

PhD Handbook

Decision, Operations & Information Technologies

1. Administrative Information

Business School Doctoral Program

- Director: Debra Shapiro
- Coordinator: Jacqueline Mathey, x5-7210

DO&IT Department

- Department Chair: Hank Lucas, x5-0100
- PhD Area Coordinators:
 - OM/MS: Wedad Elmaghraby, x5-2531
 - Information Systems: Kate Stewart, x5-0576

2. Departmental Requirements

The departmental requirements regarding student progress through the Ph.D. program are described in each respective program's (OM/MS or IS) web page. Students who do not meet these requirements will be sent a letter describing their performance deficiency and asking for improvement. If the performance problems persist, students may be asked to leave the program. Continuation of financial support will be contingent on satisfactory progress in the program as evaluated on an annual basis. Funding is provided for four years. Students who need to stay a fifth year may have funding, but that is not guaranteed. With rare exceptions, financial support will not continue beyond 5 years.

3. Advising

The Ph.D. area coordinator and the professor you are assigned to be the research assistant (RA) will be your advisor up to the point where you have both chosen a dissertation chair and passed your major comprehensive exam.

First Semester

Before the semester begins, please confer with your Ph.D. area coordinator to discuss courses for the first semester and to conduct preliminary discussion of major courses, minor selection and courses, and research tool courses. During doctoral student orientation day, the area Ph.D. coordinator will normally be available to advise and consult on your selection of courses for the first semester and to facilitate

registration. The Ph.D. area coordinator will continue to serve as your primary source of program advice during your first semester.

Second Semester and Later

By the beginning of the second semester, you need to complete your program form, i.e., the "green sheet." Your area coordinator is the person who will sign your green sheet and sign off on any subsequent changes in your program. You will need to file this with the College Doctoral Office and provide a copy for your file held by the Ph.D. area coordinator.

At most three months after passing your comprehensive exam, you have to select a dissertation chair. Some students select their chair earlier in the program. If a dissertation chair is selected before taking the comprehensive exam, the chair will become an important source of career advice. However, the Ph.D. area coordinator will still be your official advisor in terms of signing changes in the green sheets until you have passed your comprehensive exams.

Annual Reports

You will be expected to complete an annual report documenting your accomplishments after the end of the Spring Semester each year. Your annual report should outline the degree to which you are meeting the timetable outlined in your Program Plan. It also includes information about your coursework and research activities, as well as your graduate assistant responsibilities. The annual report template is available as an Appendix to this document. The PhD area coordinator will send an email reminding students to complete their reports in May of each year.

Dissertation Chairperson

Within three months after you have passed your major comprehensive exam, you should submit to the Ph.D. area coordinator the name of the D&IT faculty member who has agreed to be your dissertation chairperson. Your submission should also include a timetable for completing your dissertation, including target dates for completing your dissertation proposal defense and the dissertation itself. The timetable should have the approval of your dissertation chairperson.

At this point, your dissertation chairperson will become your advisor for the remainder of your program. However, you should continue to turn your annual report in to the Ph.D. area coordinator, provide a copy to the Ph.D. office, and also give a copy to your dissertation chairperson. While the Ph.D. area coordinator will not be directly involved with your dissertation unless the coordinator happens to be on your dissertation committee, the coordinator will continue tracking your annual report of accomplishments against the timeline you have submitted.

4. Coursework

Please take a look at Specific Area PhD Requirements (OM/MS and IS) for the updated course requirements.

Registering for Classes

Class schedules are published online at TESTUDO (<http://www.testudo.umd.edu>) mid-semester for the upcoming semester. You should use the TESTUDO registration system to register for classes. Only in extenuating circumstances will the Doctoral office use the schedule adjustment forms for add/drops that are completed and submitted by you. Students funded through a fellowship have tuition remission for up to 12 credits of coursework, whereas students funded through a graduate assistantship have tuition remission for up to 10 credits. To register for 600 and 700 - level classes, you need to see Michael Marcellino in the Master's Program Office (room 2308 VMH) to obtain approval to register through TESTUDO. Once the classes are filled up you will have to sit on a waitlist like everyone else, SO REGISTER EARLY. The MBA office is responsible for oversubscribing MBA courses. The doctoral office is responsible for oversubscription of doctoral level courses.

5. Major Activities

Research

Having publications is virtually a requirement for finding a job in today's competitive market. As you get involved in research, you will probably find yourself spending more and more time in the libraries (McKeldin, Engineering and Physical Sciences Library, and online). Early in your program, you may wish to take an orientation course at one of the libraries, and familiarize yourself with its on-line resources such as Research Port. In addition, the library has several specialized databases available including the Science Citation Index, NEXUS/LEXUS, ABI/Inform, and Dissertation Abstracts.

