PHD PROGRAM: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Doctoral students who are admitted to the School of Management (SOM) should be familiar with the policies and procedures of the Graduate School pertaining to (a) academic policies for doctoral degrees, (b) guidelines for preparing or submitting a dissertation, and (c) funding policies and guidelines (http://www2.binghamton.edu/grad-school/manual/#academic-doctoral)

Admission to Doctoral Program

For entry into the SOM doctoral program from a master's program at another university, or from a master's program in a different discipline at Binghamton, students will follow the regular graduate application and admission procedures.

Beginning the Doctoral Program

The area coordinator/faculty will assist the student in planning the coursework in the program of study and in understanding the program structure and requirements. The area coordinator, in consultation with the PhD Director/Committee, has primary responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the student's work.

As of Fall 2014, the PhD Committee members are:

PhD Director: Manoj Agarwal
Area Coordinators: Steven Schwartz (Accounting), Kristian Rydqvist (Finance), Fran Yammarino (OB/Leadership), Debi Mishra (Marketing), Surinder Kahai (MIS), Sal Agnihothri (Operations & Supply Chain)

Credit Hours

The Graduate School requires completion of at least 24 credit hours in residence regardless of any previous graduate coursework elsewhere. Different areas, however, will have different course and credit hour requirements for their students, and the area coordinators will communicate the area requirements to the doctoral students when planning the program of study.

Coursework

Doctoral students will take courses in (1) their major, (2) their minor (specialization), and (3) research skills. Different areas will have different requirements for each of these three categories; it is expected that doctoral students will take at least two courses in each of them.

Professional Qualifications

Some areas (e.g., accounting) require that doctoral graduates be professionally qualified to teach in the classroom (e.g., be CPA exam qualified). An admitted student should contact the area coordinator/PhD Director to find out if any such requirements exist, and ensure that they have completed these requirements before they join the program.

Background Courses in Management

It is desirable that all doctoral students, irrespective of their areas, have a basic understanding of the different management disciplines. Such proficiency is generally satisfied through prior business courses taken at the undergraduate or master's level. If the doctoral student’s bachelor or master's degree is not in a business related field, the area coordinator/PhD Director may ask the student to audit relevant business classes separately from the doctoral program of study.
Minimum Grade Requirements

SOM requires that all doctoral students will hold a B average, with no grade falling below a B minus. If a student gets a grade that is below a B minus, s/he may be asked to retake the course, or not have the course counted as part of the program of study.

First Year Requirements

All areas have formal or informal first year requirements that include satisfactory progress in first-year coursework, and, in some areas, satisfactory progress in first-year research. The area coordinator will communicate these requirements to the doctoral students.

If the area feels that a student is not demonstrating adequate progress in the first year in the manner that is defined by the area, the area coordinator will communicate clear expectations of the level of performance that is to be achieved within a set timeframe. Should the doctoral student not come up to expectations within the set timeframe, the area coordinator may recommend termination or non-renewal of assistantship to the PhD Director.

Research Assistantships

The Graduate School requires all funded students to work for 20 hours as a graduate research/teaching assistant with designated faculty members. The area coordinator will assign the doctoral students to one or more faculty, and the designated faculty member will communicate his/her expectations to the assigned students. The faculty member may also adjust the 20-hour time requirement after a discussion with the doctoral student depending upon the student’s course load in any particular semester.

If a faculty member is not satisfied with the quality of the student’s assistantship work, s/he will alert the area coordinator. The area coordinator will communicate clear expectations of the level of performance that is to be achieved within a set timeframe. If there is repeated non-fulfillment of assistantship obligations by the student, the area coordinator may recommend non-renewal of assistantship to the PhD Director.

Renewals

Doctoral students are required to make satisfactory progress in their coursework and towards their dissertation as a condition for contract renewals. It is the responsibility of the area coordinator/area faculty to monitor the student’s progress in this regard.

If there is an agreement among the area faculty that a student’s progress is unsatisfactory, the area coordinator should alert the PhD Director about possible termination or non-renewal of assistantship contract.

It is preferable that the recommendations for termination or non-renewal of assistantship contract are discussed and agreed upon by the area coordinator, area faculty, and the PhD Director. The PhD Director may seek the opinion of the full PhD committee in that respect.

Should a doctoral student wish to contest the decision, the student can avail of SOM’s grievance process to do so.

Summer Obligations

It is expected that doctoral students will work on research related activities in the summer months under faculty supervision.
The school currently adds a $1,350 per year for every completed year of summer work to the doctoral student’s travel/research budget. The money is used during years 2, 3, and 4 and it is recommended that $1000 be applied to conference travel expenses and $350 be dedicated to dissertation research related costs.

