



Dissertations Bootcamp

Supporting Students in a Virtual Learning Environment

Presenters: Jan Allen and April Ellsey



Welcome



Jan Allen

Associate Dean

Academic and Student Affairs
Graduate School, Cornell University



April Ellsey

Lead Product Manager
Dissertations & Theses, ProQuest

Challenges in Graduate Student Writing



Student challenges in dissertation writing Pre-COVID-19

- Self-doubt, loneliness, job market concerns
- Dispersion of your community of peers
- Financial challenges
- Competing priorities (family, job, etc.)
- Lack of understanding about what it means to write a dissertation



Planning a Virtual Bootcamp

Understanding our Climate

During COVID 19



Student needs



Opportunities



Challenges



Understanding Student Needs

Address



Isolation



Anxiety



Loneliness



Concern about delays



Limited access to libraries



Restrictions on field site visits

Needs Assessment for Graduate School Writing Boot Camp To Go!

June 29 – July 4, 2020

I am/will be writing a

☐ proposal ☐ fellowship application
☐ thesis ☐ other, please indicate _____
☐ dissertation

Name _____ Email _____

Graduate program/field _____ Degree (PhD, MS, MA, MPS, MPA...) _____

I hope to graduate _____.

I had hoped to graduate _____ (an earlier deadline) but did not. Do you want to share the reason? (Which may not be your fault!)

1. What do you hope to gain from participating in writing boot camp? What are your expectations? What do you want to learn or hope to accomplish?
2. What are the obstacles you have encountered in your writing thus far?

Responding During a Pandemic



**Virtual Programming
and Online Academic
Support**



**Virtual Writing
Workshops**



**Online Bootcamp
Events**



**Virtual Support
Community**

Opportunities: Benefits of Being Virtual



Additional presenters and panels are more accessible



Virtual writing support groups available at any hour



Opportunity to deliver online content resources



Hold events for little to no cost



Grow their peer and support community beyond their university and country

Preparing a Timeline



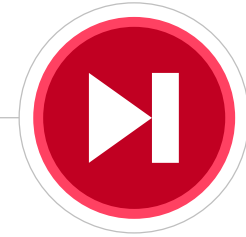
A month before Boot Camp

- Needs assessment, messages, articles, templates, and encouragement



During boot camp (7-9am, noon-2pm, 4-6 pm)

- Daily check-ins, discussions, Q&A
- Mini-lectures, panelists, guest speakers
- Writing-in-a-supportive-Zoom group



After boot camp

- Writing support groups and partners
- Weekly emails, monthly Re-Boots, 10-year reunion (by student request!)

Resources and Tools for Virtual Bootcamps

Planning Tools and Resources

Taking Boot Camp Home

aka, Developing a Strategic Writing Plan to Get You to Completion

Writing a proposal, thesis, or dissertation is not something you must do today. But it is important that you **accomplish something today** and every day to move your writing project to completion. How will you do that?

1. Think ahead and plan backwards.

“Time is that quality of nature which keeps events from happening all at once. Lately it doesn’t seem to be working.”

Make a schedule for completion so you have a schedule that keeps things from happening all at once.

- When will you defend? _____
- When do you need to distribute your reading draft to your committee? _____
- When do you need to give your final complete draft to your advisor for approval to distribute to your committee? _____