Department Activities

Other ways in which doctoral students can acquire knowledge, aside from research, coursework, and readings:

1. Attending the weekly research seminar. These usually include talks by faculty members, outside speakers and grad students.
2. When the department is recruiting, attending presentations by faculty candidates. Even when the topic is not of special interest to you, observing these presentations can be very helpful when it comes time to put together your own presentation.

The Profession

One important recommendation is that students join the major professional associations (INFORMS, ASA, Production and Operations Management) early in their careers. It is also recommended that students attend meetings of these associations, particularly when they are located nearby. In addition, students may be selected by the faculty to be sent to a consortium in their area of interest. These consortia are often limited in enrollment, and may be limited to those with the most meritorious

records. In general, a fixed budget (check with the doctoral office for current ceiling) is available for Ph.D. students who attend regional or national meetings and who:

1. Present a paper at the conference; or
2. Attend a conference to seek a faculty position or consortia (provided the dissertation proposal has been defended).

Teaching

At some point during your doctoral studies, you will have the opportunity to teach an undergraduate class if you are funded. There are several tools which can help you to prepare for these opportunities:

- The DO&IT department offers an annual teaching workshop, which you are always required to attend until you teach.
- Typically during the second year in the program, the student will sit in one section of BMGT 332 (for OM/MS students) or BMGT 301 (for IS students). The student will attend all classes, and collect material / notes for teaching. The student will also teach one session of that class, most likely a review session towards the end of the semester.
- (Typically) during the third year in the program, funded students will be required to teach one section of BMGT 332 / 301 with full responsibility.

6. Comprehensive Exam

General Smith School Policy

The Doctoral Program of the Smith School of Business requires all students to pass one written comprehensive examination in the area of concentration. Written examinations are scheduled during January and July. The Doctoral Program Office schedules the days and times of the examinations and arranges for the rooms. The Office notifies the faculty and candidates of the examination schedule at least two months in advance of the examination period. It is the responsibility of each candidate to notify the Doctoral Program Office in writing of his or her intention to take an examination at least two months in advance. Students must receive the joint permission of the Director and the area coordinator to withdraw from the examination after a written request to take it has been submitted and approved. The Doctoral Program Office will be responsible for proctoring and collecting the examinations, and, following the completion of all examinations, will transmit the examination papers to the area committee for grading. Upon the return of the grades to the Doctoral Program Office, candidates will be notified of the results. Official notification of the outcome of examinations will be provided to each student by the Doctoral Program Office.

Specific Requirements and Policies for DO&IT:

Please check specific area PhD requirements (OM/MS and IS). Please note that the OM/MS also has qualifying exams (at the end of the first year in the program), in addition to the comprehensive exam at the end of the second year in the program.

Strategies for Preparing for Qualifiers / Comps

- Talk to people who have taken the qualifiers / comps in your area recently, and get some study hints from them, if possible.
- Make a study schedule for yourself. Set goals and be realistic; it will take longer than you think to get through the material.
- Try to arrange to take the comps with other people in your area, so that you can form a study group.
- During the exam, be sure to pace yourself. Watch your time, and keep in mind the time limits for each individual question.
- Overall, relax and try not to be too nervous about taking the exam itself. Remember, this is just one step in the entire doctoral degree process. Also, remember that the studying process itself is a big part of the comps; the actual exam itself is just the end product.

8. Advancement to Candidacy

When required coursework and the written comprehensive examination have been successfully completed, the student applies for formal advancement to candidacy. Candidacy status means that all requirements for the Ph.D. other than the dissertation have been satisfied. Please see also “Admission to Candidacy” at Specific Area PhD Requirements. Application for advancement to candidacy must be completed in duplicate by the student and submitted to the area coordinator and the Director for approval. The Graduate School processes advancements to candidacy on the first of each month.

All course requirements and exams must be completed, and the student advanced to candidacy, within a five-year period. The final degree must be received within four years of advancement to candidacy or nine years of admission, whichever is later, but not less than one year after advancement to candidacy.

9. Dissertation

Please check with the Doctoral Office for any updates to the information below, regarding course numbers, number of credits, etc.

Dissertation Credits and Registration Requirements

Throughout your time in the program, you should register for dissertation credits (BMGT 899). Each student must register for 12 credits of dissertation research during the program and must be registered

during the semester in which a degree is to be received. Specifically, a student on a graduate assistantship receives tuition reimbursement for 10 credits, while a student on fellowship receives tuition reimbursement for 12 credits.

