

Appendix 3

Interview Protocol

[Before you begin, make sure you have looked over the pre-interview survey for your person, and jot down some notes about them. You can use any notes you collected as artifacts, too]

Opening: Thank you for doing this interview. I know things are a bit crazy right now, and I really appreciate you taking the time to talk with me. I'll try to make sure that we keep it around 30-60 minutes--I'm setting a timer right now. Ok if I record this interview? (wait for them to agree). Great! I'm starting the recorder now.

Goals/Purpose

As you know, the TTU online PhD program was the first of its kind. Part of the pushback when we proposed it was that online students wouldn't have the same experience as their f2f counterparts. We had to figure out what it was that the f2f students were getting outside of coursework that the online students wouldn't get, and in response to figuring out what "it" was, we created the cohort system, the May Seminar, annual reviews, and various professional development workshops. We'd like to take a pulse point assessment of how and how well the online program was able to deliver "it" to you. We'll use the data gathered in these interviews to strengthen the program, and hopefully, to publish about the program.

How the Interview will proceed

The interview will begin by asking you about "It," and then we'll move on to your specific experience with aspects of the program, and finally I'll ask you to assess these experiences. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Let's start with the idea of "It":

Dr. Joyce Locke Carter, the creator of the online program, talked about "it"--what online students *didn't* get that f2f students *did* get. What do you think "it" is? Why?

Do you think you got "it" from your experiences at TTU? How/where?

Now let's back up a bit and get some background:

When you first started, what were your goals for the online PhD program?

I see you did X while taking classes (See Survey). How difficult was it to balance work/school/personal life?

You said that you took courses via (See Survey). How well do you think this delivery system worked?

Your cohort's name was XX. How important was the cohort to your experience?

Let's start with how the program prepared you for your current position.

You said that your current position is XXX (See Survey). Did you feel prepared for this job after graduating from TTU? Why/why not?

Given what you do now, what specifically did you find valuable in the TTU online PhD that helped to prepare you for it? (Can refer to survey)

What courses “stand out” as important to you as a scholar or to your current position? It’s ok if you don’t recall names/numbers--just tell me as much as you can recall.

What experiences outside of courses “stand out” as important to you as a scholar or to your current position?

Let’s talk a bit about the Faculty:

(According to the survey, you said...) To what extent did you feel you were able to make meaningful connections with faculty? How were you able to make these connections? (if not able, why do you think that was?)

If any, what faculty members do you feel were important to your growth as a person/scholar?

Who would you consider a mentor throughout your time in the program and why?

Now let’s look at Other Students:

(According to the survey, you said...) To what extent did you feel you were able to make meaningful connections with other students?

Follow up: (if they did) How were you able to make meaningful connections with other students?

(if not) Why were you unable to make meaningful connections with other students?

Now I’d like to look at the May Seminar:

I see you have attended XX May Seminars. What was your overall impression of the May Seminar? What stands out?

In thinking about your total experience in the online TCR program, what role did the May seminar play in your academic development/progress? Can you think of some specific examples?

What would you describe as the benefits of the May Seminar? How about the drawbacks?

The purposes behind the May Seminar were to give students experience with “hands on” courses like usability, to promote the cohort, and to give you experiences that the f2f students had, but in a truncated format (professional development, annual reviews, etc.). How well did the May Seminar do in these respects? What do you wish you’d gotten?

Assessment of their experiences

What are some of the most memorable/important aspects of being a student in the online PhD program?

I know we've covered some of this ground, but What did the TTU TCR online PhD do well?
What could they have done better? Consider the following:

Courses

May Seminar

Cohort

Annual Reviews

Research

Ethics in TCR

Participation at Conferences

Dissertation Committee

Other??

If you could choose one word or phrase, how would you describe your experience with the online PhD?

Are there any other meaningful or important aspects of the online PhD program that we haven't had a chance to discuss yet that you would like to mention? This could be anything you feel has impacted you, helped you in your research trajectory, or with your current career.

Thank you for your time! Before we go, I wonder if you have any questions for me? (For instance, Is there anything that you don't think we covered?)