Productive Writing

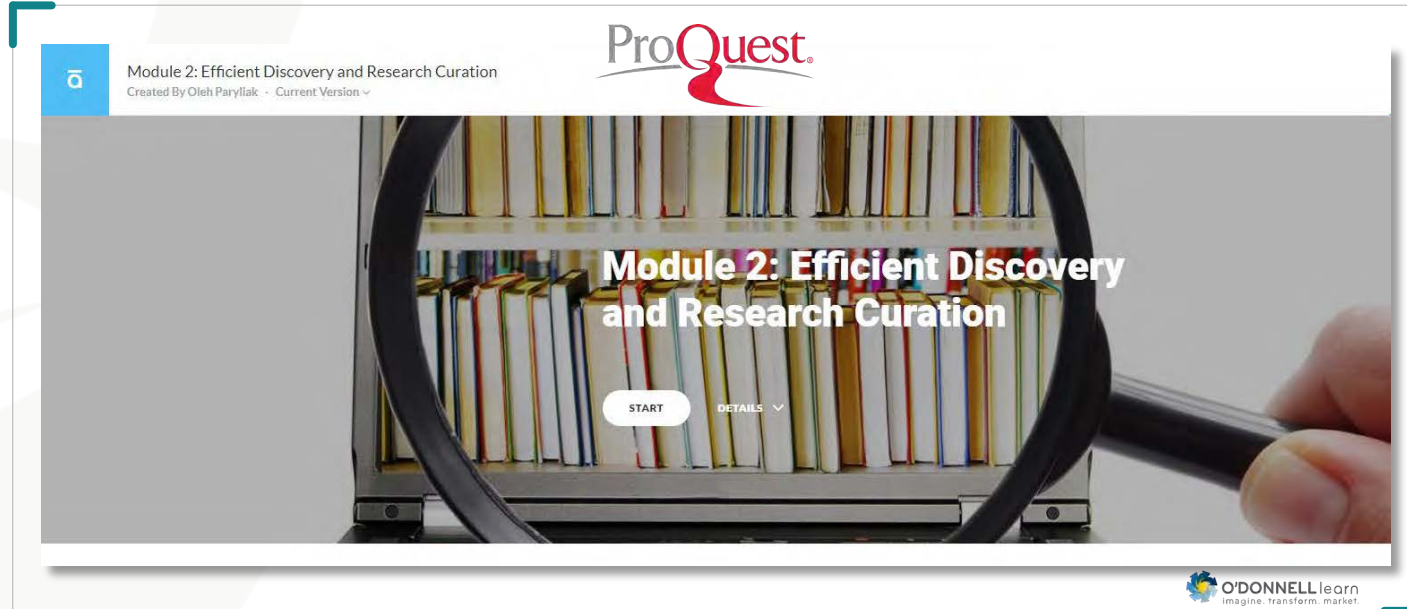
for Graduate Students with Goals for Starting or Completing a Proposal, Thesis, Dissertation, Manuscript, Paper...

Strategies to help you overcome obstacles and become a more productive writer.
Try one of these. If it works for you, make it a habit.

1. Write every day.
2. Schedule your writing time.
3. The earlier in the day the better.
4. Write in 90-minute blocks.
5. Can’t find 90 minutes? Write for 15 minutes.
6. Set a goal. Small. Measurable. Something you can do in your writing time today.
7. Think forward and plan backwards.
8. Write bad first drafts. (You’ll revise later.)
9. Make two lists before you start writing. (And a third when you stop.) The first list is everything you must do AFTER you finish your writing today. Write it down then don’t let these things distract you while you write. Your second list is everything else you must do today to keep your project moving forward. Like: Reading. Editing. Analyzing data. Finding more articles. Talking to your advisor. And the third list? See No. 20 below.
10. Remove/reduce/avoid distractions.

