
Ph.D. Program in Business Administration
Faculty Student Handbook

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Ph.D. Program Office

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide one place of reference for faculty and students about the internal administration and operation of the Ph.D. program in Business Administration at the DeGroote School of Business at McMaster University.

This document is **not** intended to replicate or modify the information found in the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) Calendar (available at <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/graduate-calendar>). If there is any discrepancy between this document and the SGS Calendar, then the School of Graduate Studies Calendar shall prevail. Students and faculty are encouraged to look at the SGS Calendar for information about:

- Graduate study at McMaster;
- General regulations of the School of Graduate Studies;
- University regulations for the Ph.D. degree;
- Graduate fees and financial assistance;
- University regulations affecting graduate students;
- University services;
- Fellowships, scholarships, bursaries and other awards;
- University governing bodies;
- Student appeals; and
- Degree programs (including the degree requirements of the Ph.D. program in Business Administration).

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The DeGroote School of Business offers a PhD program in Business Administration where students choose to focus on one of six fields of study. The fields of study are listed below along with the Academic Areas they are associated with:

- Accounting – Accounting and Financial Management Services Area;
- Finance – Finance & Business Economics Area;
- Information Systems – Information Systems Area;
- Management of Organizational Behaviour and Human Resources – Human Resources & Management Area;
- Management Science – Operations Management Area; and,
- Marketing – Strategic Market Leadership and Health Services Management Area).

All administrative processes are centralized within the PhD Program Office currently located on the fourth floor of the DeGroote School of Business.

The **Accounting** field of study is designed to prepare students who are planning to assume an academic career in a university setting to become excellent accounting researchers and educators.

The program of study provides students an exposure to issues and techniques of various research methods and designs in the context of accounting research. Typically, successful applicants will have a university degree in accounting or related fields. Applicants with other university programs of study, including economics, finance, computer science, engineering, engineering and management, and mathematics may also be qualified.

The **Finance** field is designed to prepare and graduate students with theoretical and empirical training that is required to conduct significant academic research in finance. The topics of study include, but are not limited to, the pricing of securities, investment and risk management, corporate finance, and other financial decisions of individuals and firms. This field of study is intended for individuals who are interested in the field of Finance and in a career in university teaching and research, as well as research-based careers in the financial services sector. These may include fund management and investment banking. Typically, successful applicants will have a master's degree in business administration, economics, finance, mathematics or a related field.

The **Information Systems** field of study concerns the management, use and impact of information systems in organizations. It is a multidisciplinary field by nature and draws upon theory and research from a wide variety of disciplines such as organizational behaviour, strategy, marketing, psychology, computer science, and information science. Recognizing the breadth of the field, students are free to adopt either qualitative or quantitative approaches to their research, as appropriate. The program is intended for students with a strong background and interest in information systems and an avid interest in managerial and behavioural aspects as opposed to technical orientations. It is intended for students with a master's degree in business administration, computer science, and/or information systems.

The **Management of Organizational Behaviour and Human Resources (MOBHR)** field is broad in scope and is concerned with all aspects of the employment relationship. The field has a strong research emphasis and is designed to prepare highly motivated individuals for academic careers as scholars in Organizational Behaviour, Human Resource Management, and Industrial Relations. A major strength of the field is that students can draw on diverse faculty interests to develop a research program that suits their own objectives. It is intended for students with a master's degree in business administration or in disciplines such as psychology, economics, or sociology.

The **Management Science** field is concerned with the development and application of quantitative modeling and systematic approaches to the solution of management problems. Areas of application for these techniques include operations management, logistics, and supply chain management. The field has a strong research emphasis and is designed to prepare highly motivated and capable individuals for making significant advances in management science knowledge. It is intended for students with master's degrees in business administration or in disciplines such as mathematics, engineering, science, and computer science.

The **Marketing** field of study is designed to prepare and graduate students with a solid foundation in theoretical and empirical methodologies focusing largely on firm level research in the discipline of marketing. Doctoral students will work closely with their supervisors to conduct leading edge research in the discipline of marketing which explores the processes and mechanisms by which value is created and delivered to the customer. The current interests of the faculty span innovation, new

product development, distribution channels, pricing and services. The program is designed for students who have an interest in pursuing an academic career. Typically, successful applicants will have a master's degree in business administration, economics, psychology, sociology, mathematics, statistics or engineering. Applicants from other disciplines with demonstrated competence in business management, marketing or a related field may also be considered.

PROGRAM GOVERNANCE

There are a variety of administrative positions and committees involved in the governance of the Ph.D. program. These administrative positions and committees are discussed below.

Ph.D. Director

The Ph.D. Director is the key “champion” for ensuring that the Ph.D. program is aligned with the strategic direction and values of the DeGroote School of Business and is responsive to the changing needs of students, the university and the business community. The Director is accountable to the Associate Dean for planning, developing and administering the Ph.D. program. A major responsibility of the position is to provide overall leadership in planning, developing and administering the Ph.D. program.

