

Assurance of Learning Assessment Measure Guidance - DBA

Program Overview

The Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) program mission is to integrate the theory and practice of business with the context of current issues that the business world faces. It is a professional doctorate that emphasizes the application of theory to actual business issues. The DBA program helps candidates develop proficiency in applied research by improving their methodological and analytical skills.

Participants who complete the program will be equipped for positions in higher education, consulting, and executive advancement in their current or other organizations.

The DBA Program seeks to enroll a small, select group of experienced executives in senior leadership positions who hold a master's degree from an accredited U.S. university or its international equivalent and are committed to pursuing a formal, rigorous program as practitioner-scholars. A minimum of 10 years of experience in a managerial capacity is preferred.

The Program encompasses 60 credit hours designed to be completed in three years. It is a professional, non-resident program with limited visits to campus, allowing participants flexibility as they complete their studies while pursuing careers. During the program, participants make two to three trips to campus per term. The program consists of the following components:

- Outset of Year 1: A residency that includes: 'Foundations Review': 12 half-day sessions where each half-day session consists of four hours of instruction (3 credit hours) and 'Managerial Statistics': 6 days, 5.5 hours of instruction per day (3 credit hours).
- Terms (6): 6 credit hours in each term for a total of 36 credit hours. Courses in terms 1-6 have both an online and on-campus component.
- Research Process: A three-stage process that takes place over the 3 years of the program.
- Final Research Project: Terms 7, 8 and 9 are devoted to research symposiums and the final project (18 credit hours). During Research Symposium weekends students present their current research to faculty and peers. Additionally, faculty members will present current research to the DBA class.

Program Goals and Objectives

- 1) DBA recipients will be effective researchers in industrial or academic environments.
 - a. Students will understand the technical tools (theory, methodology, statistical analyses, and reporting norms) essential to business administration.
 - b. Students will utilize technical tools to create new knowledge through original research.

Assessment methods include annual review of student progress (e.g., course grades, research performance) is reviewed by the Program each semester.

- 2) DBA recipients will be effective communicators of advanced knowledge in their area of specialization.
 - a. Students will communicate advanced knowledge on topics in business administration verbally and in writing.

- b. Students will communicate advanced knowledge on topics in business administration at a level understandable by an educated layperson or university undergraduate student.
- 3) DBA recipients will apply appropriate problem solving and decision-making skills
- a. Demonstrate ability to apply advanced knowledge on topics in business administration in ways that enhance management practice

Assessment Method: Dissertation Proposal and Oral Defense, Final Dissertation Defense, Presentations at Academic Meetings and Publications.

Three-stage Research Process

In lieu of a comprehensive exam on content, students must meet the research-related standards reflected in the following three-stage process:

End of first year: At the end of the summer term of their first year, DBA students will submit a paper that identifies an important research question, provide a review of the relevant literature surrounding that question, and put together a project plan for investigating that question (i.e., a plan explaining exactly how any initial qualitative or quantitative research would be performed). Based on the focus of this proposal, the student will be assigned a faculty advisor as they move into their second year. The faculty advisor will provide feedback on the project plan and interact with the student during the second year as they work on the project plan implementation.

End of spring term of second year: During May of the second year, the student submits a complete paper that is 'conference ready'. That is, the paper will be of sufficient quality to warrant submission to an academic conference (consistent with the list of conferences suggested by the faculty advisor). An assessment of the paper by the faculty advisor will serve as the doctoral student qualifier. Based on a positive assessment, a two-member doctoral committee is formed by the student. The committee could include one outside member, such as emeriti faculty or one from another college.

Third year: At the end of August or early September of the second year, the student will submit a final project proposal to the doctoral committee and defend it orally. The proposal will have two components. The first of these is an updated or revised version of the paper submitted in May of the second year. The second component is a detailed description of the next stage of research to be completed on the topic. This will include the aspects of the research question they will be investigating beyond what was done in the initial paper (unless an entirely new paper is proposed), and a methodology to guide the next stage of the research. In addition to assessing the proposal itself, the oral defense ensures the student's mastery of the relevant literature surrounding the project topic. If the oral defense is passed, the student becomes a DBA candidate, qualified to complete their final project and earn the degree.

The final research project is supervised by a committee consisting of at least two graduate faculty members. At least one member will be from the Warrington College of Business Administration and at least one member may be drawn from a different discipline. The doctoral committee is formed no later than the end of the fourth term. By the end of the seventh term, the student formally presents the final project proposal to the supervisory committee. Once the proposal is approved by the committee, the student works under the committee's supervision to complete the final project and sit for the final oral defense at the end of the ninth term.