



**THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF HISPANICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION (AAHHE)
AND EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE (ETS)
OUTSTANDING DISSERTATIONS COMPETITION 2010**

Guidelines

The following guidelines and accompanying explanation are provided to help ensure the highest possible standards for the competition and to make the competition as objective as possible.

1. Who is eligible to enter the competition?

The competition is open to anyone who has completed a dissertation that focuses on Hispanics in higher education **or** to any Hispanic who has completed a dissertation in the social sciences, broadly defined, between June 1, 2007 and August 1, 2009.

Studies using any research approach (historical, experimental, survey, etc.) are eligible.

Completion is defined as:

- (a) received the doctoral degree between the specified dates
- OR**
- (b) satisfactory completion of all the course work, mandatory internships and the dissertation between the dates specified above and the dissertation is acceptable to the candidate's committee, but the degree has not been officially conferred.

A routine check is made with the chair of the dissertation committee of the applicant to verify the information provided is accurate and to protect all competitors, the universities, the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education and Educational Testing Service.

Prior applicants may reapply if the completed dissertation is within the defined range of eligibility and within the dates listed above.

2. What are the criteria to be used in evaluating the dissertations?

Three criteria will be used to evaluate the dissertations:

- (a) the appropriateness of the research approach used;

- (b) the scholarly quality of the dissertation; and
- (c) the significance of its contribution to knowledge in the field.

3. **What is the first deadline for the competition?**

The first deadline is **September 7, 2009**. The chair of the Outstanding Dissertations Competition 2009 must receive six (6) copies of the dissertation abstract prepared as directed in these guidelines by this date.

THIS IS A VERY FIRM DEADLINE. ANY DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS RECEIVED AFTER THIS DATE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

4. **How should the dissertation abstracts be prepared?**

For the first round of judging, the applicant's dissertation is rated **SOLELY** upon the dissertation abstract submitted. This abstract, then, must reflect accurately, concisely and precisely the research of the full dissertation.

The following directions must be used in the preparation of the abstract.

a. **Format**

The abstract will include the following:

- (1) **Title page** – A sample title page is attached to these guidelines. Please provide all the information requested. One page in length.
- (2) **Letter** – A letter, on university stationery and signed by the chair or advisor of the dissertation committee:
 - Must state that the dissertation meets one of the two eligibility criteria, defined earlier in these guidelines.
 - Two page limit.
 - Must state how the chair would rank the dissertation among previous dissertations.
 - Significance to the discipline must also be elaborated.
 - Must state implications for policy/practice.
- (3) **Summary** – On a separate page, include a summary, **approximately 150 words in length**, double-spaced and no longer than one page in length, stating in non-technical terms, the purpose and major findings of the study.

THE MAIN REPORT SECTIONS SHOULD NOT EXCEEDING FIFTEEN (15) PAGES IN LENGTH, DOUBLE-SPACED.

- (4) **Main report section – NOT EXCEEDING FIFTEEN (15) PAGES IN LENGTH, DOUBLE-SPACED.**

The section must include the statement of the problem; the purpose of the study; definition of key terms; sampling techniques including sample size, description, etc. (if applicable); theoretical framework; main hypotheses; overview of analyses of data (if applicable); main findings and conclusions; and implications. This information should align closely with the content of the dissertation. The abstract is critical to the Judges review as they will rely on it to determine the finalists.

- (5) **Bibliography** – Will include a complete reference to each item cited in the dissertation abstract. References for items not used in the abstract should not be included.
 - (6) **Appendix** – If the applicant requires additional space in which to present details of a research instrument, a theoretical point of view, or to elaborate on some other vital point, an appendix may be included. Not to exceed (3) three pages, double-spaced.
- b. **Length.** The total abstract should not exceed twenty-five (25) typewritten, double-spaced, 8 ½” x 11” pages, including all the sections mentioned above.
 - c. **Writing Style** – The writing style should be clear, consistent, and concise. Particular care should be taken to ensure that each table, chart and/or figure is adequately explained.