Self-Directed Bootcamp Resources

ProQuest eLearning



LMS
Compatible



On-Demand
Availability



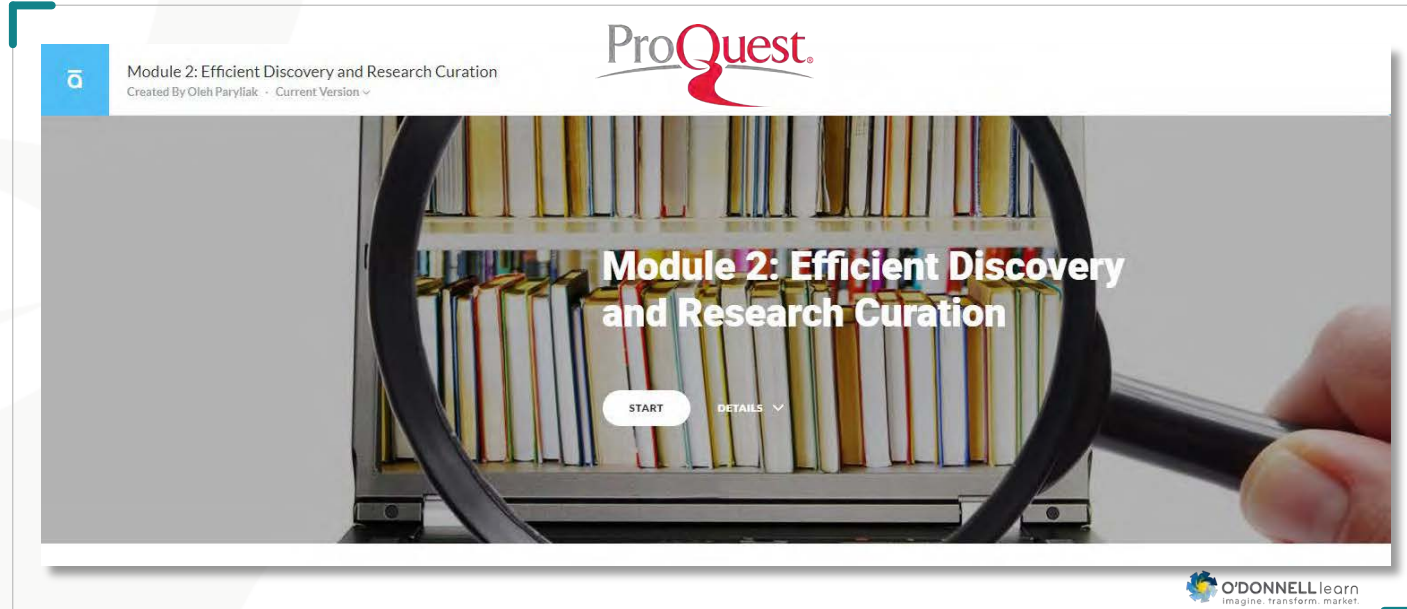
Applied
Skills Learning



Graduate
Program Resource

Bootcamp Modules

ProQuest eLearning



Module 1

Getting Started on Your Thesis or Dissertation – Topic Selection and Dissertation Process

- *How to select a topic*
- *What is the process for completing a dissertation or thesis?*

Module 2

Efficient Discovery and Research Curation – Search tips and Research Tools

- *How do perform basic and advanced topic searches*
- *Research curation tools to help build a literature review*

Module 3

Developing a Productive Writing Plan

- *Best practices for writing your dissertation and thesis*
- *Overcoming common hurdles to writing*

What early grad students are looking to achieve...

Understand what other work has been produced under their advisor



Understand the qualities of a well written dissertation



Define a niche topic, what research questions are outstanding in this field?



Develop to help generate a literature review for proposal writing



Topic Discovery for the Beginner and Experienced

PQDT Global has several search tools to assist with topic discovery

ProQuest

ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global

Basic Search **Advanced Search** Browse About | Change databases

Advanced Search Command Line Recent searches Field codes Search tips

in

AND

in

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Limit to: ☐ Full text

Publication date:

Author:

Advisor:

University/institution:

Subject heading (all):

Index term (keyword):

Manuscript type:

☐ Select all

☐ Master's theses

☐ Doctoral dissertations

Language:

☐ Select all

☐ Afrikaans

☐ Arabic

☐ Basque

☐ Bengali

☐ Bosnian

☐ Bulgarian

☐ Catalan

Refine Topic Research

PQDT search refinement tools assist with comprehensive topic research

Visualize trends about the volume of research on a topic across time

Filter by university to identify the key contributors to the topic

ProQuest

ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global

Basic Search Advanced Search Browse About | Change databases

sch(cornell university) AND mainsubject.Exact("womens studies")

☐ Doctoral dissertations only

Did you mean sch(cornell university) AND mainsubject.Exact("women studies")?

302 results

Sorted by: Relevance

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Publication date: 1981 - 2020 (decades)

Enter a date range: [] [] Update

Subject: []

Index term (keyword): []

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Language: []

Select 21-40 3 Selected items Clear

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22 Seduction, sacrifice and submission: Masochism in postwar German film and literature Mennel, Barbara Caroline. **Cornell University**, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1998. 9838760. Abstract/Details Preview - PDF (1 MB) Full text - PDF (11 MB) Order a copy

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24 Phantom daughters: Figurations of romance in nineteenth-century British India Kapila, Shuchi. **Cornell University**, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1996. 9637495. Abstract/Details Order a copy

