

Ph.D. Business Administration

Liberty University
School of Business

Ph.D. Business Administration Program Handbook V1.0

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August 15, 2022

Preface

This document describes the policies and procedures used to regulate the Ph.D. in Business Administration program. The University reserves the right to make necessary changes without prior notice. In such cases, the University will attempt to communicate these changes to all students, faculty, and staff through written means. It is important that each student familiarize themselves with the regulations set forth in this handbook and assumes their proper responsibilities concerning them.

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Liberty University prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, disability, or status as a veteran or disabled veteran. The school maintains its Christian character, but does not discriminate on the basis of religion, except to the extent that applicable law respects its right to act in furtherance of its religious objective.

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Liberty University Statement of Mission and Purpose

Maintaining the vision of the founder, Dr. Jerry Falwell, Liberty University develops Christ centered men and women with the values, knowledge, and skills essential to impact the world.

Through its residential and online programs, the University educates men and women who will make important contributions to their workplaces and communities, follow their chosen vocations as callings to glorify God, and fulfill the Great Commission.

Liberty University will:

1. Emphasize excellence in teaching and learning.
2. Foster university-level competencies in communication, critical thinking, information literacy, and mathematics in all undergraduate programs.
3. Ensure competency in scholarship, research, and professional communication in all graduate programs.
4. Promote the synthesis of academic knowledge and Christian worldview in order that there might be a maturing of spiritual, intellectual, social and physical value-driven behavior.
5. Enable students to engage in a major field of study in career-focused disciplines built on a solid foundation in the liberal arts.
6. Promote an understanding of the Western tradition and the diverse elements of American cultural history, especially the importance of the individual in maintaining democratic and free market processes.
7. Contribute to a knowledge and understanding of other cultures and of international events.
8. Encourage a commitment to the Christian life, one of personal integrity, sensitivity to the needs of others, social responsibility and active communication of the Christian faith, and, as it is lived out, a life that leads people to Jesus Christ as the Lord of the universe and their own personal Savior.

Liberty University Statement on Worldview

Liberty University embraces a worldview that is both historically Christian and Biblical, and that underlies the very concept and origins of the university. We hold that God exists and is the source of all things, all truth, all knowledge, all value, and all wisdom. We hold that God has created an orderly universe according to His design and purpose and for His glory, and that He has created human beings in His image. God is actively at work in the world and history, governing them according to His ultimate purpose. From these foundational principles, it follows that truth exists and that there is a standard of right and wrong. We hold that all of creation is fallen as a result of human sin. Finally, we hold that God has revealed Himself and His ways in the natural created order, in history, in the Bible, and supremely in Jesus Christ. God in love and through the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ is redeeming humans and the entire created order.

At Liberty University, students receive an education that integrates this Christian and biblical worldview. Students trained with this worldview perspective will be equipped with a rational framework for understanding and interpreting reality, for comprehending the meaning of life and the value of humans and things, for making decisions and engaging in meaningful action, for

studying the various academic disciplines, and for understanding the interconnectedness of all knowledge.

PhD BA Program Purpose

Students pursuing the Ph.D. in Business Administration (PhD BA) will gain knowledge skills in the areas of business administration that can be applied in current and future leadership and teaching roles. The program seeks to provide an opportunity for qualified students to attain a high level of academic, professional, and practical competence within the Biblical Worldview to prepare them for opportunities, and corresponding additional responsibilities, beyond the master's degree level. The PhD BA program emphasizes theoretical and practical real-world applications in both the coursework and the research requirements. This 60-hour program is designed for individuals seeking to advance in their current academic or business career as well as those pursuing careers in business consulting.

PhD BA Program Learning Outcomes

1. Evaluate current theoretical research in the field of business administration.
2. Recommend qualitative and quantitative analysis methods to perform effective research in the field of business administration.
3. Add to the body of knowledge in the field of business administration based upon research, knowledge of the literature, and best practices.
4. Integrate a Christian Worldview into in the field of business administration.

