



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**MEMPHIS**®

Fogelman College  
of Business & Economics

# **DOCTORAL PROGRAMS**

# **HANDBOOK**

Prepared by FCBE PhD Sub-Council Committee

Revised June 2020

## **PURPOSE**

**This handbook is designed to acquaint doctoral students and faculty in the Fogelman College of Business & Economics with the policies and procedures associated with attaining a PhD degree in business administration. However, because each concentration area is unique, students are required to work closely with their program advisors to ensure that all university, college and concentration department requirements are met.**

**This handbook is intended to provide further elaboration of requirements that are described in the *University of Memphis Graduate Catalog* and to detail procedures the college has established for fulfilling the University requirements. The contents of this handbook are intended to be consistent with the graduate catalog. The most up-to-date graduate bulletin may be found online at <http://www.memphis.edu/gradcatalog>. Similarly, departmental guidelines must be consistent with this college handbook. This handbook also supersedes all previously published guides. The guidelines set forth in this handbook apply to all doctoral students in the program regardless of start date.**

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## **Section I**

### **Program Content**

Each academic department with a concentration in the PhD program designates a faculty member to be its PhD Program Coordinator. The departmental PhD Coordinator advises each PhD student in the department, approves the program of study, and evaluates the performance of each student both academically and assistantship duties. The departmental PhD Coordinator works closely with the Department Chair and the College Director of Graduate Studies (Associate Dean of Academic Programs & Research).

### **Program of Study**

Each student should have on file in the Graduate Programs Office (located in FAB 101) a program of study document approved by the departmental PhD Coordinator and the Associate Dean for Academic Programs by the end of his or her first year of study. *For students with graduate assistantships, having an approved program of study on file by the end of the first year of the assistantship is necessary for continuation of the assistantship.*

Your program of study includes a research core, a concentration and required supporting coursework.

### **Prerequisites**

Each concentration is responsible for determining prerequisite courses that PhD students need to correct knowledge and/or skill deficiencies and courses needed to provide an appropriate background for a successful career. Students entering the PhD program with an MBA or master's degree in accounting, business administration or economics normally will have completed these courses. International students may be required to participate in Intensive English for Internationals (IEI), English for International Teaching Assistants (EITA), or other language programs. International

students are also required to successfully pass a test of English language competency, such as the SPEAK test, prior to being assigned to teach any courses in the Fogelman College of Business & Economics.

### **Research Core** (a minimum of 12 credit hours)

Each concentration includes at least 12 credit hours in research and quantitative methods to constitute a research core.

Students are expected to acquire competence in using research tools and techniques that support and extend their concentration and research core. These tools and techniques may include statistical methods, computer programming, specialized research-related software and/or coursework.

### **Concentration** (a minimum of 30 credit hours)

Each concentration comprises at least 30 credit hours, of which at least 15 credit hours must be 7/8000-level courses from one of the following areas: accountancy, business information and technology, economics, finance, management (specialization in strategic management or organizational behavior/human resource management), or marketing.

### **Supporting Coursework**

Each concentration is responsible for determining student participation requirements for noncredit educational opportunities such as mandatory attendance at research colloquia.

### **Qualifying Examinations**

Qualifying Examinations may be required by your concentration and are typically given by the end of the first year. The purpose of a qualifying exam is to determine competency in your concentration. The qualifying exam format differs across the PhD concentrations. Some concentrations administer a written exam covering content in courses taken during the first year of the doctoral program. Other concentrations

require submission of a publishable-quality research manuscript. Please consult with your departmental PhD Coordinator for details on the appropriate qualifying exam. Unsatisfactory performance on a qualifying exam can result in dismissal from the PhD program, possibly with the option to complete the master's program.

### **Comprehensive Examination**

Each student must successfully complete a comprehensive examination within two years of completing coursework. However, students may take the examination as early as the last semester of their coursework. Only students in good standing who have or are completing an approved program of study may take the comprehensive examination. The comprehensive examination is comprised of two parts—written and oral. Students who fail the comprehensive examination twice are dismissed from the PhD program.