The area coordinator should communicate to the students if they are required to be on campus to complete their summer work.

**Comprehensive Examination Committee**

All doctoral students are required to take the comprehensive examinations, as soon as all coursework is complete, but no later than the fall semester of their third year.

At least three faculty members will comprise the student’s comprehensive examinations committee. The members should set questions that adequately test the student’s proficiency in the major area, minor (specialization) area, and research skills.

One faculty member representing the doctoral student’s primary track will chair the comprehensive examinations committee. It is desirable that there be at least one faculty member from outside the student’s primary track to set questions in the student’s minor (specialization) area.

The comprehensive examinations committee can include tenure-track faculty members from outside SOM; however, the majority of the faculty members in this committee should be tenure-track faculty from within SOM.

All comprehensive examinations committee members must meet the academic qualification standards as set by their schools.

**Comprehensive Examination Format**

It is expected that the comprehensive examinations will have a written and an oral component. The area coordinators should communicate the format, expectations, and grading criteria to the doctoral students. The Graduate School stipulates that a student should be allowed to repeat one or both parts of the exam just once. The areas must make a final determination by the end of the fall semester of the third year. Students who are not successful in passing the comprehensive examinations will be asked to resign from the program.

**Admission to Candidacy for a Doctoral Degree**

Doctoral students successfully completing their comprehensive examinations will acquire the status of ABD (All But Dissertation).

If comprehensive examinations are taken during the summer months, they must be completed prior to the beginning of the fall semester if the doctoral student is to be considered ABD for the fall semester.

Doctoral students should note that the Binghamton University grants an ABD status after successful completion of the comprehensives examinations. However, many universities consider an ABD status to indicate that a dissertation proposal has been successfully defended. All students, therefore, need to be aware of the convention in their respective areas. This is particularly important when a student is interviewing in the job market.
Selecting the Dissertation Chair

Once a doctoral student has successfully completed the comprehensive examinations, the PhD Director will submit the "Recommendation for Admission to Candidacy for Doctoral Degree" form to the Graduate School. On this form, the student is required to identify the names of the dissertation chair and the members of the dissertation committee (the name of the outside examiner may be communicated to the Graduate School later; see below).

It is the student’s responsibility to find a faculty member from his/her major area to chair the dissertation. No faculty member is obliged to work with a particular doctoral student, just as no doctoral student is obliged to work with a particular faculty member.

Teaching Obligations

All students are required to complete four teaching obligations as part of their program of study and these obligations will typically be after they have attained the ABD status.

The area coordinator will develop a teaching plan for the student that may include distance-learning options and teaching outside their specific substantive area (e.g., Statistics even though they may be obtaining a degree in, for example, OB, Marketing, or Finance). It is expected that the doctoral candidate will be the instructor of record in three out of the four teaching obligations.

Fifth Year Funding

All doctoral students are funded for a period of four years (subject to satisfactory progress). In very rare cases, a doctoral student may be considered for fifth year funding (subject to the availability of funds). To be considered for fifth year funding, the area coordinator will stipulate that the extra year will result in a significant difference in the quality of the student’s placement in an academic position. A doctoral candidate must have completed a proposal defense to be considered for fifth year funding.

Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee, including the Chairperson, will be comprised of at least three faculty members, of which at least two should be from SOM. The chair or co-chair of the dissertation committee will be a SOM faculty, and it is desirable that the chair holds the rank of associate or full professor.

The committee will also include an outside examiner from outside of the School of Management, who should satisfy the credentials that are set by the Graduate School. The required “Request for Approval of Nomination of Outside Examiner” http://www.binghamton.edu/grad-school/files/Outside_Examiner_Fillable.pdf must be submitted electronically to the Graduate School.

Only faculty with the formal rank of assistant, associate or full professor in an academic department offering advanced degrees may serve as members of the dissertation committee. All members must meet the academic qualification standards as set by their schools.

Dissertation Proposal and Defense

The dissertation chair should inform doctoral candidates of the expectations, standards, and procedures regarding the dissertation project.

Conventions with respect to dissertations vary from area to area. In some areas, co-authorship, when publishing the dissertation, is the norm, whereas other areas stress upon solo-authorship. Therefore, and depending upon the area norms, the role of the dissertation chair may range considerably (e.g., from an external guide and reviewer to a collaborator actively engaged in writing the dissertation).
Beyond the written dissertation, the dissertation will comprise of an oral proposal defense, and an oral final defense. To pass, the student must receive the unanimous approval of the dissertation committee. All members of the dissertation committee who accept the dissertation in partial fulfillment of requirements for the doctorate shall so attest by their signatures on the "Recommendation for Award of Doctoral Degree" form.