Ph.D. BA Admission Requirements

The PhD BA has a competitive admissions process. Meeting the requirements does not guarantee admission into the program. In addition to any admission requirements established by the Graduate school, PhD BA Admission Requirements include:

1. Applicants must submit an official transcript indicating successful completion of a master's degree program from any discipline from an institution accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
2. A cumulative GPA of 3.00 or above on the applicant's graduate degree is required for entrance into the program
3. TOEFL Scores for students who speak English as a second language (score of 600 paper-based test: 250 computer-based test, 80 internet-based test).

Once all application materials are received for admission, the candidate's application package will be reviewed, and an acceptance decision made. When the application review process is complete, applicants will be notified via email of an admission decision.

If you have further questions about admissions requirements for this program, please contact the Liberty University Advising: luoadvising@liberty.edu

Transfer Credits

Applicants may transfer up to 30 hours of coursework. In order for a transferred course to replace a Liberty University course, the following requirements must be met:

1. The school at which the course was taken must be appropriately accredited.
2. The course credit must be at least three semester hours or five quarter hours.
3. The student must have earned a grade of B- or better in the course.
4. The course must overlap one of Liberty's courses by at least 80%. The course(s) to be transferred must have been completed within seven years of the start date of the student's program at Liberty University.
5. Credits from a prior degree on the same academic level earned through Liberty University are considered transfer credits.

Transfer credit will not be given for the following courses: BUSI 815, 816, 820, 821, 886, 987, 988, 989, and 990.

It is the responsibility of each applicant to supply transcripts along with a request to have the credit applied to the degree program. Students may be asked to submit the syllabus for any coursework being considered for transfer along with a rationale of why the student believes that the course meets the program's requirements.

Graduation Requirements

In addition to other regulations governing graduation, as stated in the Liberty University catalog, PhD BA students must meet the following requirements:

1. Complete 60 hours
2. A maximum of 50% of a post-graduate and doctoral degree may be transferred if approved and allowable, including credit from an earned degree from Liberty University on the same academic level.
3. 3.0 GPA
4. No grades lower than a B- may be applied to the degree
5. Degree must be completed within 7 years
6. Submission of Degree Completion Application must be completed within the last semester of a student's anticipated graduation date.
- 7.

Time Limits for Degree Completion

The time limit for completing the degree from the date of admission to the PhD BA program is seven years. Only in unusual circumstances may the student be granted an extension.

Granting an extension of time will usually result in additional requirements. Any student who does not complete coursework within the permissible time limit, for any reason including discontinued enrollment, must reapply for admission. A student may reapply only once and will be subject to the current standards and curriculum. The School of Business PhD BA Committee will determine if any previous courses are sufficiently time sensitive and must be repeated. Beginning with the date of readmission, the student's time limit for degree completion is determined by the number of hours remaining.

Financial Aid

Student Financial Services (<https://www.liberty.edu/financeadmin/studentfinances/>) can help with information on Tuition & Fees as well as Financial Aid.

Program Policies and Procedures

All policies and procedures as stated in the current Liberty University Graduate Catalog apply unless otherwise stated in this handbook.

PhD BA Program Handbook

Upon admission to the program, students are required to read the PhD BA Handbook. Students are required to read the handbook each year for updates and revisions. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with and abide by the Program Handbook policies and guidelines.

Grading

The PhD BA program uses the standard grading scale for doctoral programs, which is a 6-point scale. Students must earn a minimum grade of "B-" in all doctoral-level courses.

A = 960 - 1000 -- A- = 940 - 959 -- B+ = 920 - 939 -- B = 900 - 919 -- B- = 880 - 899
C+ = 860 - 879 -- C = 840 - 859 -- C- = 820 - 839 -- D+ = 800 - 819 -- D = 780 - 799
D- = 760 - 779 -- F = 759 and below

Grade of B minus

A student receiving a grade of "B minus" in a course will be permitted to remain in the program unless their GPA drops below 3.0. Grades below a "B minus" will not count towards graduation.

Cumulative GPA below 3.0

If a student's cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, they will be placed on Academic Probation during the first semester the GPA is below 3.0. Students will have one semester to obtain a GPA of 3.0 or above. If their GPA remains lower than 3.0 a second semester, regardless of course grades, the

student will be evaluated for administrative dismissal from the program by PhD BA Administration.

Enrollment and Breaks in Enrollment

All students are required to maintain enrollment in the PhD BA program.

