, 2011 printing, pages 118 – 120 and 194 – 198.
- Denver Area Council, Joseph Black, “Governance Concerning Project Requirements for Denver Area Council PhD Program (January 2010)”
- Longs Peak Council, “Doctoral Candidate Guidelines”, 1 Dec 2011, <http://www.longspeakbsa.org/training/commcollege/DoctoralCandidateGuidelines.pdf>
- Shawnee Trails Council, “Doctoral Candidacy Workbook & Doctoral Coach Guidelines”, 1 Dec 2011, <http://www.the-arrowhead.org/college/DCW-current.pdf>

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## **PURPOSE OF THE DOCTORATE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE DEGREE**

The position of commissioner in the Boy Scouts of America is one of great responsibility and expectations. As such, the Doctorate of Commissioner Science degree and subsequent Doctorate of Commissioner Science Knot Award is the ultimate culmination of a person's knowledge, skills and abilities. The Doctorate of Commissioner Science degree requires the satisfactory development of a thesis or project on any topic of value to Scouting in the local council, and which must be suitable for publication.

The purpose of a Doctoral thesis or project is to advance Scouting in a meaningful and beneficial way to both the candidate and the Denver Area Council that will continue 100 years of morals and values. The thesis or project should cause the candidate to stretch and exceed their perceived potential as a Scouter, project planner, and educator.

The successful completion of the Doctorate of Commissioner Science degree is the primary prerequisite toward earning the Doctorate of Commissioner Science Knot Award.

## **STEPS TOWARD COMPLETION OF THE DEGREE**

The first step toward earning a Doctorate of Commissioner Science degree is the completion of required course works from the annual College of Commissioner Science. A candidate must also have been awarded the Commissioner's Key, serve on the College of Commissioner Science faculty for at least one year, and recruit at least three new commissioners. A complete list of requirements for the Doctorate of Commissioner Science degree and the Doctorate of Commissioner Science Knot Award can be found later in this document.

Next, the candidate must seek an advisor to discuss the thesis or project topic, determine a reasonable timeline to complete the thesis or project, as well as the resources needed to complete the project, and the projected outcome. Consideration should be given that the execution of the project does not conflict with district or council pre-scheduled events. The advisor will in most cases be the district commissioner from the candidate's district or his or her designee. All advisors must be approved by the dean of the doctoral program.

The thesis or project topic abstract must be approved by the council commissioner, or assigned assistant council commissioner, or the dean of the doctorate program and the staff advisor for commissioner service prior to any work being performed on the thesis or project.

The topic abstract should be prepared in draft form, typed and easy to read. A thesis or project is an individual accomplishment and must be completed by a single candidate. It would be highly unusual for a thesis or project to be of sufficient magnitude to justify several candidates working on different elements.

## PURPOSE OF THE DOCTORAL ADVISOR

To support candidates in creating quality theses or projects that are meaningful and useful to the council, a doctoral advisor will be appointed to assist in the development of the thesis or project. The concept of the doctoral advisor is the product of experiences within Scouting combined with higher education and experiences from other non-profit organizations.

The relationship between the doctoral advisor and the candidate is based on the mutual desire to not only create a quality thesis, but also to add the thesis to the general commissioner knowledge base of the council. The doctoral advisor and the candidate will remain in frequent contact (either via phone, e-mail, or visits) for encouragement, guidance, and project oversight. While the thesis is to be the original work of the candidate, the doctoral advisor can make recommendations to help improve the quality of the project.

Any Scouter that has completed their Doctorate of Commissioner Science degree or is a district commissioner or is an assistant council commissioner is eligible to serve as a doctoral advisor. All advisors must be approved by the dean of the doctoral program.

In most cases, doctoral coaches have years of experience as a commissioner, and in some cases may actually have served in several categories of commissioner service. They are a vital resource for the council, and their experiences can help add to the quality training that the College of Commissioner Science provides.

## THESIS GUIDELINES

The thesis should be comprehensive, clear and concise. It should leave an independent reader no doubt as to the topic, data research and conclusions. The quality of work should show the degree of quality and professionalism that when posted on the council website, the information may be used by others to further the Scouting program in another district, council or region.

