## Appendix EE. Sample Consistency Chart of Findings, Interpretations, and Conclusions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
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</table>
| 1. The overwhelming majority of participants indicated that the course work did not prepare them to conduct research and write their dissertations. | • Course work cannot fully prepare students for the practicalities involved in conducting research and writing a dissertation.   
• Doctoral programs do not provide a supportive environment.  
• There are unrealistic expectations on the part of programs vis-à-vis what students should be able to do.  
• There are unrealistic expectations on the part of students.  
• Personal idiosyncrasies come into play.                                                                 | Students who enroll in doctoral programs should not expect that course work alone will or can fully prepare them to conduct research and write their dissertations. Completion of a dissertation is a journey the student undertakes that is content specific and, as such, becomes a process of discovery. The primary purpose of course work is to provide a sound theoretical foundation. |
| 2. All 20 participants expressed the need to know the content and to understand the process involved in conducting research and writing their dissertations. | • Content and process are intertwined.  
• During course work, students are not yet ready for the content knowledge.  
• Later, when students embark on dissertation work, they don’t understand the rigorous process.  
• Students are unmotivated to carry out the process.                                                                 | Being grounded in theory alone is insufficient. Students also need practical know-how, and they need to acquire this through more informal means. In the absence of formal preparation, students need to be open to learning informally. |
| 3. The majority of participants attempted to learn what they needed to know by reaching out in dialogue with colleagues and others, rather than through more formal means. | • Adults learn best through dialogue, reflection, and collaboration, and so students struggling through the dissertation process seek out their colleagues.  
• Learning with colleagues who are in the same boat is comforting and might be less threatening than approaching “experts” to ask for advice. | Dialogue with colleagues in a similar situation can provide a source of support. Dialogue also offers the opportunity for reflection and action. Collaborative opportunities hold the potential for development of new understanding and new learning. |
| 4. The majority of participants indicated that they relied on themselves to facilitate their progress. More than half of these same participants also said that colleagues were instrumental in helping them. | • Adults generally want to feel in charge.  
• Adults generally want to be self-reliant.  
• When students find themselves in a “common” situation, they tend to band together in camaraderie and are empathic toward one another.  
• Determination is important!                                                                 | Most adult students have a preference for directing their own learning. Progress also is largely a function of personal characteristics as well as motivation and drive. |
| 5. The majority of participants cited lack of good, timely, and consistent advisement as a major barrier standing in the way of their progress. | • The advisement that is available does not always meet students’ needs.  
• Students might have unrealistic expectations of their advisors.  
• Advisement might be intentionally or unintentionally ineffective, and may in fact be a real impediment to students’ progress.                                                                 | To move forward, students need support, feedback, and guidance from advisors. Timely and consistent advisement must be an integral part of the doctoral experience. The experience cannot function optimally as a solitary endeavor. |