1. Until students begin the dissertation phase, they are required to be enrolled in at least one course in each academic year (From Fall to Summer)
2. Once doctoral candidates enter the dissertation phase, they are required to be enrolled in each semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer) until graduation.
3. Students that have an unapproved break in enrollment will need to reapply to the program and will be moved to the most current Degree Completion Plan (DCP) if accepted.

A student facing certain unforeseen circumstances may contact his or her professor to determine if assignment extensions are possible (as noted in the course syllabi or, if warranted, an incomplete can be granted in order to allow time to complete coursework). An incomplete cannot be granted for any of the Dissertation courses.

Dissertation

Following the completion of all doctoral coursework and the Ph.D. Research Concept course (BUSI 886), students must successfully complete a Dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of PhD Business Administration. These courses are BUSI 987, 988, 989, & 990.

The Dissertation is a comprehensive research project involving a 'gap' or unexplored area found in the current business literature related to Business Administration. As a comprehensive doctoral level research project, all results must be generalizable or relatable to the overall population being studied and the research itself must be substantial in nature. The focus of the Dissertation is on research relevant to fields of Business Administration broadly as well as the doctoral candidate's cognate. The doctoral candidate will examine scholarly theories and concepts related to the gap in the literature, and then gather and analyze data to present relevant conclusions that add to the body of knowledge. The four courses must be taken over sequential semesters.

The Dissertation is expected to exhibit scholarship, reflect mastery of technique, and make a distinctive contribution to the body of knowledge related to Business Administration and the doctoral candidate's cognate. A Dissertation Chair is responsible for the general supervision and progression through the Dissertation. A Dissertation Defense and publication in the Jerry Falwell Library is required for final approval in BUSI 990. The Dissertation Chair will guide the student through various stages of research and will determine when the Dissertation is ready to be defended.

Canvas LMS and Turnitin

All courses will use the Canvas Learning Management System. Turnitin originality software is utilized by the university to verify the originality of written work. Students needing assistance with these systems can find support at the Technology Education Center.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is strictly prohibited. See the Graduate Catalog for specific definitions, penalties, and processes for reporting.

Disability Statement

Students with a documented disability may contact the Liberty University Online Office of Disability Academic Support (LU ODAS) at <https://www.liberty.edu/online/online-disability-accommodation-support/> to make arrangements for academic accommodations.

Administrative Dismissal Policy

PhD Courses: Students are allowed to repeat a total of two courses from: the PhD BA Core, Cognate Courses, and Research Courses (not including BUSI 886) for a total of 6 hours if they fail or withdraw. This applies regardless of whether the student fails the class (a C+ grade or lower, or an FN grade) or withdraws from the class (a W grade).

PhD Concept Paper Course: Students are allowed to repeat BUSI 886 one time if they fail the class (an NP or NF grade) or withdraw (a W grade).

Dissertation Courses: Students in Dissertation courses may only receive one failing or withdrawal grade (NP, NF, or W) and one making progress but repeating grade (PR) in each course Dissertation course (BUSI 987, 988, 989, & 990).

Once any of the above limits have been reached, the student will be evaluated for administrative dismissal from the program by Business Doctoral Programs Administration. Students considered for dismissal will be evaluated by the Program Committee and if a decision to dismiss the student is made, the student will be notified via email by Business Doctoral Programs Administration.

Dissertation Chair Change Request Policy

The Dissertation Chair is an essential advisor who has the expertise to guide the student through the dissertation process. The chair will take on varying roles during the process, depending on the student, the topic, the research approach, or other factors. Dissertation Chairs will serve students through 3 separate roles of a mentor:

- **Advisor-** The research chair is the principal advisor who works with the candidate throughout the Dissertation process.

- Coordinator- The chair will provide the candidate with requirements, conditions, and timelines for the Dissertation documents and the Dissertation process.
- Director- The chair will lead the candidate through each part of the Dissertation and will assist in the selection of methods, direction of the analysis, and the outcome of the research. However, the candidate is ultimately responsible for their progress through the Dissertation.