Dissertation Proposal and Defense

The student works closely with the intended committee chair and other relevant committee members to prepare the dissertation proposal. This document will ordinarily include:

1. Explanation of the subject of the dissertation, including its connection with the current state of knowledge and the prior literature.
2. Demonstration of the method to be used in the research, including the appropriateness of the method to deal with the subject.
3. Description of the model, data, or other information, to be utilized in the study, including its availability and suitability in light of the subject and method.
4. Such other content and supporting material, as the chair and committee members dictate.

When a proposal draft is ready, the candidate schedules a proposal defense. The proposal defense committee consists of five members, one of whom must be a regular member of the Graduate Faculty, from a department outside the Smith School. Further, the committee chair must be a regular member of the graduate faculty. Each member must be given a copy of the proposal at least two weeks prior to the examination.

The Nomination of Proposal Defense Committee form is obtained from the Doctoral Program Office and must be completed and returned to that Office at least two weeks prior to the proposal defense. This form must be taken to the proposal defense, signed by all members of the proposal defense committee, and returned to the Doctoral Program Office after the completion of the proposal defense.

All pertinent information concerning the proposal defense, including a copy of the written dissertation proposal, should be given to the Doctoral Office at least two weeks prior to the defense. The information will then be posted, as this examination is open to the public.

A reasonable target is for the student to defend his dissertation proposal by the end of the summer of the third year, that is, just before the Fall job market (in the fourth year).

Dissertation

The dissertation must represent an original research contribution to knowledge in the student's chosen area of concentration. It must follow the form given in manual, which is available at the Graduate School's website at <http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/etd/>.

Final Oral Examination (Dissertation Defense)

The Final Oral Examining Committee consists of five members, of which at least three (including the chair) must be members of the Graduate Faculty at the University of Maryland at College Park and one of whom must be a regular member of the Graduate Faculty from a department outside the Smith School. Each member should be given a copy of the dissertation at least two weeks prior to the examination.

The Nomination of Thesis or Dissertation Committee form is obtained from the Doctoral Program Office and must be completed and returned to that Office three months prior to the final oral examination. Details governing the structure of the committee are on the back of this form. This will generate the Report of Examining Committee form sent from the Graduate School to the Doctoral Program Office, which must be taken to the final oral examination (dissertation database), signed by all members of the committee, and returned to the Doctoral Program Office.

All pertinent information concerning the oral examination should be given to the Doctoral Program Office two weeks prior to the examination. The information will then be posted, as this examination is open to the public.

The final oral examining committee will examine the candidate on the research work incorporated in the dissertation, and then vote on the candidate's qualifications for the degree. In order to justify a finding of failure, at least two negative votes must be cast.

Upon completion, two copies of the dissertation, along with three copies of the abstract and two title pages, must be submitted to the Graduate School on the proper paper as stated in the manual. The copies must be submitted to the Graduate School Records Office, after the Final Oral Examination but before the deadline listed in the Graduate School's Calendar of Important Dates. It is expected that some modifications of the research will be submitted to an academic referred journal for publication.

Graduation Ceremonies

In order to participate in graduation ceremonies, a student must submit a completely signed report of the Final Dissertation Oral Examination to the Doctoral Program Office prior to the ceremony. The student must pass the Dissertation Oral Examination to participate in the ceremony. Any student who has achieved a Fail or Conditional Pass of the oral examining committee will not be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies. Participation in the graduation ceremony does not automatically guarantee graduation from the university. All requirements must be fulfilled before graduation is finally certified on the transcript.

10. The Job Search Process

First, it is important that you lay a firm foundation for this search process early in your doctoral program. In particular, begin to work on papers that will result in published papers and articles. In the

modern academic market, many universities are looking for individuals who have already published before receiving their doctorates.

Second, it is important to understand the time parameters of the recruiting cycle. The recruiting "season" typically is kicked off with the Fall INFORMS meeting in October/November. If you are interested in a position in September one year after the Fall INFORMS, you should try to attend the meeting and talk to as many people as you can. You should contact as many universities as you desire for possible interviews at the INFORMS Meeting at least one month before it takes place. You can forward your curriculum vitae (C.V.) to these universities at that time, as explained below. Usually, universities want to have the C.V. in hand before scheduling an interview with you. You can also use the job placement service (including an on-line version) of INFORMS. It provides lists of both applicants and faculty openings. Another conference where universities also interview is the Decision Sciences Annual Meeting, which occurs in the week before Thanksgiving.

Many universities make decisions about whom to invite for a campus interview sometime in December and January. The big recruiting season is late-January through mid-March. Probably 70-80% of offers and acceptances occur in that "window." Then there is a much smaller "after-market" that occurs in April and May.