Ph.D. Administrative Coordinator

The Ph.D. Administrative Coordinator is responsible for providing administrative, financial, and recruiting support for the Ph.D. program. These duties include: identifying and analyzing problems with the program; developing or modifying policies and making recommendations to address issues and presenting these to the Director for approval; collaborating with the Director on program strategy development and implementation by collecting, analyzing, assessing, and summarizing information relevant to the decision making process; and preparing and maintaining the program budget.

Ph.D. Administrative Assistant

The Ph.D. Administrative Assistant is responsible for providing administrative support for the Ph.D. program. These duties include: assessing and summarizing the qualifications of eligible applicants and ensuring that all applications are complete; compiling and distributing application files for review; processing applications for internal and external scholarship competitions; and providing updates to applicants about the status of their applications.

Ph.D. Operating Committee

This committee addresses matters pertaining to individuals enrolled in or applying to the doctoral program. This includes dealing with the review of secondary stage applications (see below for a description of the application process), the ranking of Ph.D. scholarship applications, and the annual review of Ph.D. student progress. In terms of composition, this committee consists of the following individuals:

- the Ph.D. Director (Chair);
- the Ph.D. Administrative Coordinator (non-voting);

- the Associate Dean; and,
- one faculty member from each field appointed by the Associate Dean based on the recommendation of each field's Area Chair.

Since this committee deals with private student information, no doctoral students serve on this committee. Faculty members from the various fields who are selected to serve on this committee do not receive any special teaching relief for this work; rather, this work constitutes part of these faculty members' regular service obligations.

The Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee (GCPC)

This committee is chaired by the Associate Dean. Its purpose is to consider and make recommendations to the Faculty of Business on matters of policy and curriculum affecting graduate work in the School of Business, including new programs and course changes.

The Ph.D. Director has a seat on this committee. Areas within the School of Business feed suggestions and recommendations concerning Ph.D. curriculum and policy changes to the Ph.D. Director, who in turn vets these through this committee for approval.

Each Area in the School has representation on this committee. Doctoral students have representation on this committee as well.

The DeGroot Doctoral Students Association (DDSA)

Though not part of the formal governance and operation of the Ph.D. Program in Business Administration, this association provides a mechanism by which students enrolled in the doctoral program collectively organize and interact with the program's governance structure.

The primary objectives of the DDSA are to encourage a community environment, facilitate communication both within its membership and between its membership and the DeGroot School of Business, and act as a unified voice representing the interests of DeGroot Ph.D. students within the McMaster community, specifically through participation in committees concerning graduate student curriculum and policy (via the GCPC), and general graduate student issues (via McMaster's Graduate Student Association.)

Formed in September 2006, the DDSA has its own constitution and membership. For more information, visit the DDSA website at <http://www.business.mcmaster.ca/ddsa>.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Application Process

There is a two-stage application process for candidates wishing to study in the doctoral program. The first is a preliminary application that allows program administrators to weed out applicants who do not meet the minimum application requirements. This saves time in collecting and tracking numerous supporting documents for each application (e.g., transcripts, references, GMAT/GRE/TOEFL scores, statement of interests) and saves unqualified applicants the expense of completing an application. The School of Graduate Studies allows the School of Business to use a two-stage application process as long as the number of preliminary applications that are submitted is documented. Ph.D. students accepted into the program have indicated they favour the two-stage application process when applying.

The Ph.D. program's administrative staff screens preliminary applications according to a decision tree outlined by the Ph.D. Director in consultation with the Ph.D. Operating Committee. Applicants that do not meet the minimum requirements are immediately rejected at this point. Qualified applicants are invited to proceed to the formal (second) stage submit a formal application package. The Administrative Coordinator consults with the appropriate field-level representative on the Ph.D. Operating Committee if the decision is not clear.

There is one online formal application form for all graduate programs at McMaster. This system indicates that students are applying for a "Ph.D. in Business Administration" as opposed to a specific field. This follows the way other Ph.D. programs are set up at McMaster. A question at the beginning of the form asks students to select a specific field of study. Currently, students are able to select only one field of study when applying for admission. The form explicitly gives instruction on what students should write about in their description of research interests (e.g., identification of research interests, their past research experience and publication history, their reasons for doing a doctorate, their reasons for choosing DeGroote, their intentions of what they will do upon graduation). The form asks students to identify their GMAT scores or their GRE scores and they are required to have the formal report sent to us by the testing center. . A mandatory question asks students to identify one or two potential supervisors and why they would like to work with these individuals; the form provides a statement that identifying a potential supervisor does not guarantee that the person will be the student's actual supervisor.

