Doctor of Education:
Teacher Leadership

A Guide for Writing the
Capstone Project

revised 4/24/13
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Capstone Experience Overview

The capstone experience for the Maryville University Ed.D. in Teacher Leadership will bring into play the recurring elements and themes developed over the seven-semester program of studies. The processes employed to complete the experience are as critical to the worthiness of the effort as is the final product. At its conclusion, the product should contribute to the solution or the completion of a real-world challenge (the improvement of teaching, school programs, or instructional leadership from the perspective of a teacher leader).

The Capstone must contain research about a subject worthy of doctoral studies, the testing of a hypothesis or resolution of research questions, requisite data gathering to solve the problem and support the decision, the essentials of excellence in written and oral communications, and evidence of moral leadership.

Timeline

During the first two semesters of the program, the candidate will have engaged and participated in the Introduction to Action Research (EDL 711) and Advanced Research (EDL 712). After EDL 711, the student will have completed Chapters One and Two. After EDL 712, the student will have completed Chapter Three. Working alone, in pairs, or small groups, the candidate(s) will engage in research-based, data driven, real world educational leadership experiences to provide front-line support in a project or problem of significance. The last two chapters of the Capstone will be completed independently during the last five
semesters of study. The candidates will remain in contact and work with the instructor of EDL 712 throughout the project.

The complete Capstone Project is due in the student’s seventh (final) semester by the 5th week. The Capstone Project should consist of five chapters: (1) Introduction, (2) Review of the Literature, (3) Methodology, (4) Results, and (5) Conclusions, Limitations, and Recommendations, along with the Introductory Pages, References, and Appendices (please see the sample pages in this guide beginning on page 10). The instructor of EDL 724 will examine the project and then set up a conference with the candidate(s) to discuss strengths and weaknesses of the project. The candidate(s) will then have until the 8th week of the semester to incorporate the feedback into their project and turn it in again to the instructor of EDL 724. Final approval of the Capstone Project will be given to the candidate(s) in person or through the mail in the form of a Capstone Scoring Rubric.

Schedule by Semester

**Semester One:**

**EDL 711 Introduction to Action Research**

Complete Introductory Pages, Chapter One, Chapter Two and the References.

**Semester Two:**

**EDL 712 Advanced Research for Teacher Leaders**

Complete Chapter Three and outline Appendices.
Incorporate feedback from EDL 711 and EDL 712 instructors into the Introductory Pages, Chapter One, Chapter Two, Chapter Three, References and Appendix.

Submit the IRB (Institutional Review Board) Document (Appendix A) for approval.

**Semester Three:**
Prepare to implement new idea(s) and/or conduct research.

**Semester Four & Five:**
Implement new idea(s) and/or conduct research.
Begin gathering data.

**Semester Six:**
Start assimilating and analyzing data.

**Semester Seven:**
**EDL 724 Capstone**
Turn in Initial Capstone Project (by the 5th week).
Conference with EDL 724 Instructor.
Edit and turn in final Capstone Project (by the 8th week).
Receive final approval for Capstone Project in the form of a Scoring Rubric (Appendix C).
Final Capstone Presentation to Cohort(s) and invited Maryville University Staff (Appendix D).

**Project Scope and Depth**
As teacher leaders, your research must demonstrate your leadership abilities in developing and implementing your action research project. While the research
may take place primarily in the classroom, the research topic will have a scope and depth exceeding that of action research normally implemented by teachers as professional development or for personal improvement of teaching. Your instructors for EDL 711 and 712 will guide you in designing a study with both (1) practical importance for the school or district, and (2) a scope and depth suitable for doctoral work.

**Research Involving Human Subjects**

Any students conducting research involving human subjects (Federal Regulations define a human subject as “a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains (1) data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or (2) identifiable private information”, must fill out an IRB (Institutional Review Board) document and submit it during their second semester to the instructor of EDL 712 for approval before any data other than that of public domain may be gathered.

**Final Oral Presentation**

The final Capstone Project will form the basis for a final presentation, highlighting the experience, to be made to the candidate’s cohort group, invited Maryville University staff and other cohorts during the seventh semester of course work. If more than one candidate worked on the Capstone Project all are expected to participate fully in the Capstone Project Presentation. A guide for these presentations can be found in Appendix C.

**Publication Requirements**

**Submitting parts of the paper and corrections**
The candidate is responsible for proofreading and submitting an **electronic copy** with correct typing, spelling, pagination, and formatting each time for review (including drafts). **All correspondence** between the instructor and candidate shall be kept electronically by the candidate as proof of corrections.

**Type**

A standard font such us Arial or Times Roman (12 point) should be used for the entire project.