25 Escape artists: Shallow women in nineteenth-century literature Greene, Laura Elizabeth. **Cornell University**, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1995. 9542503. Abstract/Details Order a copy

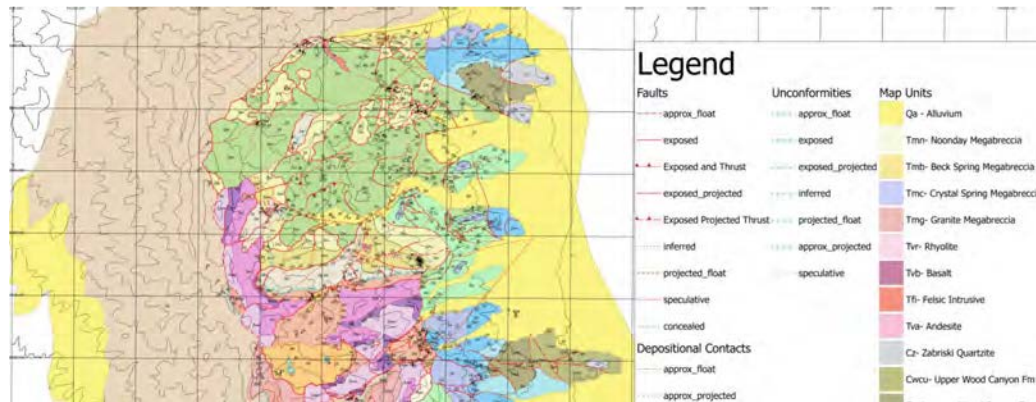
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Supplemental Files Linked to Published Work

Geometry, Timing, and Kinematics of Neogene Extensional and Transtensional Structures of Southern Death Valley: Implications for Regional Reconstructions and a Corrective Method for Rigid Body Rotations

Fleming, Zachariah Fleming. The University of Texas at El Paso, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2018. 13421565.

[Full text - PDF](#)[Preview - PDF](#)[Abstract/Details](#)[Supplemental files](#)[References](#) (92)

Structure from Motion in the Geosciences

Carrivick, Jonathan; Smith, Mark; Quincey, Duncan. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, Sep 6, 2016.

[Cited by](#) (12)[Table of Contents](#)[Relevant Chapters](#)

High precision analysis of an embryonic extensional fault-related fold using 3D orthorectified virtual outcrops: The viewpoint importance in structural geology

Tavania, Stefano; Corradetia, Amerigo; Billib, Andrea. *Journal of Structural Geology* Vol. 86, (May 1, 2016): 200-210.

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Photogrammetric digital outcrop reconstruction, visualization with textured surfaces, and three-dimensional structural analysis and modeling: Innovative methodologies applied to fault-related dolomitization (Vajont Limestone, Southern Alps, Italy)

Bistacchi, Andrea; Balsamo, Fabrizio; Storti, Fabrizio; Mozafari, Mahtab; Swennen, Rudy; et al. *Geosphere* Vol. 11, Iss. 6, (December 2015): 2031-2048.

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Low-temperature thermochronology of the Black and Panamint Mountains, Death Valley, California; implications for geodynamic controls on Cenozoic intraplate strain

Bidgoli, Tandis S; Amir, Erika; Walker, J Douglas; Stockli, Daniel F; Andrew, Joseph E; et al. *Lithosphere* Vol. 7, Iss. 4, (August 2015): 473-480.

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Assessing Outcomes of a Virtual Bootcamp

What the Deans Learned at Bootcamp!