In terms of reviewing formal (second stage) applications, the long term goal is to work towards an automated, online solution. However, this may take some time to implement. In the interim, the following process is used to review second stage applications of prospective students:

- Each faculty member receives a summary of all candidates in his/her field and is asked to rank these candidates. This summary is prepared and distributed by the Ph.D. Program Office and includes information about each candidate such as past degrees, grade point averages, GMAT and GRE scores, letters of reference, transcripts and a statement of research interests.
- If a faculty member requires more information on a candidate, the faculty member is welcome to go to request the complete application package from Ph.D. Program Office .

- Each faculty member assesses and ranks each candidate using a master spreadsheet response form. This form asks faculty members to independently provide feedback on each candidate they are reviewing. This feedback includes whether to admit the candidate, whether the faculty member wishes to supervise the candidate, whether the faculty member will provide additional funding in the form of research assistantships, computer equipment, or internal scholarships, general comments about the candidate, and rankings of the candidate compared to other candidates. When this form is complete, the faculty member submits the form to the Ph.D. Program Office.
- The independent faculty rankings are collated into one summary spreadsheet per field. The spreadsheet contains the average rankings of each candidate across all faculty member assessments. These spreadsheets are then forwarded to the respective Area Chairs.
- This summary for each field is discussed at the field's Area meeting and the faculty members in that field identify their recommendations of candidates to choose and their suggestions for potential supervisors. Area recommendations on potential supervisors are based on mutual supervisor/student research interests, the ability of the supervisor to financially support students, the number of Ph.D. students currently supervised by the supervisor and their current stage in the program. The Area Chair is asked to submit -the Area's A-list candidates including funding and supervision, B-list candidates (those that may be considered if candidates on the A-list decline our offer of admission) and their No List (candidates that are not suitable and will not be reconsidered) to the Ph.D. Program Office.
- Once all Area recommendations are received, the Ph.D. Administrative Coordinator distributes a summary of these candidate recommendations to the members of the Ph.D. Operating Committee for review.
- The Ph.D. Operating Committee considers the field recommendations of candidates and finalizes the admission offers to make. An offer of admission is based on target enrolments, the quality of candidates recommended by the fields, and the availability of suitable supervisors. Enrolment targets for a specific year are determined by the Ph.D. Director in consultation with the Dean's Office on budgetary matters and with the Ph.D. Administrative Coordinator on space and resource matters; the amount of available funding in the Ph.D. budget largely drives enrolment targets. The accepted practice is that the Ph.D. Operating Committee makes offers to the best students overall and to make offers only if there is available funding to do so. This method gives flexibility in admitting the best students available across fields and makes the program financially responsible. There is a general expectation of equal distribution of students across fields overall; however, the number of students granted admission to specific fields in any particular year may vary across fields. It is expected that the Ph.D. Operating Committee acts in good faith to ensure that the best students are recommended for admission into the program overall, while still recognizing the fact that new fields may need to ensure a certain number of students are admitted to those fields to help those fields grow.
- Based on the decision of the Ph.D. Operating Committee, the Ph.D. Administrative Coordinator initiates recommendations for admission offers to the School of Graduate

Studies. SGS has the final right to accept or reject any of these recommendations, and creates the Offer of Admission letters.

Student Funding

Students admitted to the doctoral program are currently guaranteed four years of funding at a minimum of \$20,000 per year. Students typically receive their annual guaranteed funding through some combination of scholarships, research assistantships (RAs), and teaching assistantships (TAs). In addition to this guaranteed funding, “top-up” funding can be offered to students upon admission from various sources including additional graduate or research scholarships, research assistantships or sessional lectureships.

All faculty members who agree to supervise a Ph.D. student are encouraged, but not mandated, to provide an RA research scholarship of \$4-5K per year for four years (this amount is in addition to the \$20,000 minimum). The RA research work typically is to be completed during the summer academic term.

If a supervising faculty member cannot supply this amount, then RA-ship opportunities for a student can be solicited from other faculty members. Students in this situation are encouraged to talk to faculty themselves to secure potential RA-ships.

A faculty member who wishes to provide full-funding to supervise a student may do so. This allows faculty members to supervise qualified applicants who are not being accepted into the program because of a lack of available funds from the School of Business.

A limited number of tuition bursaries are available to incoming international (VISA) students as a means of bridging the gap in fees between Canadian and international students. The current practice is to allocate two tuition bursaries per field per year to incoming international students. This is typically offered to the top ranked international student in each field.

It is permissible to make an offer of admission with no guaranteed funding if students can provide evidence that they have sufficient financial support from corporations or governments. These admissions will be on a case by case basis provided that the applicant follows the standard application procedures and provided that space and other resources are available.

It is not permissible to make an offer of admission with no funding in the case of students who declare they will self-fund their own Ph.D. program. In this case, McMaster must make a commitment of financial support upfront and students can decide after that whether to accept the financial support or not.