**Margins**

The left margin should be one and one half inches, the top margin should be one and one half inches with the running head at one inch and right justified, the bottom and right margins should be one inch. The margin requirements apply to all photocopies, photographs, charts, maps, and other items, which might be included in the appendices.

**Single space or double space?**

Dedication page and Abstract page are single spaced. All other pages are double spaced.

**To Indent or Not to Indent?**

**Do not Indent**: the first line of Dedication Page, any line on the Abstract Page, subheadings in the body of the paper

**Indent**: Subheadings in the Table of Contents, paragraphs in the body of the paper

**Centering**
All titles should be centered (examples: Abstract, Dedication, Table of Contents, Chapter One, etc.). Subheadings should be left justified, not centered.

Page Numbering

Pages in the body of the paper should be numbered in the top right hand corner to the right of the running head. Page 1 is not numbered. Page numbering starts on page 2. The appendices are not numbered (for directions on citing and labeling appendices correctly, see pages 17 & 18 in this guide. The Introductory Pages have a different numbering system (i, ii, iii, iv, etc.)(see the example in the appendix).

Running Head

A summary of the title of the project should be used as a running head on all pages of the project except the title page and appendices. The running head is right justified and placed to the left of the page numbers. Please refer to the sample pages in the appendix.
Chapter One: Introduction

Recommended Length: 5-7 pages

Purpose: The purpose of Chapter One is to introduce the problem area, establish its significance, and share the researcher’s perspectives on the problem.

The following components must be present in Chapter One:

Introduction

Presentation of the problem

Globally (i.e., Worldwide, USA, etc.)

Locally (State, District, Specific School)

Justification for pursuing your topic

History of the problem

Current status of the problem

Clearly State Your Research Question(s)

Summary: Three or four sentences explaining the problem and a transition sentence or two letting the reader know what to expect in Chapter Two. Mention major contributors to the field of study you plan to research. State and/or restate your research question(s) here as well.

Definitions (only if necessary)

Note: Cohesiveness throughout the project is essential. Research Questions and Hypotheses must be stated clearly and in the same manner throughout the paper.
Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

Recommended Length: 15-25 pages

Purpose: The review of the related literature indicates what is known about the problem or topic. Its function is to educate the reader about the area that was studied. It is NOT a series of abstracts or annotations but rather a summary and analysis of the relationships and differences among relevant studies and reports. The review should flow in such a way that the least related references are discussed first and the most related references are discussed last, just before the statement of the hypothesis.

The following components must be present in Chapter Two:

Introduction
A report on what the experts have researched and concluded about your topic.
15 to 25 resource citations (books, articles, reviews of research, curriculum reviews, etc.)
Definitions (if necessary)
Summary: Synthesize the research in your own words
Tie the research to your project

Clearly state your hypothesis or research questions.

Note: Cohesiveness throughout the project is essential. Research Questions and Hypotheses must be stated clearly and in the same manner throughout the paper.
Chapter Three: Methodology

Recommended Length: 8-12 pages

Purpose: The methodology chapter includes a description of the participants, instruments, design, strategy, and assumptions. This chapter should describe your project so clearly that another researcher could read it, duplicate it and expect similar results. Most, if not all appendices will be cited in this chapter.

The following components must be present in Chapter Three:

Design of the Research
Demographics-Must include a chart and a brief narrative.
Target Sample Selection (if necessary)
Description of the Program
Definitions (if necessary)
Time Line
Collection of the Data (including a confidentiality statement)
Description of Assessment Tools
Plan for Analyzing the Data

NOTE: Follow the APA manual in all citations.
Chapter Four: Results

Recommended Length: 5-10 Pages

Purpose: Description of findings pertinent to the research question(s) or hypothesis(ies) in tables, graphs and/or charts along with narratives to describe each. These narratives should highlight significant results or areas of interest, not reiterate the entire chart.

The following components must be present in Chapter Four:

Results of all data collected in tables, charts and graphs correlated with narratives.

For quantitative components, statistical calculations of the results including but not limited to: Measures of Central Tendencies (Mode, Mean and Median), Standard Deviations, Effect Sizes, Correlation Coefficients.

For qualitative components, narrative support for results of open-ended questionnaires or surveys, interviews, field/classroom observations, focus groups, qualitative content analyses, etc.

Mixed-method studies will include both of the above components.

Note: It is best to organize and report the data in this chapter around the research question(s) or hypothesis(ies) stated in Chapters One and Two.
Chapter Five: Conclusions

Recommended Length: 4-7 Pages

Purpose: The purpose of Chapter Five is to analyze thoroughly the data from Chapter Four while synthesizing it with the information discussed in Chapters One and Two in order to draw clear, succinct conclusions in relationship to your research question(s) and/or hypothesis(es).