### **Written Examination**

The written examination is intended to test your overall comprehension of the concentration, including knowledge gained in your coursework and any other knowledge that is relevant to a successful career in your concentration.

The written examination is set by the departmental PhD Coordinator in collaboration with appropriate Departmental faculty. At least two graduate faculty members must grade each exam question.

The procedures used for grading each question and determining an overall pass or fail are determined by each concentration and are detailed in each department's Comprehensive Examination Protocol. If a student's performance on the written examination is sufficiently poor, the student may be awarded a grade of "fail" on the comprehensive examination. If a student's performance on the written examination warrants, the concentration schedules an oral examination.

## **Oral Exam**

The oral examination is scheduled as soon as possible following the grading of the written examination. The departmental PhD Coordinator and other faculty from the concentration organize and administer the oral examination. In designing questions for this exam, the committee focuses on testing ability to demonstrate an integrated knowledge of your concentration. Note that successful completion of both a written and an oral examination is required.

## **Length of Program**

The University of Memphis PhD program in business administration is designed to be completed in approximately four to five years as a full time student with a master's degree. Students entering the program with only a bachelor's degree or attending part-time usually take longer. The Fogelman College doctoral program has a ten-year limit on completing degree requirements. The ten-year time limit begins with the starting date of the first semester of coursework in a PhD student's program of study and runs continuously until December 31 date ten years later.

The limits, two years from completion of course work for passing the comprehensive exam, and ten years for completing the degree, can be extended for a student in good standing. A written request from the student's program coordinator and the Department Chair must be sent for the approval of the PhD Sub-Council and Associate Dean of Academic Programs & Research.

## **Progress toward Completion of the Degree**

Evidence of progress toward completion of the degree during coursework is provided by successful completion of the courses in the student's program of study. Evidence of progress toward completion of the degree once the student has completed their coursework, but has not been admitted into candidacy, is provided by successful completion of the comprehensive examination.

Once the student has passed the comprehensive examination and is admitted into candidacy, evidence of progress toward the completion of the degree consists of completion of assignments given in the dissertation credit course (BA 9000). If the student's performance in BA 9000 is deemed unsatisfactory by the professor on record, the professor shall communicate that circumstance in writing, to the student, PhD Coordinator, Department Chair, and the Associate Dean. When two such memos are received regarding a student's progress in BA 9000, the PhD Coordinator will bring the matter to the PhD Sub-Council Retention Committee. The Retention Committee, which is a committee of the PhD Sub-Council, will review the situation and make a determination of whether the student should be allowed to continue in the program or be dropped from the PhD program for lack of sufficient progress towards completion of the degree.

If the Retention Committee approves a termination recommendation, the student and Graduate School will be notified. The student can appeal the decision following the procedures noted in Section III of this document.

### **Residency**

The purpose of a residency period is to provide doctoral students with significant time for sustained contact with faculty members. Such continuity is deemed essential to preparation for professional success as well as socialization into the academic community. In order to fulfill residency requirements in the Fogelman College, students must:

1. Complete a minimum of thirty (30) credit hours of doctoral course credits, exclusive of prerequisites, research tools, mathematical competency and dissertation at the U of M; and
2. Enroll as a full-time student for at least two consecutive semesters not including the summer semester.

## **Section II**

### **Assistantships**

Many PhD students hold some form of assistantship that requires teaching and/or research duties. In addition to the financial benefit, an assistantship gives the student an opportunity to gain rewarding experience. Assistantships can require work of 10 or 20 hours a week. The expectations associated with an assistantship are outlined in this section.

### **Research Assistantship**

A research assistantship is a general assignment where the student will assist a professor. The tasks may include library research, computer work, assistance with any course-related activities such as tutoring students, assisting with lectures, assisting with computer management of a course, grading, and any other assignments deemed appropriate by the PhD Coordinator and Department Chair. Research assistantships vary according to the work habits of the professor involved. Most professors tend to be flexible in terms of timing, which means the assistantship should not hinder coursework or other responsibilities.