All doctoral students have access to \$1,000 for any valid research-related purpose to use within their first four years of study (e.g., travel to conferences, dissertation expenses). These expenses need to be approved by the Ph.D. Administrative Coordinator. In addition, Ph.D. students have two additional sources of funding available to them for travel and conference costs: i) financial support from the Dean’s Office for conference travel; and ii) funds from their Ph.D. supervisor.

Conference Travel

Doctoral students are encouraged to participate in major academic conferences in order to enhance the reputation of the DeGroot School of Business and encourage excellence in research. The DeGroot School of Business has a travel conference policy for the provision of funds up to \$2,000 per annum (May 1 to April 30) for qualifying Ph.D. students. A maximum of \$4,000 will be available for support for each Ph.D. student during the 4 years of the Ph.D. Program. There is no carry-forward of unspent appropriation on the annual conference related travel funding allowance.

To qualify for these funds, the doctoral student must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- have successfully completed his/her comprehensive exam;
- will be presenting a paper at the conference, or participating in the conference in a significant way.
- travelling to a conference where full conference papers are peer-reviewed and the conference must have a 60% or lower acceptance rate (in exceptional circumstances, this criteria may be waived);
- has not received funding for conference travel from the Dean's Area more than two times before;
- has not received financial support from the Dean's Area for travel to a conference in the same calendar year.

To apply for travel funding students must:

- Complete the DSB Conference Related Travel Information form (see Appendix "A")
- Write a letter to the Associate Dean requesting funding. The letter should include a statement outlining the name, date and location of the conference as well as a brief statement outlining how you and the school will benefit by your attendance. The request should also include a budget outline expected expenses. The letter should be signed by the applicant and his/her supervisor.
- Obtain a letter of acceptance from the conference. This letter should state the acceptance rate for papers.
- Submit the above three forms electronically to the Associate Dean, cc'ing a copy to the Ph.D. Program Office.

All travel expenses must be in accordance with McMaster University's travel policy. This policy can be found at: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/purchase/>.

The Associate Dean will review all travel applications promptly and will notify the student in writing of the decision. **This notification must be included with the Expense Report when expenses are submitted.**

If the application is approved, the student may apply for an ‘Accountable Advance’ to assist with expenses that must be paid prior to travel. An expense report (including all receipts) must be submitted promptly upon return from the conference. Remember to keep a copy of all receipts, boarding passes and forms for your records.

Travellers that have not been approved prior to travel will not be reimbursed.

Ph.D. Supervision

Upon admission to the Ph.D. program, a student is assigned a Ph.D. supervisor. The supervisor is normally assigned to the student for the duration of his/her degree. In some extenuating circumstances, (e.g., change in research direction) supervisors and supervisory committees can change. If changes are made in a student’s supervisor or in the composition of a student’s supervisory committee, it is understood that this is acceptable practice and does not bear negatively upon a faculty member’s research or supervisory capabilities.

In compliance with SGS regulations, a supervisory committee is established for incoming students “as soon as possible, and in any case no later than six months following their arrival.” The supervisor is responsible to select supervisory committee members. Normally, there are three faculty members on a student’s supervisory committee. One of these members must be the student’s Ph.D. supervisor.

Untenured faculty members are able to supervise a student as long as the untenured faculty member’s term appointment has been renewed (i.e., after the three year point). However, in this case, a back-up tenured faculty member needs to be identified.

Ph.D. supervision is normally done by a single faculty member. However, the School of Graduate Studies at McMaster does recognize co-supervision. In all cases, a supervisor of record must be designated. In the case of co-supervision, one supervisor is often seen as the “primary” supervisor.

There is flexibility in the composition of the supervisory committee in terms of non-supervising faculty members. For example, these faculty members can come from different Areas within the School of Business or from different departments or faculties within McMaster University. In compliance with SGS regulations, no more than one faculty member may be from outside McMaster.

There is no upper limit on the number of students a faculty member can supervise. However, in practice, the suggested maximum number of students a faculty member can adequately supervise is three.

In terms of compensating faculty for agreeing to supervise students and serving on supervisory committees, the following process is used:

- A 0.5 teaching relief awarded to the Ph.D. supervisor and a divide the remaining 0.5 teaching relief among the other member of the supervising committee.

- Teaching reliefs for Ph.D. supervision are awarded upon completion of a student's oral dissertation defence. The Ph.D. Administrative Coordinator initiates this request twice per year (Fall/Spring Convocation)
- In the case of supervisorships and supervising committees that change, teaching reliefs are only awarded to the supervisor and supervising committee members that exist at the time of the student's oral dissertation defence.

The duties of a Ph.D. supervisor are as follows:

- to ensure that the student complies with all SGS regulations as stipulated and described in the School of Graduate Studies Calendar;
- to meet with the student in the first week of the program to complete a study plan that ensures the student meets all course requirements, ideally within 20 months;
- to guide the selection and development of the student's dissertation research;
- to review and give advice on the student's scholarship applications;
- to provide the student with regular appraisals of progress or lack of it; and,
- to initiate appropriate action if the student's progress is unsatisfactory, including any recommendation that the student withdraw, for approval by the Ph.D. Director.