The following components must be present in chapter five:

Analysis of the results of this study

Discussion of how this study compared to the literature

Limitations of the study

Recommendations for action based on the conclusions and limitations

Note: It is best to organize and report the information in this chapter around the research question(s) or hypothesis(es) stated in Chapters One and Two. Also, be careful about jumping to conclusions. Make sure you are measuring what you say you are measuring. For example, you cannot give a survey on teacher proficiency and make conclusions about teacher satisfaction. You cannot demonstrate improved teacher satisfaction in Chapters Three and Four and then claim improved student achievement as part of your conclusions in Chapter Five unless you also demonstrated improved student achievement in Chapters Three or Four or cited someone
else’s research in Chapter Two that demonstrates improved student achievement based on improved teacher satisfaction.

References

15 to 25 sources must be utilized in the project.

Every source must be cited in the body of your paper using APA format (most or all will be in Chapter Two). Refer to the APA Style Manual.

Appendices

According to Gay (2006), appendices are items that help to clarify your project (i.e., assessment tools, examples of student work, surveys, samples of consent forms to be used with research participants, IRB proposals, samples of structured surveys or questionnaires used in the research) (p.89). Appendices also provide information and data that are pertinent to the study but are either too lengthy or not important enough to be included in the main body of the paper.

Appendices commonly contain materials especially developed for the study such as tests, questionnaires, and cover letters.

Citing of Appendices

Citing is very simple and may be done in one of two ways. See the examples below:

In staff meetings at both schools, teachers attended staff development that included a Power Point presentation titled Bridging the Gaps (Appendix A).

OR
In October 2007, short surveys (Appendix B) for both parents and students were developed.

Appendices should be placed in the order in which they are cited in the paper. The first one is labeled Appendix A, the second one is Appendix B, etc. The title of the appendices should be placed at the top in the center directly under the label. See the appendices at the end of this Guide as an example.
References

Psychology Association.

Gay, L.R. (2006). Educational research: Competencies for analysis and
applications. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.
Appendix A

IRB Document

IRB (Institutional Review Board)

To access Maryville’s Institutional Review Board information and related forms, follow these steps:

1. Go to the Maryville portal (http://my.maryville.edu)
2. Log in
3. On the top toolbar on the site, click on Academic Services
4. On the left, click on Institutional Review Board
5. The complete application packet, including detailed instructions and tips for completing all parts of the protocol, is included in the document “Application Packet 2012.” Click in the right-hand column to open the document.

OR

Link to the IRB site directly (Maryville login required):

https://my.maryville.edu/AcademicServices/Institutional%20Review%20Board%20IRB/Forms/Sorted%20by%20document%20name.aspx
Appendix B

The Effects of Utilizing Teaching Strategies Designed for the Left Brain Learner on the Academic Achievement of Ninth Grade History Students

by

Leonard Keith Kinder

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctorate in Education

Maryville University
Saint Louis, Missouri
August 2008
This Capstone Project submitted by

__________________________________________  __________________________
Candidate’s Signature                      Candidate’s Signature

__________________________________________  __________________________
Candidate’s Signature                      Candidate’s Signature

has been accepted by the faculty of the School of Education at Maryville University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctorate in Education.

Capstone Instructor’s Signature(s)

__________________________________________  Date __________
Dedications (or Acknowledgements)

I dedicate this project to the members of my cohort group, the faculty of the Maryville University, and my family. I would like to give a very special dedication to my wife, who supported me throughout my Maryville experience. This project would not have been possible without her love and support.

NOTE: This page is optional.

NOTE: Your dedications should be single spaced.
Abstract

This research study was conducted to determine the effect of teaching left brained strategies to right brained learners on achievement measured by daily quizzes in a ninth grade Modern American History class. The study was conducted from September 2006 to May 2007. The participants in this study were twenty six ninth grade students in a large suburban high school. During the first unit of the study, students were given a pretest prior to the test and a posttest at the end of the unit. During the second unit, students were given a pretest and posttest, but were also given daily quizzes. When the data were examined each student’s progress was recorded from pretest to posttest for each unit. The results indicated students’ unit test scores were higher on average for the unit without daily quizzes. The mean posttest scores for the first unit were 82.3%, while for unit two the mean score was 73.2%. The students also improved on average, more on the unit without daily quizzes than with the quizzes. The mean improvement from pretest to posttest for unit one was 13.1%. The mean of the daily quiz unit improvement was 4.8%. In conclusion, this study found that the left brain strategy of utilizing daily quizzes did not significantly impact student achievement.