Regardless of the specific role, the chair is expected to regularly review candidate progress and serve as a mentor, working with the student to move the Dissertation process forward. The chair will carefully review the Dissertation submissions and provide detailed written comments to the candidate, be available to provide further detail if there are questions regarding the comments, and review any revisions prior to determining that the candidate is ready to move forward. In the event a candidate believes a chair is not meeting the above requirements, an appeal for a new chair may be submitted following the process outlined below.

Procedure for Doctoral Candidates to request a change in Dissertation Chair:

1. Changing a Dissertation Chair is not common and should not be taken lightly.
2. Students may submit a formal request to change their Dissertation Chair for the coming semester. Changes are not made during an on-going semester unless there are extenuating circumstances.
3. The student must express their grievance in writing and submit it to:
<https://www.liberty.edu/online/complaint-assistance-issue-resolution/steps/>
The email must include specific examples of how the research chair has failed to fulfill their duty as a chair or acted in a manner outside the Liberty Way in their interactions with the student. Only complaints submitted in this manner with supporting documentation will be considered official complaints. Complaints submitted via other forums will not be considered official complaints.
4. An Online Chair will be assigned to review the request and accompanying documentation.
5. The Online Chair will research the issue to include the actions of both the student and the research chair and a decision will be rendered based on research findings.
6. The Online Chair will rule on the complaint and update administration on the outcome.
7. If a change in Dissertation Chair is warranted a replacement will be located for the coming semester.
8. Any actions by the student that fall outside of the Liberty Way / Code of Conduct will be turned over to the Dean of Students for further action.
9. The student will be notified via email of the decision.
10. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of their initial complaint, they may appeal within five business days of the rendered decision by providing additional support/documentation for review.
11. A second and final review of the complaint will be completed by the Director of Doctoral Programs within the School of Business.

Grievance Policy

Grade Grievances: Students must contact the course professor regarding a resolution of grievance related to grades. If the issue is not resolved at this point, students may submit a formal grade

appeal through graduate student advising. Please refer to the grade appeal process in the current *Liberty University Graduate Catalog*. If the situation falls within the parameters set forth in the process, a grade appeal can be submitted.

Other Grievances: Graduate students must first make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the individual with whom the grievance originated. The next step in the process is to appeal to the LU Online Student Advocate Office by following the complaint procedure as outlined on the website.

PhD BA Course Titles and Descriptions

Note: The table below does not include the three cognate courses.

BUSI 702	PhD Program Orientation	Introduction to the PhD Organization & Management and PhD Business Administration programs. This course provides an overview of core areas of business and management, student expectations, the process of conducting scholarly research, strategies for success, and university resources.
BUSI 710	Foundations of Applied Research Methods	This course provides an overview of academic and applied research methods to be used in doctoral research. The course will explore all the elements necessary to establish the foundation of the study. The course will also explore the research processes necessary to effectively search, identify, develop, and structure research for further investigation.
BUSI 730	Strategic Allocation of Financial Resources	The advanced study of accounting and financial decision making techniques and models that are useful in the translation of strategic and operational goals related to resource allocation into specific budgetary expectations of revenue, expenses, capital expenditures, and needs for external funding, including analysis of the effects of contingencies that might cause financial outcomes to vary from budgeted expectations.
BUSI 740	Managing the Supply Chain	A comprehensive study of concepts, processes, and strategies used in the development and management of global supply chains. Topical coverage will include: supply chain management, production planning and inventory control, order fulfillment and supply chain coordination; and global supply chain design, logistics and outsourcing.
BUSI 745	Marketing for Competitive Advantage	This course will examine the development of marketing strategy from the perspective of shifting demand patterns due to changes in consumer behavior, market segmentation, persona development, and the economic environment. Marketing strategy will be developed and examined through the lens of a Christian Worldview.
BUSI 750	Managing Human Resources	This course provides the business leader with the knowledge of critical topics related to strategically managing the organization's human resources. Key issues addressed include the environment of HRM, jobs and labor, talent development, performance, compensation and employee relations. Current HR issues, measuring HR effectiveness, global human resource management and HR ethics will be evaluated.