5. **How many copies of the dissertation abstract are required?**

Six (6) copies of the dissertation abstract should be sent, FIRST CLASS MAIL, to:

Dr. Patricia Arredondo
Associate Vice Chancellor and
Professor, Educational Psychology
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
PO Box 413
Chapman Hall 230
Milwaukee, WI 53201-0413
(414) 227-3301

6. **What is the general procedure that will be used in the competition?**

The judging, generally speaking, will be in two phases. The first phase will use the dissertation abstracts as a basis. The chair of the competition will send the abstracts to a Panel of Judges who will be asked to judge/evaluate the abstracts. Each judge will be asked to submit to the chair of the competition a ranking of the top five (5) abstracts.

The chair of the competition will determine the top five (5) to seven (7) abstracts and will ask the applicants to submit a copy of the complete dissertation, to be used as a basis for the second phase of the judging/evaluating process.

In the second phase, the Panel of Judges will convene to read, evaluate, and rank the complete dissertations and will determine the top three (3) dissertations.

A schedule, which outlines the process in more detail, is included in the **Important Dates** section that follows.

7. **What are the most important dates and deadlines?**

The schedule below, in addition to providing important dates and deadlines, provides additional information about the process.

March 7, 2009	The outstanding dissertations competition is announced at the awards luncheon at the fourth annual national conference of the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education in San Antonio, Texas.
April 6, 2009	Announcements of the competition and guidelines are sent to all individual members of the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education and to the presidents of AAHHE institutional members. Announcement will be posted on the website of both AAHHE and ETS. Announcements will be advertised in the <i>Journal of Hispanic Higher Education</i> , <i>Hispanic Outlook of Higher Education</i> and other journals. ETS will announce the competition to its constituencies.
September 7, 2009	Applicants submit six (6) copies of dissertation abstract to the chair of the dissertations competition.
September 15, 2009	Chair of the dissertations competition distributes abstracts to the Panel of Judges.
October 14, 2009	Panel of Judges completes screening and advises the chair of the dissertations competition of rankings. Each judge identifies five (5) top dissertation abstracts.
October 19, 2009	Chair of the dissertations competition determines five (5) to seven (7) top abstracts and advises all entrants of the results. In effect, these abstracts are the semifinalists that will be reviewed and discussed by the committee.
October 23, 2009	Deadline for semifinalists send one copy of complete dissertation to Eleanor Horne at ETS.
October 29-30, 2009	Panel of Judges meets and selects the top three (3) dissertations at ETS. Address and instructions will be provided to the semifinalists.

November 5, 2009	Chair of the competition notifies the three (3) finalists and the others not selected of results.
March 4-6, 2010	Winners are announced at the fifth annual national conference of the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education, in Costa Mesa, CA.

8. What recognition will be given to the winners?

In effect, there will be two types or levels of winners:

- (1) The semifinalists—the writers of the top five (5) to seven (7) dissertation abstracts, from which the three (3) finalists are selected, and
- (2) The three (3) finalists—the writers of the dissertations selected by the Panel of Judges as first, second and third place winners.

The three (3) finalists will be recognized formally at the annual awards luncheon during AAHHE's fourth annual conference in Costa Mesa, California on March 4-6, 2010.

The American Association for Hispanics in Higher Education will pay for travel expenses within the continental United States for the three (3) finalists, to include hotel room for two (2) nights and per diem for two (2) days. The Association will also pay the registration costs for the finalists at the conference.

The first place winner will receive an award of \$5,000. The second place winner will receive an award of \$2,000, and the third place winner will receive an award of \$1,000. All three finalists will receive an AAHHE/ETS plaque.

As well, the three finalists will present their dissertations in individual concurrent sessions at the conference. The American Association for Hispanics in Higher Education will also ask the three (3) finalists to submit to the *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, AAHHE's partner, an academic article based on the dissertation, provided that the dissertation is within the scope of the journal.

ETS will invite the first place winner to publish the essence of the winning dissertation in an appropriate ETS publication and to showcase the research at a seminar hosted by ETS in Princeton, New Jersey.

9. Who makes the final decision?

All decisions by the Panel of Judges are final.

Additional details about all aspects of the competition are online in the Outstanding Dissertations Competition 2009 Guidelines at www.aahhe.org

(As of January 16, 2009)