

# BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, DBA

**Degree:** Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)

## Program Overview

Business leadership is increasingly required to integrate multiple sources of knowledge, understand the perceptions of diverse parties, and put human values into action. Executives are challenged to create social, intellectual, and economic value for their organizations and for society at large based on rigorous and sound evidence. Recognizing these challenges, Weatherhead School of Management offers two doctoral degrees in management for working professionals: the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) and the PhD in Management with a Designing Sustainable Systems track.

Our DBA is based on the original vision of a practitioner-scholar who has the ability to think intensely and critically about business problems confronting an organization, a community, a nation, and the world. Students are afforded opportunities to probe and model “wicked” problems, challenge existing assumptions, and test new ideas. We accomplish this through a cross-disciplinary fashion drawing from and contributing to both management theory and practice.

Our PhD Management with a track in Designing Sustainable Systems is focused on preparing interdisciplinary scholar-practitioners for successful research and academic careers. In our PhD track, students develop the ability to approach problems of practice rigorously from multiple disciplinary angles, to produce sound evidence, and apply theoretical frames to address those problems and communicate them to academic and practitioner audiences. The program also prepares students for successful teaching in academic settings and various academic courses.

Curricula and coursework in these programs provide a foundation for lifelong conducting of rigorous research and practicing of evidence-based management. Courses interrelate theoretically and methodologically and prepare students to holistically bring academic, theoretical and data-driven perspectives to bear on problems that they encounter in their organizations or in public policy advocacy.

## Learning Outcomes

- Students are competent researchers.
- Students are effective scholarly communicators in print and in presentations.
- Students are scholarly practitioners and practical scholars.
- Students are change agents that bring evidence-based management to businesses and society.

## Program Requirements

The DBA is a 60 credit hour, three-year, lock-step program with an option to pursue the Designing Sustainable Systems track in the PhD in Management Program. DBA students' research projects are evaluated by a faculty review committee over the course of the program at critical research milestones.

## Research Requirements and Deliverables

### Research Proposal

The first research deliverable is a qualitative research proposal that frames the student's research problem of practice and research question. Additionally, the proposal specifies a design for the fieldwork portion of the qualitative research project. An inductive qualitative research proposal is developed that synthesizes a substantial (though not exhaustive) body of scholarly literature (theoretical and empirical) in a fashion that creates a conceptual framework that provides insight into a significant problem of practice reflecting the lived experiences of a specific group of practitioners.

The research proposal outlines a broad research question to guide the qualitative research and specifies a design for the fieldwork to be carried out in the study. Students develop individual scholarly skills of reading, writing, conceptualizing (including framing), creating ethnographic/phenomenological/semi-structured interview protocols, conducting semi-structured interviews, and interpretively coding and analyzing qualitative interview data.

### Qualitative Research Paper

The qualitative research paper presents findings and explanatory concepts from the student's qualitative fieldwork research study. It identifies and frames a potent “phenomenological practice gap” wherein current practitioner and academic knowledge is lacking in guiding effective practice. The research synthesizes significant scholarly literature into a coherent conceptual framework and an understandable logical argument of relationships among theoretical constructs.

Students learn to frame effective questions for practitioner-scholarship research that embodies inquiry and openness, aligning the conceptual framework and research question to the chosen problem of practice, and to write scholarly papers that are clear and present a logical flow of well-supported arguments. By understanding the development of grounded theory and understanding ethnographic observation and field notes, students formally and rigorously code and analyze qualitative data in an interpretive fashion.

### Quantitative Capstone Project

The quantitative capstone project integrates the analytical approaches that students learn in their quantitative courses. The capstone exercise is intended to allow students to demonstrate their independent competence in quantitative inquiry skills and multivariate data analysis. Additionally, based on a satisfactory assessment, it allows the student to progress toward the completion of the quantitative research paper, which is a requirement for both the DBA and the PhD in Management: Designing Sustainable Systems programs.

### Quantitative Research Paper

At the end of the Fall semester of the third year, students will have completed a quantitative research paper. The objective of the quantitative research paper is to generate a rigorous and valid quantitative empirical study that is guided by a hypothesized model of the student's variables or phenomenon of interest. The study must be framed by current theoretical and empirical work within the area of interest and the hypotheses must be based on appropriate casual logic.

A robust research design is utilized that follows the material covered in the quantitative research courses including collecting, analyzing, and validating data in a way that mitigates biases. Students complete a systematic and rigorous quantitative analysis and interpret the analysis in a way that provides novel insight into the phenomenon of interest. The quantitative research paper details the project and is written in a manner

that meets high scholarly standards to merit future publication in top-rated journals and/or other dissemination outlets.

### Integrative Paper

As a final requirement for the DBA program, an integrative paper is required. Students write a short overview statement introducing their qualitative and quantitative research studies, making substantive observations and conclusions about each study, and presenting a personal reflective statement about its significance to the author, scholarship and to practice.

### DBA Dissertation

An original and significant endeavor, the DBA Dissertation consists of the integrative paper and the qualitative and quantitative research papers.

This provides an overview and organizes the study into a coherent thesis and serves as the dissertation requirement of the DBA program.

## Sample Plan of Study

### First Year

Fall		Credit Hours
DBAP 611	Theory and Practice of Collective Action	3
DBAP 613	Leading Change	3
DBAP 665	Introduction to Research Inquiry	3
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>9</b>

### Spring

DBAP 638	Qualitative Inquiry I	3
DBAP 642	Directed Studies Seminar	1.5
DBAP 672	Flourishing Enterprise: Creating Sustainable Value for Business and World Benefit	3
DBAP 673	Understanding, Designing, Managing Complex Systems	3
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>10.5</b>

### Second Year

Fall		Credit Hours
DBAP 641	Qualitative Inquiry II	3
DBAP 642	Directed Studies Seminar	1.5
DBAP 680	Conflict & Cooperation in the Global Arena	3
DBAP 681	Research Designs and Analytics for Archival and Online Data	3
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>10.5</b>

### Spring

DBAP 617	Technology and Social System Design	3
DBAP 642	Directed Studies Seminar	1.5
DBAP 649	Experimental Design and Analysis	3
DBAP 682	Foundational Statistical Analysis and Measurement	3
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>10.5</b>

### Third Year

Fall		Credit Hours
DBAP 614	Business as an Evolving Complex System	3
DBAP 642	Directed Studies Seminar	1.5

DBAP 645	Integration of Qualitative and Quantitative Inquiry	3
DBAP 677	Designing Sustainable Systems	3

---

**Credit Hours** **10.5**

### Spring

DBAP 640	Social Ethics: Contemporary Issues	3
DBAP 642	Directed Studies Seminar	0
DBAP 664	Knowledge Dissemination to Influence Managerial Practice	3
DBAP 683	Integration of Methods Sequences	3

---

**Credit Hours** **9**

---

**Total Credit Hours** **60**