The thesis document should outline the main topic, the scope of which is a direct benefit to the Denver Area Council (at a district or council level). The paper should also contain details of the end result of the research and data collection used in the development.

The Boy Scouts of America provides several general requirements for the thesis:

- Thesis must be a minimum of 20 double-spaced, typed pages (8½-by-11-inch white paper).
- It must be bound in a nonpermanent binder so that the paper can be reproduced if advisable.
- Thesis must show evidence of meaningful research, project development, and study.
- Thesis becomes the property of the Denver Area Council, Boy Scouts of America. If published, full credit to the author will be given.
- Thesis must include a complete bibliography.

- Thesis must be submitted to the council by December 1<sup>st</sup> for review and acceptance if the degree is to be awarded at the annual College of Commissioner Science.

The thesis must be properly formatted as taught in DCS 601, DCS 602 and DCS 603. Candidates are encouraged to use forms of media including charts, graphs, video etc. in the thesis since the document will most likely remain in electronic (pdf) format and stored on the Denver Area Council's commissioner web site.

The Doctoral candidate has an unlimited amount of time to complete their thesis. If possible, effort should be made to complete the thesis within 12 months of the approval of the topic.

Should a candidate not wish to publish his or her thesis on the council website, such a position should be made clear by the candidate to the approval committee during final approval.

## **PROJECT GUIDELINES**

Instead of writing a thesis, some candidates may prefer to do an approved project not requiring a written thesis. If a project is performed, a brief report must be provided that clearly documents the work performed during the project.

The project might be compared to that of an Eagle service project for youth. While the Doctoral project and paper may or may not be as labor intensive, the Doctoral candidate should provide: 1) a project plan, 2) resource outline, 3) time line, and 4) expected results. The project report is developed from the outline, discussion and results. The project report is drafted after the project has been completed, and should contain the information, knowledge and experience extrapolated from the project which will be used in the body and conclusion.

Secondly, the project proposal, discussion, review, approval, deployment, completion, documentation and final acceptance should be outlined in a time line approach. A particular strategy in achieving that goal would be to use the SMART method taught at Wood Badge, that being: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relative and Timely.

Similar to a formal thesis, the project report should be comprehensive, clear and concise. It should leave an independent reader no doubt as to the topic, data research and conclusions. The quality of work should show the degree of quality and professionalism that when posted on the council website, the information may be used by others to further the Scouting program in another district, council or region.

The project report should outline the main topic, the scope of which is a direct benefit to the Denver Area Council (at a district or council level). The paper should also contain details of the end result of the research and data collection used in the development. The project reports become the property of the Denver Area Council, Boy Scouts of America. If published, full credit to the author will be given. The

project report must be submitted to the council by December 1<sup>st</sup> for review and acceptance if the degree is to be awarded at the annual College of Commissioner Science.

The Doctoral candidate has an unlimited amount of time to complete their project. If possible, effort should be made to complete the project report within 12 months of the approval of the project.

Should a candidate not wish to publish his or her project report on the council website, such a position should be made clear by the candidate to the approval committee during final approval.

## **FINAL APPROVAL**

The completed thesis or project report must be approved by the dean of the doctoral program and the Denver Area Council staff advisor. In cases where the thesis or project report is deemed to not be of sufficient quality, it will be reviewed by a committee of 3 members of the council commissioner training team. Generally the team will include: the candidate's district commissioner, the assistant council commissioner for training and another district commissioner. If, after this secondary review, the thesis or project report is still deemed to not be of sufficient quality, it will be returned to the doctoral candidate for rework.

Further questions regarding any aspect of the project and/or thesis should be directed to the dean of the doctoral program: Steve Waltz, [ArvadaScout@msn.com](mailto:ArvadaScout@msn.com).

The awarding of the Doctorate of Commissioner Science degree is performed at the annual College of Commissioner Science or at other events approved by the council commissioner.