The duties of the Ph.D. supervisory committee (including the Ph.D. supervisor) are as follows:

- to approve the dissertation proposal;
- to meet with the student annually to discuss progress, set future goals and complete the Supervisory Committee Meeting Report;
- to maintain knowledge of the student's research activities;
- to give advice on research, usually through the student's supervisor;
- to act as internal examiner for the student's dissertation;
- to suggest external examiners for the student's oral defense, and,
- to act as a member of the examination committee for the final oral defence of the dissertation.

The student's responsibilities in terms of Ph.D. supervision are as follows:

- to comply with all School of Graduate Studies policies and procedures;
- to meet all expectations of the doctoral program;

- to maintain regular contact with the supervisor and supervisory committee;
- to follow the guidance and direction given by the supervisor and supervisory committee;
- to apply for all external scholarships for which they are eligible (students unsure of their eligibility should check with the Ph.D. Program Office);
- to attend the program all three terms of the university calendar year as specified in the SGS calendar (e.g., normal vacation entitlement is two weeks of vacation during the year, however it must not interrupt scheduled course work or teaching/research assistantships; any vacation must be scheduled by mutual agreement and should be approved in writing by the student's supervisor; a copy of the approved request must be submitted to the Ph.D. Program Office for inclusion in the student's file);
- to attend campus a minimum of two to three times per week;
- to monitor email and voicemail daily; and,
- to meet all administrative deadlines (e.g., scholarship applications, forms, registration).

If a student encounters a problem with supervision, it is his/her responsibility to consult with the Ph.D. Director and seek an acceptable resolution. If the student's supervisor is the Ph.D. Director, then the student should consult directly with the Associate Dean.

Registration

Students are responsible for meeting the deadlines for program registration, course registration and any change in course selections, as specified in the School of Graduate Studies Calendar.

All Ph.D. students should confirm status, complete tuition payment agreement and register for Ph.D. courses through the SOLAR website. At this time, students are not able to register for MBA level courses or courses from other departments on line. Students should contact the Ph.D. Program Office for the appropriate forms.

The selection and registration of courses requires the approvals of both the student's supervisor and the Ph.D. Director. Course selections should be determined in the student's first week of the program. Students are expected to follow the program requirements for their field of study as outlined in the School of Graduate Studies Calendar. Any deviation from this plan should be discussed with and approved by the supervisor and the Ph.D. Director. All course requirements should be met within the first 20 months (terms 1-5) of the program to ensure that the comprehensive exam can be written in the student's sixth term.

Ph.D. Scholarships

As stipulated in each student's offer of admission, funding that students receive during their first four years of study is conditional upon each student applying for all external scholarship awards for which they are eligible, such as an Ontario Graduate Scholarship, SSHRC or NSERC doctoral scholarship. It is expected that each student, regardless of their year of study, apply for all scholarships for which they meet eligibility criteria. Supervisors are encouraged to help students

complete their scholarship applications and write any requisite letters of reference. Students are highly advised to approach their supervisors for such assistance well in advance of any scholarship deadlines and to provide the completed application to the supervisor when making their requests.

For OGS scholarships, the School of Graduate Studies requests that student applications are ranked by field of study. As such, the review and ranking of OGS scholarships is first done at the Area level. Area Chairs have discretion how these rankings within the Area are done. Some Area Chairs prefer all Area members review the OGS applications, while other Area Chairs strike a special committee comprising a sub-group of Area members. Once all Area rankings are received, the Ph.D. Administrative Coordinator disseminates the Area rankings along with all OGS applications to members of the Ph.D. Operating Committee. This committee then meets and discusses the ranking of students and recommends the final ranking of students to SGS. The Ph.D. Program Office provides SGS with this final ranking.

For SSHRC scholarships, the review and ranking is done program-wide. As such, there is no need for individual fields to provide a ranking of candidates within their field. Thus, for SSHRC scholarship applications, the review and ranking of student applications is carried out solely by the Ph.D. Operating Committee. At this meeting, field representatives provide an overview of student applications in their field. Based on this overview, the whole committee comes up with a ranking of all student applications. The Ph.D. Program Office provides SGS with this final ranking.

For NSERC scholarships, the School of Graduate Studies requests no ranking of student applications. Thus, student NSERC applications received by the Ph.D. Program Office are sent directly to SGS.

Ph.D. Student Offices

Dedicated office space is provided to each full-time doctoral student in years 1-4. These assignments are determined by the Ph.D. Administrative Coordinator and students may be relocated periodically to accommodate incoming students. Students who are in year 5 that require office space will be expected to share any available cubicles with other 5th year students. There will be no space made available to students who are in year 6 and beyond. The Ph.D. student offices are located in the Annex section of the DeGroot School of Business building on the second floor in two areas: DSB-A210 and DSB-A211.