Work beyond the normal requirements can lead to co-authorships that can enhance job prospects. However, a substantial intellectual contribution as determined by the faculty must be made to warrant co-authorship.

A research assistantship can be an integral part of the doctoral program. The experience is part of the foundation of a student's career since it is a mentor/trainee relationship that imparts skills and attitudes which will affect the student's ability to publish and teach.

### **Teaching Assistantship**

A teaching assistantship prepares the students for a number of challenges facing academics. It gives the student hands-on experience at developing syllabi, designing

tests and other material, and increasing familiarity with a variety of teaching aids. It also gives the student public speaking experience and a useful credential on a resume during job searches.

The teaching assistantship can range from partial (where the lecture is taught by a faculty member) to total (where the student is responsible for class, selection of textbook, grading, etc.).

### **Teaching Requirement**

All students are required to gain teaching experience. Most students will have full responsibility for teaching a course independently prior to receiving the PhD degree.

### **International Students in the Classroom**

The University of Memphis requires that all classroom instructors have an adequate mastery of the spoken English language. International students whose native language is not English are required to pass the SPEAK test prior to teaching a course. Depending on score, a student may be required to take language remediation courses through the Center for International Programs Office. Students who hope to obtain assistantships in the future are encouraged to take the SPEAK test as early in their graduate career as possible.

### **Continuation of Assistantship Funding**

The Departmental PhD Coordinator and the Department Chair, in conjunction with the appropriate departmental faculty, are expected to evaluate the performance of each student in the assigned research and teaching activities. The evaluation will be satisfactory or unsatisfactory and the Department Chair must provide this evaluation, and appropriate guidance for improvement, if warranted, to the student in writing. The evaluation will also be conveyed to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs. If the student disagrees with the evaluation, he/she may appeal to the Associate Dean for a review of the evaluation. If there is a disagreement between the Associate Dean's evaluation and the Department Chair's evaluation, the Dean of the College will make the

final determination, which may not be appealed further. If a student receives an unsatisfactory evaluation for two semesters, the assistantship will be revoked.

## **Section III**

### **Retention Appeals**

If a student is dismissed from the doctoral program and the student feels the dismissal is unwarranted, the student may file a retention appeal. The student's initial request should be made in writing to the Department Chair. If the student is not satisfied with the departmental response, a retention appeal to the College can be initiated by informing the Dean of the Fogelman College of Business & Economics in writing. The Dean's Office then refers the appeal to the College Graduate Council (which is comprised of both the Masters and PhD Sub-Councils).

According to University policy, a hearing date must be set, and all parties notified, within 15 class days of receipt of the student's request for a hearing. All parties include the student, the Department Chair, the Departmental PhD Coordinator and the department's designated Committee.

In the notification of the date and time of the hearing, the College Graduate Council will request all relevant information pertaining to the appeal including the student's initial departmental appeal, the departmental response (which includes any record of deliberations of the examination committee, the department committee and any written response to the student on the part of the department by the department chair) and the student's request to the College Graduate Council for an appeal hearing and any supporting materials provided by the student up to that point. Any of the parties may provide additional supporting evidence or request, in writing providing rationale and justification, that other relevant individuals provide materials or testimony on their behalf. The College Graduate Council will determine the relevancy of additional testimony and may or may not request participation of the other named individuals at the hearing.

All materials received by the College Graduate Council will be distributed to all parties in a timely fashion. Additional witnesses requested on the behalf of any party, are notified by the College Graduate Council of the hearing and procedures for participating at this time.

All parties will have an opportunity for presenting the facts, as they understand them. The College Graduate Council will have already reviewed all documents and presentations should be succinct and to the point. All presentations will be formal presentations or rebuttal and responses to questions at prescheduled times. There will be no debate, but any participant may ask for a clarification of a statement or allegation with the consent of the Chair of the College Graduate Council. Initial presentations will be limited to no more than 15 minutes. Rebuttal and closing remarks will be limited to no more than ten minutes. The order of the hearing will be: student presentation, Department Committee presentation, Department Chair presentation, Departmental PhD Coordinator, additional witnesses, questions to each by Council members, rebuttal by the student, rebuttal and closing remarks by the Department Committee, rebuttal and closing remarks by the Department Chair, recall of witnesses and other parties for questions by the Council, if necessary, rebuttal and closing remarks by the student.