NOTE: Your abstract can be reported in one to three paragraphs and must include a very brief description of your 1) research question or hypothesis, 2) your method of research and 3) your results.

NOTE: Your abstract should be single spaced.
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NOTE: Double space the entire Table of Contents.
NOTE: Indent Subheadings
NOTE: Include titles for all appendices
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Presentation of Capstone Project

The following information is provided as a guide to help the candidates prepare for a successful presentation of results of the Capstone projects to the Maryville University School of Education Faculty and cohort peers.

General Information:

The graduate education faculty will select one evening during the seventh semester of the program for all presentations.

Two weeks prior to the presentations, candidates will select a time slot to present. Each presentation is limited to 20 minutes.

Presentation of the Capstone project will be made by all members of the group who participated in the completion of the project.

All cohort members are expected to attend the presentations of Capstone projects. Refreshments will be served throughout the presentations.

Remember, your Capstone will have already been approved. The Maryville faculty and audience are not there to question your methods or results. They are present to share in your excitement for your achievement.

The Presentation:

Maryville University will provide the site and the necessary technology for a successful presentation. Candidates will be asked, approximately two weeks prior to the presentation, to submit requests for any special technology needed.

Presentations will be set on a twenty (20) minute schedule with three (3) per hour.

Candidates are encouraged to develop a PowerPoint presentation, with handouts for the audience, to give the most thorough understanding of the project.

The following are parts of the presentation which are necessary to provide maximum coverage of the Capstone project:

1. Explain why you choose this particular project. (Why does it need to be researched, what is the ultimate result you want from the process, how you will use the results to further school improvement in your district?) (1-2 minutes)
2. Explain what you found in the current research from experts in the field. (List supporting evidence for your method but also address dissenting opinions). (1-2 minutes)

3. Explain your methodology, including your research question, your hypothesis, all aspects of your target group, and action implemented. (3-4 minutes)

4. Explain what data you collected, why you collected the data, an analysis of the data, and the results of the data analysis. (4-5 minutes)

5. Explain what conclusions you have drawn from the data, what limitations the study poses, and what further studies need to be or can be conducted from your study. (4-5 minutes)

6. Celebrate! You are finished with your presentation.
Appendix D: Capstone Scoring Rubric

Maryville University
Doctorate in Education Capstone Project Rubric

Name of Candidate: _________________________________Date of Submission: _________________________________

Signature of Scorer: _________________________________Date Scored: _______________________________________

Final Grade: _________

Capstone Title: ___________________________________________________________________________________

The following scoring rubric will be used to assess your cumulative Capstone Project. To receive a “Pass” in the course, you must receive “Adequate Progress” and/or “Progress Exceeds Expectations” scores in all categories.