BUSI 770	Strategy Formulation & Strategic Thinking	The advanced study of the process of business strategy development and execution including the decision traps to avoid and the most effective ways to develop and implement strategy.
BUSI 815	Qualitative Research Methods	This course examines the qualitative method used in doctoral research, with a focus on five qualitative designs: narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, ethnographic, and case study. Underpinning philosophical assumptions are presented in context with the selected qualitative designs. The course also covers data collection, analysis, and validation measures appropriate for qualitative research.
BUSI 816	Advanced Qualitative Research Methods	This course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of advanced qualitative research processes, including data collection methods and data analysis to write reliable results. The course covers critical aspects of conducting rigorous qualitative research exploring concepts like the researcher's role, reflexivity, and research ethics.
BUSI 820	Quantitative Research Methods	This course is designed to prepare doctoral students to apply statistical methods to problems in business administration. Students will learn the fundamental concepts, designs, principles, and statistical skills necessary to perform an empirical study. This will include a basic knowledge of the nature of quantitative methods and the principles of experimental design. Upon conclusion of the course, students will be able to differentiate between a variety of models and statistical methods appropriate to business administration research.
BUSI 821	Advanced Quantitative Research Methods	This course provides an advanced study of the selection and use of quantitative methods and associated statistical techniques in doctoral research. Through study and practical application problems, students will gain experience in all phases of advanced quantitative research from data management and statistical analysis to properly interpreting and presenting the results. Students will gain experience using leading statistical analysis software.
BUSI 886	PhD Research Concept	This course will focus on students completing a research concept paper and preparing students for their dissertation.
BUSI 987	Dissertation I	This course is the first step for doctoral candidates in the process of developing and completing their research study and dissertation. doctoral candidates will complete Chapter 1, Introduction and develop a detailed outline of Chapter 2, Literature Review.

BUSI 988	Dissertation II	This course is the second step for doctoral candidates in the process of developing and completing their research study and dissertation. Doctoral candidates will complete Chapter 2, Literature Review and Chapter 3, Methodology and combine them with Chapter 1 to form their research proposal. Candidates will also conduct their research proposal defense and submit their research to the IRB for review.
BUSI 989	Dissertation III	This course is the final step in for doctoral candidates in the process of developing and completing their research study and dissertation. Doctoral candidates will conduct their field study and complete Chapter 4, Data Analysis and Results as well as Chapter 5, Conclusions. Finally, doctoral candidates will combine all chapters to form their dissertation manuscript in preparation for their dissertation defense.
BUSI 990	Dissertation IV	This course is the final step in the program. Doctoral candidates will defend their dissertation and finalize their manuscript for publication. Can be taken concurrently with 989.

PhD BA Cognates

Cognates are the areas of specialization offered for the PhD BA Program. Each cognate requires three courses focused on that specific area of specialization. This provides the PhD BA graduate a high level of knowledge and skill in organization and management in general combined with a focused level of skill and knowledge in the area of specialization selected. For more information on the cognates and the specific courses required, please go to the School of Business at:

<https://catalog.liberty.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/graduate-business/business-administration-phd/>

Suggested Course Sequence

For students that would like to move through the program quickly, the following course sequence is suggested. The student will need to complete all of the tasks in each of the Dissertation Courses within a single 15-week term for each course in order to follow this timeline. Not all students are able to complete all tasks in a single 15-week term.

Note: The table below includes the three cognate courses.

First Semester (Year 1) B-Term (8 Weeks) BUSI 702 / BUSI 710 D-Term (8 Weeks) BUSI 730 / BUSI 740	Second Semester (Year 1) B-Term (8 Weeks) BUSI 745 / Cognate 1 D-Term (8 Weeks) BUSI 750 / BUSI 815
Third Semester (Year 1) B-Term (8 Weeks) BUSI 770 / BUSI 820 D-Term (8 Weeks) BUSI 816 / Cognate 2	Fourth Semester (Year 2) B-Term (8 Weeks) BUSI 821 / Cognate 3 D-Term (8 Weeks) BUSI 886
Fifth Semester (Year 2) A-Term (15 Weeks) BUSI 987	Sixth Semester (Year 2) A-Term (15 Weeks) BUSI 988
Seventh Semester (Year 3) A-Term (15 Weeks) BUSI 989	Eighth Semester (Year 3) B-Term (8 Weeks) BUSI 990

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