Recognizing that this is a shared work environment, students are expected to keep their personal offices clean and to minimize any excessive noise or activity that may impede or negatively affect other students working in that area.

Access to DSB-A210 and DSB-A211 is restricted to students having office space there and appropriate administrative staff (such as the Ph.D. Administrative Staff Coordinator and Ph.D. Administrative Assistant). Faculty members are not to have key access to DSB-A210 nor DSB-A211. Faculty members wishing to meet with Ph.D. students are encouraged to meet in faculty offices as opposed to the Ph.D. student office area. In addition, students are not allowed to have visitors to the Ph.D. student offices. This is to minimize noise levels in the Ph.D. student office area and to enhance the privacy of student office space.

Computers

Each incoming student should receive a brand new computer when possible, preferably upon entry into the program. It is common accepted practice for Ph.D. supervisors to fund the purchase of these computers. In those cases where a supervising Ph.D. supervisor lacks funds for the purchase of a computer, the Ph.D. budget will be used.

Student Teaching Opportunities

Students in all fields are encouraged to gain teaching experience prior to the oral defence of their dissertation. It is expected that Area Chairs will work to promote such opportunities for doctoral students who have successfully passed their comprehensive exams.

Full-Time vs. Part-Time Study

The Ph.D. Program at the DeGroot School of Business is offered on a full-time basis only. Under the regulations of the Government of Ontario, a full-time graduate student must:

- be pursuing his or her studies as a full-time occupation;
- identify himself or herself as a full-time graduate student;
- be designated by the university as a full-time graduate student;
- be geographically available and visit the campus regularly. Without forfeiting full-time status, a graduate student, while still under supervision, may be absent from the university (e.g. visiting libraries, doing field work, attending a graduate course at another institution, etc.) provided that, if any such period of absence exceeds four weeks in any one term, written evidence shall be available in the Graduate Studies Office to the effect that the absence has the approval of the Chairman (sic) of the Department and the Dean of Graduate Studies;
- be considered to be a full-time graduate student by his/her supervisor or equivalent (designated by the university).

In addition to these government regulations, it is the position of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, which appraises all of our graduate programs, that it supports “a ten-hour limit on university related employment and encourage[s] full-time students to limit time spent on employment inside or outside the university.”

The DeGroot School of Business interprets “be geographically available and visit the campus regularly” as being physically on campus at least two to three times a week and in regular attendance at planned events. This would include: guest speakers, seminars, research days, town hall meetings, dissertation proposal defences and dissertation defences. Under no circumstances should students plan vacations (outside of the regularly scheduled breaks) during the fall and winter terms. This is especially true for students that are registered in courses. Ph.D. students are expected to spend the summer months conducting research but may take limited vacation time with their supervisor’s approval.

We understand that students may occasionally face a family emergency that requires them to leave campus for a period of time. Students should speak with the Administrative Coordinator, their supervisor and the professor they are assisting if this occurs.

In rare circumstances, students, with the approval of their supervisor, may apply to the School of Graduate Studies for part-time status. Such approval is not given unless the student has met the following criteria:

- passed the comprehensive examination;
- defended the dissertation proposal; and,
- has made significant progress in the completion of the dissertation, including data collection and analysis.

Students switching to Part-Time status are not eligible for scholarship payments and are not guaranteed department funding. Part-Time students are still responsible for tuition payment and must make arrangements through the Cashier's office for payment prior to the beginning of the term.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Program Timeline & Duration

The time required to complete the program varies widely and is largely dependent upon each student's personal experience while in the program. In general, students are expected to complete the program within four years with an upper limit of six years. Past DeGroote graduates have completed the degree in as little as three years while others have needed six years.

A typical timeline for students enrolled in the Ph.D. program is as follows:

Years 1 & 2:	Course Work (students complete between 6 and 12 courses)
May/June of Year 2:	Comprehensive Exam
Year 3:	Dissertation Proposal Defence
Year 3: & 4:	Data Collection and Analysis
End of Year 4:	Write-up of Dissertation and Oral Defence

In order to keep students on a four-year timeline, student performance is assessed on an annual basis. A student whose work is unsatisfactory may at any time be required to withdraw from the University.

In those cases in which a student does not manage to complete the degree requirements before the end of the time limit specified in the SGS calendar (i.e., six years from the start date of enrolment in the Ph.D. program), the University has no further obligation to provide supervision. Upon consultation with the department and on its recommendation the student will be shown as having been "withdrawn in good standing due to time limit".