All presenters and witnesses will then be excused from the hearing. Based on the evidence and testimony provided, the College Graduate Council will determine whether or not there is a basis for reinstatement in the PhD program. In the event that there are remaining questions, any of the parties involved may be called back for additional information or clarification of testimony. After all deliberation has taken place the final decision will be based upon the majority vote of the College Graduate Council members present at the hearing, with the Chair voting only to break a tie or force a tie, on the following motions. Motion A: "Upon reviewing all evidence and hearing all testimony the Graduate Council has determined that there is no cause for overturning the retention decision of the Department and the Graduate Council does not reinstate the student in the program." If and only if this motion fails the College Graduate Council will consider Motion B: "Upon reviewing all evidence and hearing all testimony the Graduate

Council has determined that there is appropriate cause to overturn the retention decision of the Department and hereby reinstates the student in the program.”

The College Graduate Council will convey the outcome of this vote to all parties within seven class days. The College Graduate Council will make no other recommendations concerning the appeal at this time, only to reinstate the student or not. The Dean’s Office will also inform all relevant parties of the opportunity for appeal.

## Section IV

### **Dissertation and Final Semester**

A dissertation constitutes **major research** that is both original and creative. It must demonstrate ability to conduct independent research and interpret the facts and information revealed by the research in a logical and thought-provoking manner.

#### **Dissertation Purpose**

The dissertation and the final defense must demonstrate a satisfactory level of scholarly competence in the use of research methods and writing. The content of the dissertation must comply with the research standards of the University and contribute to the development of new knowledge and/or information. The dissertation is the research capstone of the PhD program.

#### **Dissertation Committee**

Each student selects a faculty member with doctoral mentor status in the concentration to chair the dissertation committee. The Dissertation Committee Chair and the student choose the additional members of the committee. The committee must have at least four members (graduate faculty); to assemble the range of expertise needed to guide their dissertation work, most students assemble committees with four or five members. Only one adjunct or affiliate graduate faculty member may serve as a voting member.

The committee's role is to provide guidance as you develop and complete your dissertation. They provide the first review and initial acceptance or rejection of the

manuscript. A dissertation will not be submitted to the Graduate School until it meets the committee's approval. See the "Final Semester Check List" for guidelines on the review process.

### **Dissertation Proposal**

Before writing the full dissertation, a proposal must be submitted to, defended before, and approved by the dissertation committee. Interested faculty and PhD students may attend the proposal defense and participate in the discussion of the proposed research. Notification of the scheduling of the proposal defense will be made to all faculty by email from the Graduate Programs Office. The dissertation committee decides the outcome of the proposal defense.

### **Human Subjects Research**

All research involving data collection or other investigations using human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the University's Institutional Review Board, the Committee for the Protection of Research Participants, prior to beginning any such research. In order to obtain approval, complete and submit an application to the committee, c/o irb@memphis.edu.

Depending on the level of potential risk to subjects, as determined by the committee, the application may be subject to full committee review, expedited review, or exempted from the review process. Please allow up to four weeks for a response from the committee.

The application can be obtained from the graduate school website at <http://memphis.edu/irb/>.

### **Dissertation Credit**

In order to remain in active status, each student must register for at least one credit hour every semester after passing the comprehensive examinations. (The summer term is not considered an academic semester for this purpose, unless you plan to graduate in

the summer.) If a program allows a student to take the minimum required six (6) dissertation credit hours s/he must take additional courses relevant to the degree program at the 7000/8000 level to earn the total minimum credit hours required for PhD degree completion. No more than 18 dissertation credit hours will be counted towards the degree, although students may enroll for additional hours to maintain active status.

