Graduate Education Goals
PhD in Business Administration (& MS Business Research\(^1\))
Carlson School of Management

December 10, 2014

1. Consultation

The students were surveyed in Spring 2013 as part of the program’s participation in the Graduate Review and Improvement Process (GRIP). The survey solicited feedback on program requirements, student feedback and support mechanisms, and assistantships. A version of that survey is planned to be retaken in Spring 2016 and every 3 years thereafter. The Student Advisory Committee (SAC), consisting of PhD student representatives from each of the departments within the college, provides an ongoing conduit of communication between the DGS and the students. They were consulted on this document.

The college’s PhD committee consists of faculty representatives from each of the departments within the college. The committee solicited faculty input and discussed the goals both for the development of Assurance of Learning goals instituted in Spring 2011 as part of the college’s accreditation process and in developing this statement. The goals will be part of the input in our regular program review by the committee.

2. Goals

The purpose of the Carlson School’s PhD Program in Business Administration is to prepare its students for careers as faculty members at universities throughout the world. Working with our own world-renowned faculty members, our students gain experience in conducting basic and applied research, skills for continued professional and scholarship growth, and grounding in the fundamentals of good teaching. Our graduates compete for faculty positions where they contribute to knowledge in the field, teach/prepare future business leaders and academics, and serve their field, their home college, and their community. Students focus their research and coursework in one of seven areas of concentration: Accounting, Finance, Information & Decision Sciences, Marketing, Strategic Management & Entrepreneurship, Supply Chain & Operations, and Work & Organizations (formerly the PhD-HRIR program). Graduates of the program should be able to effectively contribute toward the work and intellectual life of their university and profession, and toward transferring knowledge within the profession and community.

Doctoral graduates should have a critical understanding of the knowledge in at least one of the areas of concentration within management and be prepared to make original and significant contributions to the knowledge in that area. They should be able to design and execute a research program that addresses important management problems. The goals for doctoral students include the abilities to:

1. Conduct publishable, high quality research that adds to the knowledge base of their field
   a. Demonstrate command of the knowledge and literature in their field at a level required to make important research contributions
   b. Command of one or more relevant research methodologies for conducting research
   c. Conduct an original research project

\(^1\) The MSBR degree was approved September 2014. It is a non-admitting master’s program whose sole goal is to reward master’s level performance of students who were admitted to the PhD-BA program but do not complete the degree. Qualification for the degree is based on a faculty assessment of Master’s level performance on PhD required coursework, the doctoral written preliminary examination, and research and teaching activity.
2. Communicate their knowledge to others
   a. Conduct an effective course
   b. Present their research in both written and oral forms in a clear, well-organized manner
3. Contribute as an active citizen in the discipline, serving academia, the profession, and society at large

3. Assessment

Students demonstrate command of the knowledge and literature through strong performance in their coursework and by passing first-year exams (optional, varies by concentration area) and the preliminary exams. Course content is determined by each area to provide good preparation in that field. The course requirements are also vetted through the PhD committee of the college. The coursework includes a minimum of 8 credits covering appropriate research methodology. Maintenance of a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.3 is required as evidence of sufficient mastery of the knowledge and methods. The written preliminary examinations provide a comprehensive assessment of this mastery relative to the breadth of topics deemed essential to each area of concentration.

The oral preliminary exam, and thesis proposal defense constitute evidence of the student’s ability to generate and conduct innovative, methodologically-sound, theory-based research. This process of assessment begins with annual evaluation of their RA appointments, and a publishable quality second-year paper prior to the preliminary oral examination. Finally, the dissertation thesis culminates the process. The thesis is evaluated in terms of the candidate’s abilities to identify a research question that is relevant, innovative, and grounded in theory. The thesis should make a contribution to the field, advance current thinking, and demonstrate analytical, methodological, and conceptual rigor. Successful completion of a dissertation, as approved by the student’s final examining committee, is the final evidence of the student’s contributions and readiness to pursue an academic career.

These research steps also provide a foundation for assessing the student’s ability to communicate their research orally and in print. In addition, in support of the goal of communication, each fall students present their research progress from the previous summer. More generally, students are encouraged to present their research in seminars, in departmental workshops, and at professional conferences. These opportunities provide feedback on the student’s progress as a scholar, and their engagement with the professional academic community.

As to communication in teaching, each student begins as a TA and is required to receive training through either Grad 8101 or a series of workshops (depending on student choice and concentration area requirements). Following this, each student is required to teach a course. Their performance and progress along both the teaching and research dimensions are evaluated annually by the student’s advisor and/or departmental faculty coordinator.

At a program level as part of the CSOM Assurance of Learning program, we have developed rubrics for regular evaluation of the oral prelims, dissertation, and teaching goals. We also annually track input, process, and output related measures. For example, we maintain information about applications, admission and matriculation rates, and applicant statistics like test scores and GPAs (input side); program milestones, publications, and presentations while in the program (process); and, position at graduation, and position and publications after five years (output evaluation).