If a completed dissertation is submitted, and is acceptable to the School of Business, the student can be readmitted in order to defend the dissertation. Students who have been withdrawn in good standing should be aware that they may be required to complete additional course work before being permitted to proceed to a defence of the dissertation. In all cases, the department must first declare that the submitted dissertation is ready for defence before the student will be readmitted. At the time of readmission, the student will be required to pay a fee (equivalent to one year's tuition), to compensate for the costs of the defence and subsequent processing of the dissertation.

Course Work

Students are encouraged to check the SGS Calendar for exact program requirements.

Each field has specific course requirements; however commonality is built into the program. For instance, all students are required to take one common course B778 (Management Theory). Further, certain groupings of fields share common courses (e.g., students in the HR and IS fields are required to take B780 (Research Methods and Design) and B782 (Applied Multivariate Statistics).

The minimum number of courses students must take is six; the maximum number of courses a student can take is twelve. Ordinarily, course work is completed within two academic years, ideally within twenty months of starting the program. Students with prior knowledge may be exempt from certain required courses; however, they may have to substitute the exempted course with another similar level course in order to meet the 6 course minimum. Students without sufficient background knowledge may be required to take additional courses but may not exceed the 12 course maximum. Course selection is discussed and reviewed between the student and the supervisor, and each individual student will follow his/her own academic path, which is dependent on what the supervisor deems necessary to succeed in the program.

Comprehensive Exams

SGS policy indicates that a student's comprehensive exam and its administration are the responsibility of the department in which the student is registered (i.e., the School of Business), not of the student's supervisory committee or the Area to which the student's field of study is aligned.

Every doctoral student must pass a comprehensive examination assessing breadth of knowledge of his or her chosen field. It is expected that the coursework will provide preparation for this examination.

The exam will differ from one field of study to another; however, the content, format, and timing of the exam will be the same within each field. That is, students in a specific field are expected to write the same examination over the same time period. Examinations that include a common element (that all students in a specific field write) and an elective element (where individual students choose questions according to their respective areas of research specialization) are deemed acceptable as being "the same examination."

The exact format of the comprehensive exam is left to the discretion of each Area. Typically, there is an in-house written portion conducted on site at the School of Business and a take-home written portion usually due within one week's time.

In accordance with SGS policy, the comprehensive exam must be completed no later than 24 months after starting the program. Typically, the exam will occur near or around the student's 20 month of study (i.e., May/June of the student's second year).

Five months prior to the exam (typically in December of the student's second year), the Ph.D. Program Office, in consultation with the Area Chairs will organize a comprehensive exam committee for each field. This comprehensive exam committee will be responsible for establishing the exam reading list, preparing the exam questions, and marking the exams. The comprehensive exam committee will determine the format and structure of the exam. The reading list and exam questions will be determined in consultation with the supervisors of students who are writing the exam. There must be at least two faculty members (ideally three) marking a student's exam (typically one of whom will be supervisor of the student). The exam will first be marked independently by each faculty member on the committee. Later, these faculty members will get together to reach agreement on a final mark for each student.

The exact timing for the administration of the examination will be determined in consultation with the comprehensive examination committee and the students slated to write the examination. However, the examination must be scheduled to allow enough time for a second attempt (should it be needed) to be written and graded before the end of the student's 24th month in the doctoral program.

The outcome of the comprehensive exams will be reported to the School of Graduate Studies as "pass with distinction", "pass", or "fail." If a student fails the first attempt, a second attempt at this examination will be permitted if approved by the supervisor and the Ph.D. Director. If needed, this second attempt must be completed by the end of the student's 2nd year.

Dissertation Proposals

The dissertation proposal is the mechanism by which students gain approval from their supervisory committees to embark on their proposed dissertation projects. A proposal is required before students collect data (for empirical investigations) or begin any analysis work (for theoretically-oriented dissertations).

Typically, dissertation proposals occur at the beginning of Year 3 of a student's program – shortly after completion of a student's comprehensive exam. It is unacceptable for students to defend proposals just prior to their actual oral defence of their completed dissertations.

In terms of timeline, students first submit a written dissertation proposal to his or her supervisory committee. A public oral defence of the proposal follows shortly thereafter. An announcement of the date and location of this defence will be sent to DeGroot Ph.D. students and faculty.

The format of this defence is similar to that of a student's Ph.D. oral dissertation defence. Normally, the proposal defence will consist of a 20 minute presentation followed by two rounds of questions from the exam committee members, and then questions from the general audience. After this, the Ph.D. student and members of the general audience would be asked to leave and the supervisory committee would make its deliberation. The student would later be called back into the room and told the results of the defence by his or her supervisor.

Dissertations

Prior to oral defence, students must prepare a written dissertation that is consistent in format with the instructions provided in the “Guide For the Preparation of Theses” issued by the School of Graduate Studies. When the majority of the supervisory committee has approved the dissertation, the student submits three copies of the dissertation to the School of Graduate Studies and one copy to each member of the supervisory committee. The final date for submitting the dissertation to Graduate Studies for autumn or spring convocation can be found in the sessional dates section of the SGS calendar.