Only those students who have passed the comprehensive examination are permitted to register for dissertation credit. Eligible students need a permit to register for dissertation hours. Those students not meeting the criteria for registration must obtain permission from the Associate Dean for Academic Programs & Research.

### **Admission to Candidacy**

To be officially admitted to candidacy for a doctoral degree, you must have satisfied the following requirements:

1. The "Doctoral Degree Candidacy Form" and an "Apply to Graduate Application" must be filed by the deadline on the Graduate School website.  
[http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/graduation\\_information/graduation.php](http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current_students/graduation_information/graduation.php)
2. The student must have at least a "B" average on all course work listed on the candidacy forms as well as on any other graduate work taken at The U of M within the ten-year time limit. Grades of "D" or "F" are not accepted for any graduate degree credit, but these grades will be computed in the GPA. No more than six (6) credit hours of grade "C" will be counted toward degree requirements.
3. All course work offered for the doctoral degree must have been completed within a **ten-year time frame ending at the date the degree is conferred.**
4. The student's entire program, including the dissertation, must be acceptable to the dissertation committee, Associate Dean for Academic Programs & Research, and the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies in the Graduate School.

## **Final Semester Checklist**

During the final semester of completing your dissertation, you must begin planning for graduation. Use the following checklist for meeting graduation deadlines. Exact dates for deadlines are published each semester on the Graduate School website or the Registrar's website under student calendar.

### ✓ **File Application to Graduate**

Consult the University Graduate School website for the deadline for filing application to graduate. You will find instructions for filing the intent to graduate form at:

[http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/graduation\\_information/graduation.php](http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current_students/graduation_information/graduation.php)

### ✓ **File Doctoral Degree Candidacy Form**

The deadline for graduate students to submit candidacy forms is listed on the University Graduate School website. You must obtain all necessary signatures *except* that of the College Director of the Doctoral Program two weeks prior to the Graduate School due date, then turn the form in to the PhD Academic Services Coordinator in FAB 101. The PhD staff verifies the accuracy of the information, obtains the Associate Dean for Academic Programs' signature, and forwards the form to the University Graduate School.

### ✓ **Completion of AACSB Learning Objectives Form**

The Fogelman College of Business & Economics developed a form that shows how the student has satisfied various learning objectives. This form must be submitted to the PhD Academic Services Coordinator by the dissertation chair at the time of dissertation defense to meet standards established by AACSB.

✓ **Dissertation Format**

While writing the dissertation, students are required to follow the guidelines found at:

[http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/tdguide.php](http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current_students/tdguide.php)

✓ **Dissertation Defense and Submission**

After the dissertation committee judges that the student is ready, the dissertation committee will hold a final (public) oral examination. If the dissertation committee judges that the student's performance on this examination is satisfactory, all requirements for the degree will have been completed. The dissertation defense provides an opportunity to ascertain: that the student is the primary author of the document, possesses knowledge of the broad range of research related to the study, can justify the research methodology and designs used as well as defend the conclusions, possesses the ability to collect and interpret data for empirical manuscripts, and is capable of presenting the study in a coherent, understandable, and scholarly manner.

✓ **Ordering Your Cap and Gown**

Regalia orders must be received no later than three weeks before commencement exercises. Late orders will not be accepted. To order cap and gown, go to <http://www.memphis.edu/commencement/apply/cap-and-gown-order.php>

✓ **Submit Dissertation to Graduate School**

The University Graduate School uses the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) system to collect and archive dissertations for degree candidates to submit a text-based PDF file instead of submitting traditional paper copies.

[http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/tdguide\\_preparation.p  
hp](http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current_students/tdguide_preparation.php)

However, some departments may request students to submit a paper copy. If a paper copy is requested, students must follow the guidelines for both the ETD and the paper submission.

The University Graduate School webpage specifies dates by which the draft copy of a defended dissertation must be submitted to the University Graduate School (about four weeks before commencement) and the final copy of the dissertation must be submitted to the University Graduate School (about two weeks before commencement).