Introductory Pages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introductory Pages (Title Page, Advisor Signature Page, Abstract, Table of Contents, List of Tables)</th>
<th>Inadequate Progress</th>
<th>Adequate Progress</th>
<th>Progress Exceeds Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One or more pages missing and improper format</td>
<td>All pages are present and correct format followed</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter One: Background and Rationale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Inadequate Progress</th>
<th>Adequate Progress</th>
<th>Progress Exceeds Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature of the Problem</td>
<td>One or more parts missing (Problem specifically indicated, Impact is clearly stated, Statement is concise, Purpose of study is clear)</td>
<td>Problem specifically indicated, Impact is clearly stated, Statement is concise, Purpose of study is clear</td>
<td>One or more parts exceeds School of Education requirements (Problem specifically indicated, Impact is clearly stated, Statement is concise, Purpose of study is clear)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Two: Review of Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Inadequate Progress</th>
<th>Adequate Progress</th>
<th>Progress Exceeds Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevant research and</td>
<td>The researcher fails to present both sides of the research, Weak organization with</td>
<td>The topic and subtopics were presented effectively to justify the hypothesis, Well</td>
<td>One or more parts exceeds School of Education requirements (The topic and subtopics were</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>no logical sequencing or structure</td>
<td>organized, relevant and demonstrates logical sequencing and structure</td>
<td>presented effectively to justify the hypothesis, Well organized, relevant and demonstrates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>logical sequencing and structure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow and Synthesis</td>
<td>Presents overall general ideas but fails to flow smoothly, Conclusions were lacking</td>
<td>Transitions tie sections together and flow smoothly from one section to the next,</td>
<td>One or more parts exceeds School of Education requirements (Transitions tie sections together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>based on the articles and authors cited</td>
<td>The student was able to make succinct and precise conclusions in connection to the</td>
<td>and flow smoothly from one section to the next, The student was able to make succinct and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>research problem</td>
<td>precise conclusions in connection to the research problem)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Chapter Three: Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Inadequate Progress</th>
<th>Adequate Progress</th>
<th>Progress Exceeds Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>General description of sample. Population and demographics are absent.</td>
<td>Detailed description of sampling procedures, population, and target group</td>
<td>One or more parts exceeds School of Education requirements (Detailed description of sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>procedures, population, and target group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>Poor description of all parts of the collection procedure</td>
<td>Instruments, data collection procedures, and rationale for collection are presented.</td>
<td>One or more parts exceeds School of Education requirements (Instruments, data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>procedures, and rationale for collection is presented.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures</td>
<td>No descriptions of research strategy, methods are poorly described</td>
<td>Research strategy is present, specific methods are described, statistical analysis is appropriate</td>
<td>One or more parts exceeds School of Education requirements (Research strategy is present, specific methods are described, statistical analysis is appropriate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Lacks a description of the research design, and design is not justified</td>
<td>Includes a description of the research design and approach, provides an appropriate justification of design</td>
<td>One or more parts exceeds School of Education requirements (Includes a description of the research design and approach, provides an appropriate justification of design)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four: Results</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>One or more parts missing (Summary of data in table or figures, data in tables are explained in body of paper, table or figures display the data effectively, all questions and assessment tools are analyzed, table and figures follow logical format)</td>
<td>Summary of data in table or figures, data in tables are explained in body of paper, table or figures display the data effectively, all questions and assessment tools are analyzed, table and figures follow logical format</td>
<td>One or more parts exceeds School of Education requirements (Summary of data in table or figures, data in tables are explained in body of paper, table or figures display the data effectively, all questions and assessment tools are analyzed, table and figures follow logical format)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Five: Conclusions, Limitations, and Recommendations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>One or more parts missing (Results are synthesized (what did you learn?), conclusions are compared with literature review)</td>
<td>Results are synthesized (what did you learn?), conclusions are compared with literature review</td>
<td>One or more parts exceeds School of Education requirements (Results are synthesized (what did you learn?), conclusions are compared with literature review)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>One or more parts missing (Limitations in your procedure that affected results are explained (e.g., observer bias, weak attitude survey)</td>
<td>Limitations in your procedure that affected results are explained (e.g., observer bias, weak attitude survey)</td>
<td>One or more parts exceeds School of Education requirements (Limitations in your procedure that affected results are explained)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>One or more parts missing (Based on limitations, recommendations for future research are listed)</td>
<td>Based on limitations, recommendations for future research are listed</td>
<td>One or more parts exceeds School of Education requirements (Based on limitations, recommendations for future research are listed)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| References | Inadequate Progress | Adequate Progress | Progress Exceeds Expectations |
| References | Less than the required number of sources for information and quotes | Meets the required number of sources for information and quotes | Exceeds the required number of sources for information and quotes |

| Organization | Inadequate Progress | Adequate Progress | Progress Exceeds Expectations |
| Overall Organization, Written Communication and Depth of Thought | One or more parts missing (Tight organization, logical flow, consistent and appropriate use of detail to support ideas, evidence of deep and insightful understanding of the various aspects of teacher leadership, insights and synthesis of learning with implications for improving schools) | Tight organization, logical flow, consistent and appropriate use of detail to support ideas, evidence of deep and insightful understanding of the various aspects of teacher leadership, insights and synthesis of learning with implications for improving schools | One or more parts exceeds School of Education requirements (Tight organization, logical flow, consistent and appropriate use of detail to support ideas, evidence of deep and insightful understanding of the various aspects of teacher leadership, insights and synthesis of learning with implications for improving schools) |

| APA Format | Inadequate Progress | Adequate Progress | Progress Exceeds Expectations |
| APA Format | One or more areas not followed (spacing, APA format, grammatical errors, typographical errors, punctuation) | Proper format followed on all pages | Non applicable |
### Presentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>An oral presentation of your action research project.</th>
<th>Inadequate Progress</th>
<th>Adequate Progress</th>
<th>Progress Exceeds Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One or more of the following parts not summarized adequately: topic, research, methodology, results and conclusions; and/or did not meet the time constraints of 13 to 18 minutes.</td>
<td>Adequately summarizes all parts of the action research: topic, research, methodology, results and conclusions; meets the time constraints of 13-18 minutes.</td>
<td>Meets all requirements of Adequate Progress and is presented in an interesting and/or entertaining format.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Comments:

### Time:

### Summary

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Knowledge, Skill, Disposition</th>
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<td>Results (Ch 4)</td>
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### Concluding Remarks: