Programs of Research
School of Business and Technology Theoretical and Topic Area Guidelines for PhD Dissertation Research
Version 1.6 effective October 2015

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PHD BUSINESS PROGRAMS

Business Management, Business, Organization and Management

Program Guidelines

The doctoral specialization in General Business Management provides learners with a deep understanding of business theory, research, and practice. The curriculum focuses on business systems and leadership, financial management, accounting, economics, strategy, and social responsibility. In addition, core courses will also equip learners with a strong global, ethical, and inter-disciplinary perspective. In addition to the core curriculum, learners gain advanced knowledge and skills in research design and application. Successful completion of the General Business Management specialization prepares learners to lead, consult, or teach in the field of business management with a theoretical and pragmatic perspective, creating practical solutions to real-world problems.

The PhD Business Management program faculty suggest learners use this information as guidelines. If your research plans include theories and topics other than those listed below or research methods other than those listed in the current SoBT PhD Dissertation Guidebook, you are encouraged to discuss your research plans with your mentor and then gain topic approval (Milestone 2) by the Faculty Chair for PhD Business Management.

General Management Specialization

Guidelines

The doctoral specialization in General Business Management provides learners with a deep understanding of business theory, research, and practice. The curriculum focuses on business systems and leadership, financial management, accounting, economics, strategy, and social responsibility. In addition, core courses will also equip learners with a strong global, ethical, and inter-disciplinary perspective. In addition to the core curriculum, learners gain advanced knowledge and skills in research design and application. Successful completion of the General Business Management specialization prepares learners to lead, consult, or teach in the field of business management with a theoretical and pragmatic perspective, creating practical solutions to real-world problems.
Theoretical Perspectives

- Affective events theory
- Agency theory
- Behavioral decision theory
- Complexity theory
- Contingency theory
- Equity theory
- Expectancy theory
- General economic theories (micro, macro)
- Goal-setting theory
- Human capital theory
- Industrial organization/economics
- Institutional theory
- Leadership theories
- Management theories
- Network theory
- Organization communication
- Population ecology theory
- Prospect theory
- Resource dependence theory
- Social capital theory
- Social cognitive theory
- Social exchange theory
- Social identity theory
- Systems theory
- Transaction costs theory

The Academy of Management publishes journals that are in the top tier of scholastic resources. Four of these include:

- Academy of Management Journal
- Academy of Management Learning and Education
- Academy of Management Review
- Academy of Management Perspectives

These journals are included in the Academy's dues; student rates are available. The Academy has an annual conference including doctoral-centered workshops and a broad range of Divisions and Interest Groups that focus on particular areas of management research.

General Management Topic Areas

- Management sciences include topical areas such as Management, Leadership, Administration, Human Resources, Organizational Behavior, Entrepreneurship, Economics, Marketing, Finance, Accounting, Quality and Continuous Improvement, Strategy, Operations. These topical areas reside in most sectors and industries. Typically, in a research project, you would identify the sector in which your study will take place.
- Managerial aspects ("soft disciplines"—OB, leadership, HR, Mgmt. Ed.)
- Groups or organizations as the unit of analysis—not individuals (i.e., you may study individuals to ascertain a group outcome, such as preferred learning styles of sales personnel)
- Organization behavior and theory
- Organization communication
SOBT TOPIC AREAS

- Organization culture and sub-cultures
- Organization dynamics
- Team and group dynamics, virtual teaming, etc.
- Technical aspects ("hard disciplines"—specializations)
- Economic philosophy, structures, global impact
- Finance, accounting, marketing, systems and global nature
- Strategy
- Entrepreneurship

General Management Unapproved Topic Areas

- Studies within your own organization
- Studying CEO’s of Fortune 500 organizations
- Studies involving prisoners, prisons or other vulnerable populations
- Studies about youth, elders or other protected groups
- Study of individual participants who graduated from a human services organization’s to determine if any or all “succeeded”
- General Management does not include studies whose primary foci include: Psychology, human services, counseling or behavioral sciences
- Studies considered high risk to participants, for example: where someone could lose her or his employment for having participated
- Ethical studies that ask individuals about their own ethics or the perceived ethics of those around them
- Program evaluation studies
- Government and/or military organization (see below: Capella Research, Military Research, and Research that Requires a Contract or Data Usage Agreement)
- List not intended to be exhaustive

Academy of Management Journals

- The Academy of Management Review (AMR)
- Academy of Management Journal (AMJ)
- Academy of Management Learning and Education (AMLE)
- The Academy of Management Perspectives (AMP)
- The Academy of Management Annals
Management Instrument Examples


MANAGEMENT EDUCATION SPECIALIZATION

**Guidelines**

The Management Education specialization prepares doctoral learners to teach business management courses at the postsecondary level. This specialization combines advanced business knowledge and skills with management education literature analysis, teaching practice, learning and instructional design, learning theory and educational processes, classroom assessment, and course design and development. The Management Education specialization offers a terminal degree option for learners who want to excel in postsecondary business management instruction either in a university or corporate environment, allowing them to develop solid research skills and culminating in a dissertation that advances the body of knowledge of management education. Learners in the Management Education specialization may also enroll, concurrently, in the School of Education’s Post-Masters Certificate in College Teaching.

Management Education is multi-disciplinary; learners take courses in the School of Business and School of Education. The goal of Management Education is to educate adults in business—either in corporate or university settings—and teach the Business core curriculum. Since School of Business confers the degree, Management Education dissertations must be framed in business and management theories and not immersed in traditional educational studies, such as program evaluation or learner achievement.

**Theoretical Perspectives**

- Andragogy
- Constructivism
- Control theory
- Critical theory
- Institutional theory
- Knowledge-Based theory
- Mental Models theory
- Organizational Theories
- Pedagogy as adapted for adults
- Pragmatism
- Role theory
- Social Cognitive theory
- Social Constructivism
- Social Exchange theory
- Social Learning theory
- Social Network theory
- Symbolic Interaction

**Management Education Topic Areas**

Multi-generational workforce learning styles, the infusion and/or adoption of technology within business curricula, using evidence based management content in curricula, student centered models in business curricula, learning style diversity and the implications upon organizational culture, the theoretical investigation of andragogy within adult learning environments, predictor variables of job performance and implications for business educators. List not intended to be all all-inclusive.

**Management Education Unapproved Topic Areas include**

How to teach, psychology of learning, curriculum development, program evaluations (what works and what doesn’t from an instructional standpoint), etc.; all School of Education
topics; experimental designs in pre- and post-learning assessments; primary or secondary educational environments. List not intended to be all all-inclusive.

**Management Education Journals**

- Adult Education Quarterly: A Journal of Research and Theory
- Academy of Management Learning and Education
- American Journal of Business Education (online)
- International Journal of Education Management
- Journal of Business Ethics Education
- Journal of Distance Education
- Journal of Education for Business
- Journal of Management Education

See note above about the Academy of Management and its benefits. There is a Division for Management Education.

**Management Education Instrument Examples**


ACCOUNTING SPECIALIZATION

Guidelines
The PhD in Business Management specialization in Accounting is designed for accounting faculty, accounting professionals such as certified public accountants and certified and chartered management accountants, or those with a Master of Accountancy or equivalent degree. The specialization provides learners with the opportunity to develop advanced knowledge of accounting research, practice, and education and strengthens the skills needed to think critically about, and formulate appropriate solutions to, accounting problems in the global era. Throughout the specialization, learners evaluate advanced theoretical constructs, standards, and techniques of accounting practice; analyze strategic implications of accounting issues; and conduct scholarly research that contributes to the field of accounting. Successful completion of this specialization prepares learners to pursue advancement in accounting research, practice, teaching, management, or consulting.

The PhD Business Management Accounting program faculty suggest learners use this information as guidelines. If your research plans include theories and topics other than those listed below or research methods other than those listed in the current SoBT PhD Dissertation Guidebook, you are encouraged to discuss your research plans with your mentor and then gain topic approval (Milestone 2) by the Faculty Chair for Accounting.

Theoretical Perspectives
- Corporate tax reform theory
- Entity theory
- Political theory of corporate taxation
- Progressive income tax theory
- Perkins theory of taxation
- Static trade-off theory
- Theory of cost accounting
- Auditing theory

Accounting Topic Areas
- Fraud in corporate finance
- Financial accounting
- Cost Accounting
- Tax consequences on shareholders wealth
- Working capital management
- Ethics in accounting and finance
- GAAP vs. IFRS
- Managerial accounting
- International accounting
- Cash management
- Ethics in corporate accounting
- Multinational accounting and finance
- Public and non-profit accounting and finance

Accounting Journals
- Auditing: A Journal of Practice & Theory
- Accounting Journal
• Journal of Accountancy
• Journal of Accounting Research
• The CPA Journal
• New Accountant
• Journal of Forensic Accounting
• International Journal of Accounting
FINANCE SPECIALIZATION

Guidelines

The PhD Finance specialization provides learners with advanced knowledge of finance theory and practice and seeks to enable learners to identify and solve finance problems within financial systems and institutions. The curriculum emphasizes current and emerging theory in financial systems and institutions management, the economic foundation of financial systems and institutions, financial reporting, investments and portfolio management, and derivatives and commodities. Successful completion of this specialization prepares learners to lead, consult, or teach in the area of finance.

The PhD Business Management Finance Specialization program faculty suggest learners use this information as guidelines. If your research plans include theories and topics other than those listed below or research methods other than those listed in the current SoBT PhD Dissertation Guidebook, you are encouraged to discuss your research plans with your mentor and then gain topic approval (Milestone 2) by the Faculty Chair for Finance.

Theoretical Perspectives

- Theorem of capital-structure irrelevance (Modigliani & Miller)
- Tradeoff theory of leverage (Modigliani & Miller)
- Trade-off and Pecking Order Theories of Debt (Murray & Vidhan)
- Capital asset pricing model
- Capital budgeting model (Sullivan & Sheffrin)
- Working capital management theory (Sagan)
- Modern portfolio theory (Markowitz)

Finance Topic Areas

- Investment and financing decisions
- Optimal capital structure with taxation
- Bankruptcy costs
- Agency theory and ownership structure
- Dividend puzzle
- Information and signaling hypothesis
- Stockholders and bondholders conflict
- Corporate leasing policy
- Pricing of debt
- Options pricing analysis
- Investment banking and capital acquisition
- IPOs underpriced or overpriced
- Bonds and yield curve
- Mergers and acquisitions
- Corporate control
- CAPM model
- Options pricing and strategies
- Capital budgeting techniques
- Real estate market
- 2008 failure of financial institutions
- Mortgage market
- Insurance market
Commercial papers
Foreign exchange market
Risk factors in capital markets

**Finance Journals**
- Review of Financial Studies
- Journal of Finance
- Journal of Financial Economics
- Journal Accounting & Economics
- Accounting: Organizations and Society
- Journal of Banking and Finance
- Accounting Review
- Journal of Accounting Research
- IMF Economic Review
- Review of Accounting Studies

**Finance Instrument Examples**


HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (HRM) SPECIALIZATION

Guidelines

The PhD Human Resource Management specialization focuses on knowledge and skills needed to teach, consult, lead, practice, and conduct research in the field of human resource management. Learners evaluate multidisciplinary theories and human resource management strategies and practices for creating flexible and innovative settings in the 21st century’s global workplace. The specialization focuses on key issues related to attracting, developing, and retaining a global workforce. The course work addresses diverse demographic and cultural perspectives, the influence of new technologies on the workplace, and the impact of the dynamic external work environment on human resource management practices.

The HRM Specialization for the PhD Business Management (and PhD Organization and Management) program faculty suggests learners use this information as guidelines If your research plans include theories and topics other than those listed below or research methods other than those listed in the current SoBT PhD Dissertation Guidebook, you are encouraged to discuss your research plans with your mentor and then gain topic approval (Milestone 2) by the Faculty Chair for HRM.