Working backwards from the Graduate School deadlines, you can plan when your final defense must be conducted, allowing time to complete revisions your dissertation chair/committee members might suggest before or at the time of the defense. Be sure to allow at least several weeks before the defense date for your dissertation chair and dissertation committee members to revise and comment on the final defense draft, even if they have commented on earlier drafts.

## **Section V**

### **Forms Requirements for a PhD Degree**

1. PROGRAM OF STUDY

This form enables students to outline a program of study for the PhD degree and should be completed with the help of the major advisors. Students should inquire about their program of study during their first semester in the program and must have an approved program of study on file in the Graduate Programs Office by the end of their first year of study.

2. COMPREHENSIVE EXAM RESULTS FORM

This form is completed immediately after the written and/or oral examinations. It requires the signatures of the members of the examining committee. This form should be submitted to the Graduate Programs Office (FAB 101). The passing of both written and oral comprehensive

examinations will officially change your student status to ABD (all but dissertation) when processed in the Graduate School.

3. DOCTORAL DEGREE CANDIDACY FORM

Submit this form after passing written and oral examinations. At the latest, this form must be submitted to the Graduate School by the deadline dates specified for the semester the student intends to graduate typically the first week of classes.

4. FACULTY ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT FORM

A faculty committee will advise the student through the different stages of completing the dissertation. All committee members must have graduate faculty status. The committee must have at least four members. The chair must hold full graduate mentor faculty status. Only one adjunct or affiliate member may serve as a voting member on the committee. At least one committee member should be from outside the concentration area. The student must obtain the signatures of members agreeing to serve on the dissertation committee.

5. DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEFENSE RESULTS

This form is signed by committee members when the dissertation proposal has been approved. A copy of the human subjects research approval/exemption letter must be attached (if applicable).

6. APPLY TO GRADUATE

This application is filed at the beginning of intended graduation semester by the deadline. If a student does not graduate during that semester, a new application must be filed.

7. ANNOUNCEMENT OF DISSERTATION DEFENSE

An abstract of dissertation defense must be submitted by email to the Graduate Programs Office and Thesis/Dissertation Announcement form filed with Graduate School ([http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/graduation\\_information/graduation.php](http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current_students/graduation_information/graduation.php)) three weeks prior to the dissertation defense date. The announcement is distributed to all graduate faculty within the Fogelman College including faculty members on the student's advisory committee as well as PhD students and members of the Graduate School.

Note: To use any room in the college of business, a request must be submitted using the online request.

8. DISSERTATION DEFENSE RESULTS FORM

This form is for committee members' signatures when the committee has approved the dissertation.

9. DISSERTATION APPROVAL FORM

This form serves as the official approval of an electronic thesis or dissertation by the student's dissertation committee and must be submitted to the Graduate School with the defended and corrected copy for review. This form must not be included in the electronic document. This form must have original signatures of all committee members.

**Forms can be obtained visiting the Graduate School and PhD Program websites:**

[http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/tdguide.php](http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current_students/tdguide.php)

[http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/resources/forms\\_index.php](http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/resources/forms_index.php)

<http://www.memphis.edu/fcbephd/index.php>

PhD Program Departmental Coordinators:

Dr. Steve Lin, [swlin@memphis.edu](mailto:swlin@memphis.edu), Accountancy

Dr. Huigang Liang, [hliang1@memphis.edu](mailto:hliang1@memphis.edu), Business and Information Technology

Dr. Joon Lee, [jlee17@memphis.edu](mailto:jlee17@memphis.edu), Economics

Dr. Thomas McInish, [tmcinish@memphis.edu](mailto:tmcinish@memphis.edu), Finance, Insurance & Real Estate

Dr. George Deitz, [gdeitz@memphis.edu](mailto:gdeitz@memphis.edu), Marketing and Supply Chain Management

Dr. Kurt Kraiger, [Kurt.Kraiger@memphis.edu](mailto:Kurt.Kraiger@memphis.edu), Management

PhD Program Academic Services Coordinator:

[fcbe@memphis.edu](mailto:fcbe@memphis.edu)

Fogelman Admin. Bldg. 101

3675 Central Avenue

Memphis, TN 38152 USA