Selection of an external examiner is the responsibility of the Dean of Graduate Studies. To aid in that selection, the supervisory committee is required to provide the names and contact information for three potential examiners, at least one month prior to the submission of the dissertation. The nominees must be at arm’s length from all members of the supervisory committee and the student. To maintain this distance, all communication with the external examiner must originate from the School of Graduate Studies. An online system exists to facilitate the nomination of potential examiners.

The examining body consists of the following members:

- the student’s supervisor,
- an external examiner,
- two representatives of the School of Business, normally from the student’s supervisory committee, and,
- one representative of the faculty at McMaster (outside the School of Business) at large.

When the external examiner physically attends the dissertation oral defence, a representative of the faculty at large is not required.

The external examiner will submit a written report on the dissertation to the School of Graduate Studies approximately one week prior to the scheduled defence. The School of Graduate Studies will send a copy of this report to the supervisor but its content is to be withheld from the student until after the defence has taken place. If a major revision is not required by the external examiner, an oral defence will be convened by the Dean of Graduate Studies, chaired by himself or his delegate and conducted by all members of the examining committee.

The examination proper will be conducted only by the members of the examining committee. When they have completed their questions the chair may permit a few minutes of questioning by visitors. Normally, the student will attempt to answer visitors’ questions, but these are not to be considered part of the examination for the degree. Observers will withdraw prior to the committee’s deliberations on the student’s performance at the defence. The committee reports to the Dean of Graduate Studies either that the candidate has passed or failed.

After successful defence, the candidate is required to correct any misprints detected by the readers and make the required revisions. Upon approval of these edits, the student will submit six copies to

the School of Graduate Studies for binding. The student is responsible for the payment of the binding as well as any additional postage fees that may apply.

In addition to the \$500 that SGS provides to support external examiner travel, the Ph.D. budget will be used to cover an additional \$500 of expenses. Any expenses over this amount (\$1,000) would be covered by the student's Ph.D. supervisor.

APPENDIX "A"

DeGROOTE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS CONFERENCE RELATED TRAVEL APPLICATION

The DeGroot School of Business Conference Related Travel program supports participation financially in national and international conferences of major significance, as well as representational and executive office activities in scholarly and professional organizations; thereby enhancing the reputation of the DeGroot School of Business and the University and encouraging excellence in research, teaching and professional development.

The maximum allowable Conference Related Travel funding is \$2,000 per annum (May 1 to April 30). A maximum of \$4,000 will be available for support for each Ph.D. student during the 4 years of the Ph.D. Program. There is no carry-forward of unspent appropriation on the annual conference related travel funding allowance.

The following documents must be submitted to the Associate Dean, DeGroot School of Business, in advance of the conference:

- One electronic copy of the Conference Travel Application

Applicants who have attended, or plan to attend, more than one conference must submit a separate application for each conference.

Applications from faculty holding contractually-limited appointments and students must include a workplan (maximum one page) to demonstrate that the activities for which they are requesting funding will be completed before their appointment and/or enrolment ends.

Part A: General Information	
Name:	
McMaster ID:	Phone & Extension:
Email:	Area:
Rank (e.g., Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Lecturer, Ph.D. Student, etc.):	
Status: (e.g., Tenure, Tenure-track, Teaching-track, Contractually Limited Appointment, Ph.D. Student, etc.):	
Name of Area Chair:	

Part B: Conference Information	
Title of Conference (One conference per application form.)	
Sponsoring Organization:	
Nature of Conference (e.g., national, international, other (please explain))	
Location:	Date:
Frequency of Conference (e.g., annual association meeting, special <i>ad hoc</i> meeting, etc.)	

Justification for Conference Attendance
Nature of your Participation (e.g., presenting a paper, representational activities, etc.):
Title of Paper to be Presented (if applicable). If you are presenting a paper, please attach an abstract, note the participant selection process and if the proceedings will be published.
Please explain clearly how the proposed participation in the conference contributes to your career development, is appropriate to your career stage, and your role in the professional organization or body (if appropriate)

Part C: Budget

Transportation Costs:

Air (limited to economy-class airfare)

Ground (University mileage rate of \$0.40 per km is to be used)

Other (passport and immigration fees are not eligible expenses)

Accommodation:

(Support is limited to 5 days. The recommended maximum for accommodation within Canada is \$120 CDN per diem. The recommended maximum for accommodation outside of Canada is \$120 US per diem. Justification must be provided for requests that exceed the recommended rates.)

Meals:

(Support is limited to 5 days. The maximum per diem rate allowed for meals within Canada is \$48 CDN. The maximum per diem rate allowed for meals outside of Canada is \$48 US.)

Registration Fees:

Other Expenses:

Total Amount Requested:

(Note the total amount not to exceed \$2,000 per annum (April 1 to March 31))

Applicant's signature_____
Date