Theoretical Perspectives

- Adult learning (Malcolm Knowles theory)
- Agency theory
- Best fit/contingency model
- Corporate branding
- E-recruiting
- Exchange theory
- Expectancy theory
- Guest’s model of HRM (1989, 1997)
- HC Bridge
- High commitment management model
- High involvement management model
- High performance management (high performance working) model
- High performance work systems
- Human Resource analytics (Fitz-Ens HCM:21 Model)
- Human Resource decision science (Talentship)
- Human capital theory
- Hyper-connectivity
- Institutional theory
- Intellectual property
- Intrinsic/Extrinsic motivation
- Knowledge Program management office approach to portfolio management
- Leadership skills in project management
- Knowledge worker/capital
- LAMP model
- Multi-generational workforce
- Multiculturalism
- National culture theory (Hofstede)
• Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)
• Organizational culture (Schein Model)
• Organizational theory
• Patterson’s model of HRM
• Performance measurement
• Reinforcement theory
• Self-Directed teams
• Social Media
  o Social networking legal issues
  o Social networking sites
  o Storey’s hard and soft HRM (1989)
  o Strategic human resource management theory
  o Succession planning
  o Systems thinking
  o Virtual teams

**Human Resource Management Topic Areas**

• 2020 Workplace
• Adult learning (Multiple theories)
• Agency theory
• Best fit/contingency model
• Branding
• Corporate branding
• Corporate Social Networks
• Recruitment and Selection
• E-recruiting
• Employer of choice
• Ethics and Ethical Behaviors
• Exchange theory
• Expectancy theory
• Guest’s model of HRM (1989, 1997)
• HC Bridge
• High commitment management model
• High involvement management model
• High performance management (high performance working) model
• High performance work systems
• Human Resource analytics (Fitz Ens HCM: 21 Model)
• Human Resource decision science (Talentship)
• HRIS adoption
• Human Resource analytics
• Human capital theory
• Hyper-connectivity
• Institutional theory
• Intellectual property
• Job satisfaction
• Johnson’s best practice model (2000)
• Knowledge worker/capital
• LAMP model
SOBT TOPIC AREAS

- MADs (Mergers, acquisitions & downsizing)
- Motivational Theories (process and content)
- Multi-generational workforce
- Multiculturalism
- National culture theory (Hofstede)
- Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)
- Organizational culture (Schein Model)
- Organizational theory
- Patterson’s model of HRM
- Passive candidates
- Performance measurement
- Reinforcement theory
- Self-Directed teams
- Social contracts
- Social Media
- Social Media Literacy
- Social networking legal issues
- Social networking sites
- Social Recruiting
- Storey’s hard and soft HRM (1989)
- Strategic human resource management theory
- Succession planning
- Systems thinking
- Talentship
- Talent Management
- Training and Development
- Turnover
- Virtual teams
- Web based HR
- Work/Life Issues
- Web-based HR
- Work/Life balance

Human Resource Management Journals

- Organization Science
- Personnel Psychology
- International Organization
- Journal of Human Resources
- Journal of Service Research
- Journal of Organizational Behavior
- Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes
- Research in Organizational Behavior
- Information and Organization
- Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology

Human Resource Management Instrument Examples


LEADERSHIP SPECIALIZATION

Guidelines

The PhD Leadership specialization emphasizes multi-disciplinary scholarly literature and emerging trends in the leadership field, advancing the theory or practice of leadership to meet the challenges of leading in a dynamic global business environment. The specialization helps learners develop leadership qualities that support integrating multiple perspectives by building the skills in systems thinking, critical thinking, creative thinking, reflective thinking, and statistical thinking that enable leaders to build productive relationships and strengthen an organization’s viability. The specialization focuses on helping leaders become aware of and shift their beliefs and behaviors as leaders enabling them to more effectively influence and impact the organization and its external environment.

The PhD Business Management (and PhD Organization and Management) program Leadership specialization faculty suggests learners use this information as guidelines. If your research plans include theories and topics other than those listed below or research methods other than those listed in the current SoBT PhD Dissertation Guidebook, you are encouraged to discuss your research plans with your mentor and then gain topic approval (Milestone 2) by the Faculty Chair for Leadership.