Understanding the Results

Student Feedback

Productivity perceptions

Knowledge gained

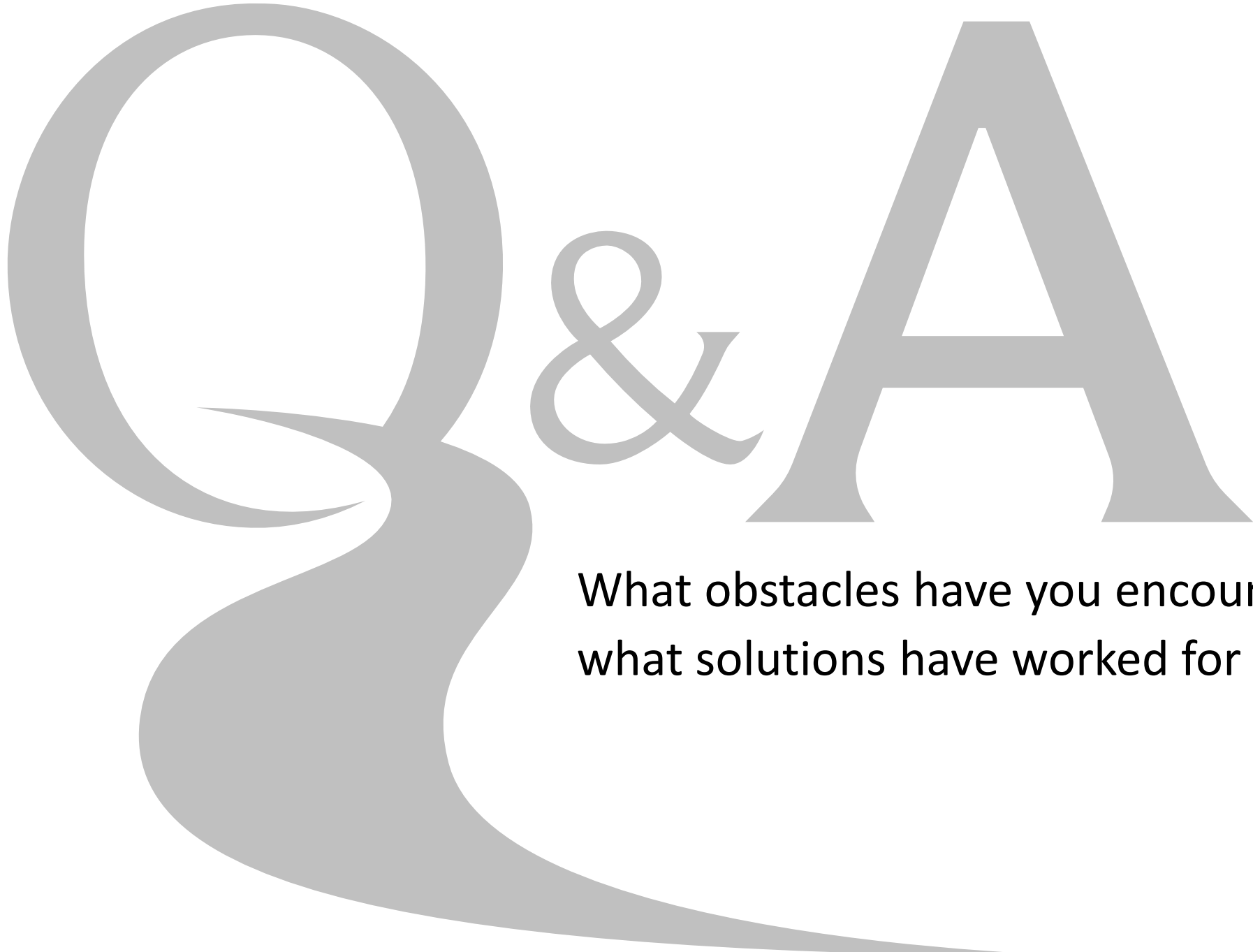
Skills developed

What the Deans Learned at Boot Camp

About students during
this unprecedented time

About students'
writing support needs

About what to do at
the next virtual boot camp



What obstacles have you encountered and
what solutions have worked for you?



THANK YOU!

Jan Allen

Jan.Allen@cornell.edu

April Ellsey

April.Ellsey@proquest.com

FAQs and Resources



How can I get materials from Jan's boot camp?

<https://about.proquest.com/researchers/graduate-student/expert-advice-thesisdissertation/Virtual-Dissertations-Bootcamp.html>



How do I gain access to ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global?

<https://about.proquest.com/contact/contact-sales/>



How do I access and learn more about ProQuest's eLearning Modules?

www.about.proquest.com/go/elearningmodules LINK will be active beginning Aug. 1.



How do I get a copy of Jan's book?

<https://www.amazon.com/Productive-e-Graduate-Student-Writer-Dissertation/dp/1620368919>