Your list of schools should represent your preferences and constraints, e.g., geographical and family. Be sure to match your interests, skills, and abilities as best as possible to your initial choices. Also, you must pay heed to the issue of geographical mobility; the more you geographically restrict your search, the less likely you are to find a position that suits you. Also, just for the record, universities (including the University of Maryland) rarely hire their own graduates, particularly after they have just received their doctoral degrees.

You should directly ask your dissertation advisor whether you should write to universities on your own, or whether they want to write. Often, faculty will provide one "cover" letter of recommendation to several universities and ask that the student take the responsibility for mailing all of the letters. Faculty will sometimes write directly to faculty members at other universities they personally know, attaching your C.V. to the letters. Alternatively, faculty may ask that you write directly to specified universities or faculty members they know, starting the letter with "Professor XXX suggested that I write to you about a possible faculty position starting in September of XXXX." Each faculty member will describe to you his or her modus operandi. In other cases, you may write the initial letter without mentioning any faculty's name and enclose your C.V. Schools can then contact the references that you provide on it if they are interested. This approach is suitable if you are responding to a published job listing and you so indicate at the beginning of your letter.

Of course, you should obviously investigate the list of jobs that can be found in the Job Placement Bulletin of INFORMS, ASA and POMS. The Chronicle of Higher Education also lists current positions, and has a home page of listings on the Internet.

Finally, you should realize the importance of the campus visit, especially the seminar you will give based on your doctoral dissertation. As a general rule, this seminar is critical, and, at this juncture in the job search process, much more critical than your grades and performance in the doctoral program. It is highly recommended that you present your seminar, at least once, to some DO&IT doctoral students and faculty (your dissertation advisor and others you have been working with) prior to your visit. During each campus interview, you will go through several individual interviews with faculty members and administrators, and you should be prepared to answer their questions about your research, your dissertation, your job constraints and preferences, possible courses to teach, etc. You should also prepare a set of questions that you can ask each interviewer, such as: (1) Do you support faculty research in the summer? and (2) What are the teaching expectations? Will I be teaching different courses each semester? What is the teaching load? It is also recommended that you do your “homework” before the campus interview – learn about the faculty in that department, their research interests; if possible try to read one paper by each of the people you’ll be interviewing with.

After the campus visit, it may be several weeks before a university reaches a hiring decision. You can facilitate this process if one university definitely gives you a job offer you like, but you are waiting to hear from other universities. At that point, you should contact the remaining universities to ascertain when a decision will be made. Frequently, a university will give you a job offer with a time constraint placed on it (e.g., two weeks to reply before the job offer is rescinded).

If the decision is negative, you should realize that there are a large number of factors coming into play, including the subjective feeling of fit that each university uses in evaluating candidates. Often there are only very small differences between the candidates that leads to the selection of one rather than the others. Do not become discouraged and try to focus on the positive aspects of the search, such as visiting different universities and meeting faculty members who will be your colleagues during your professional career.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix A: Template for Annual Report

Name:

Date:

Address:

Home Telephone:

Office Telephone:

E-mail Address:

Web Page URL:

Current Advisor:

Members of Dissertation Committee (if formed):

Date Entered PhD Program:

Coursework:

Major Area GPA:

Overall GPA:

Date of Qualifying Exam (intended or passed)::

Date of Comprehensive Exam (intended or passed):

Areas in Comprehensive Exam with grades (if passed):

Give major area listing all courses, with number, title, semester and grade.

Give minor area listing all courses, with number, title, semester and grade.

List all research tools courses with number, title, semester and grade.

List all other courses with number, title, semester and grade.

Research:

Date Advanced to Candidacy (estimated or actual):

Date of Dissertation Proposal Defense (estimated or actual):

Title of Dissertation (tentative or actual or potential research areas):

Estimated Target Date for Graduation:

Primary areas of Research Interest:

List of Publications, Presented Papers, Working Papers, Submitted Papers
(please include full citations, including co-authors and current status)

List relevant summer Jobs:

Teaching and Graduate Assistantships:

List all Teaching assignments (discussion or lecture) - course number, title, semester;
if you were the instructor, include the summary teaching scores (raw and weighted)

List you other Graduate Assistant Assignments, by semester and professor:

List your preferences, if any, for assignments in the coming year:

Summary:

Please write a short (one paragraph or so) self-evaluation summary of your progress and performance in the PhD program and of your future career aspirations and goals. You may also include any other suggestions, criticisms and requests regarding any aspect of the PhD program that you wish to be made known to the department