## REQUIREMENTS FOR A DOCTORATE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE DEGREE

The minimum requirements for a Doctorate of Commissioner Science degree are:

### Prerequisites

- Completion of master's degree.
- Have been awarded the Commissioner's Key.
- Current registration as a commissioner.

### Course requirements

- Completion of 10 additional courses of instruction not used to qualify for other college awards (total of 24), at least five of the courses at the doctor's program level.

### Thesis or Project

- Completion of a thesis or project on any topic of value to Scouting in the local council.
- The topic and final paper or project must be approved by the dean of the doctor's program and the staff adviser.

### Performance

- Serve on the College of Commissioner Science faculty (instructor or support staff) for at least one year.
- Recruit at least three new commissioners.
- Approval of council commissioner or assistant council commissioner.
- Approval of Scout executive or staff adviser for commissioner service.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR DOCTORATE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE KNOT AWARD

The minimum requirements to earn the Doctorate of Commissioner Science Knot Award are:

### Tenure

- Serve as a commissioner for a minimum of 5 years. Their service can be in one or more commissioner roles or positions of service.

### Prerequisites

- Completion of master's degree.
- Have been awarded the Commissioner's Key.
- Current registration as a commissioner.

Note: To receive this award knot, you must qualify for your doctorate degree as well.

### Course Requirements

- Complete a minimum of ten (10) additional courses of instruction not used to qualify for other college awards (total of 24), at least five (5) of the courses at the doctor's program level as listed in the *Continuing Education for Commissioners* section of the *Administration of Commissioner Service* manual.

### Thesis or Project

- Completion of a thesis or project on any topic of value to Scouting in the local council.
- The topic and final paper or project must be approved by the council commissioner, or assigned assistant council commissioner, or the dean of the doctorate program and the staff advisor for commissioner service.

### Performance

- Serve on the College of Commissioner Science faculty (instructor or support staff) or work with training support for commissioners for at least one year.
- Recruit at least three new commissioners at any level.
- Approval of council or assigned assistant council commissioner
- Approval of Scout executive or advisor to commissioner service

**Grandfather or Sunset Clause:**

Since the key requirement of this award is tied to an approval of a thesis (councils with a commissioner's college) or project (councils without a commissioner's college) that is only earned once, this award is retroactive for individuals who have completed other requirements prior to the approval of this award. This clause applies for the previous 10 years. Any commissioner who meets these requirements would need to list any courses they have taken previously and then complete their thesis or project to apply for the award.

Anyone who earned their doctorate based on the current qualifications will not have to repeat what they have already completed, even if it was prior to 10 years ago. They will have to show their current council commissioner or staff adviser what they have done and then approved.

## THESIS OR PROJECT REPORT REQUIREMENTS

There are three types of reports you can choose from when writing your thesis or project report. The type of report you use depends on the thesis or project you choose. The three types of reports are:

- ❖ **Informative Reference** – adding more to a topic, consolidating information for others to use as reference (e.g., How to run a Camporee)
- ❖ **Analytical Report** – taking data and interpreting it to provide useful information (e.g., trends in recruiting and retaining Scouts); it may not answer all the questions, but could give insight
- ❖ **Experimental Project Report** – trying something new

1. The thesis must be a minimum of 20 pages, double spaced, 12 pt. font. There is no minimum number of pages for a project report.
2. Format of a thesis or project report:
  - a. Title Page (name of subject, sub-title, authors name, date)
  - b. Table of Content (organization of headings, sub-headings)
  - c. List of Illustrations, Tables, and/or Charts
  - d. Preface, Forward, or Letter of Transmittal
  - e. Body of Thesis or Project Report
    - i. Introductory chapters (background, purpose, problem delimitations of subject, methods, summary of study findings)
    - ii. Analysis and interpretations of findings
    - iii. Conclusions and recommendations based on data presented
    - iv. Summary chapter
  - f. Supplementary material
    - i. Appendixes
    - ii. Bibliography
    - iii. Index
    - iv. Glossary of terms

**Remember – the focus of a thesis or project must be on a topic of value to Scouting in the Denver Area Council**