Theoretical Perspectives

- Leadership behaviors
- Full range leadership model (includes transformational and transactional Leadership)
- Authentic leadership
- Relational leadership
- Servant leadership
- Shared leadership
- Value-based leadership
- Trait-based leadership theories
- Contingency theories
- Hersey-Blanchard situational leadership theory
- House’s path-goal theory
- Fielder’s contingency model
- Leadership process model
- Contextual Leadership
  - Team leadership
  - Intergroup leadership
- Strategic leadership
  - Executive leadership behavior theories
  - Executive leadership trait theories
- Women and Leadership
  - Glass ceiling
  - Glass cliff
  - Labyrinth
- Global leadership theories

Leadership Topic Areas

The following are a general list of topics that are appropriate in the area of Leadership. Not all potential topics are included here, so please work with your mentor to select a more detailed topic.
SOBT TOPIC AREAS

- Leadership and spirituality
- Cognitive processes in leadership
- Leading adaptation and innovation
- Leadership and organizational culture
- Leadership and organizational learning
- Leaders impact on followers
- Leaders stress and well-being
- Decision making
- How situations influence good leadership
- Creativity
- Innovation
- Social responsibility and ethics
- Leading groups and teams (includes virtual)
- Employee turnover, absenteeism, and withdrawal
- Communication (individual, team, and organization)
- Group and team processes
- Job design, roles, and tasks
- Leadership behaviors and styles
  - Authentic Leadership
  - Servant Leadership
  - Full Range Leadership Model
  - Leader-Member Exchange
  - Other models with sound theory and empirical support
- Leadership impact on followers
  - Commitment
  - Motivation
  - Well-being
  - Performance
- Organizational development and change
- Political dynamics
- Corporate social responsibility
- Leadership ethics

Leadership Journals

- Academy of Management Journal
- Academy of Management Review
- Leadership Quarterly
- Leadership Journal
- Journal of Leadership Studies

Leadership Instrument Examples


Gorman, M. F. (2011). *A case study in effectively bridging the business skills gap for the information technology professional* Taylor & Francis Ltd. doi:10.1080/0883232100366363348


INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT SPECIALIZATION

Guidelines

The PhD in Business Management with a specialization in Information Technology Management is designed for mid- and senior-level Information Technology professionals and practicing Information Technology executives, individuals with senior business management experience, or those with a master's degree in a related field. The specialization focuses on emerging trends, models, technological influences, and multidisciplinary research to advance the theory and practice of leading Information Technology strategic planning and management in complex environments, including diverse organizational and global cultural contexts. Learners evaluate collaborative relationships among Information Technology and other leaders in the organization in pursuit of organizational goals; strategies for fostering an organizational culture that integrates technological innovation within the context of changing business needs; and the ethical and legal issues that influence the theory and practice of Information Technology management. The specialization prepares learners to lead, consult, or teach in the field of Information Technology management from an informed, strategic viewpoint, creating practical solutions to emerging real-world problems encountered as organizations compete in the global marketplace.

The process of identifying a topic for your dissertation study begins with a review of the peer reviewed literature to establish either a gap in the knowledge base, a problem requiring a resolution, or a new model needed to support innovative work in the field. This generally requires corroborative evidence from a number of different articles and authors from peer reviewed journals. Once you have decided on a topic, then you must review the literature, including other dissertations, in greater detail to determine the key foundational theories or models, often based in fields such as business, psychology, or education, that address the knowledge gap or problem or model you intend to study.

Since Information Technology is a recent emerging discipline and is cross-functional in nature, Information Technology researchers not only use technology specific theories but also often borrow theories from other reference disciplines to study Information Technology problems. The list below provides a sample of common theories encountered in recent Capella dissertations – while not exhaustive, it does include a number of theories related to Information Technology, Business, Social/Psychology/Behavioral fields that may be relevant to your particular study.

Theoretical Perspectives

- Absorptive capacity theory
- Agency theory
- Competitive strategy (Porter)
- Contingency theory
- Dynamic capabilities
- Equity theory
- Game theory
- Institutional theory
- Knowledge-based theory of the firm
- Portfolio theory

Information Technology Management Topic Areas

Hot Topics
• Using big data to drive business decisions
• Big data in open government
• Managing a diverse Information Technology workforce in a diverse Information Technology environment
• Managing risks in a technology centric business environment
• Service Science, management and engineering (SSME)
• Information technology service science

Other Topics
• Aligning Information Technology and business goals
• Information Technology -enabled process improvement
• Business continuity/risk management
• Improving user satisfaction
• Controlling Information Technology cost
• Information Technology staff development
• Information Technology governance
• Revenue-generating services/products
• Measuring and communicating Information Technology value
• Improving project management discipline
• Data privacy
• Regulatory compliance
• Scaling Information Technology globally
• Development of Information Technology -based services
• The management of Information Technology resources
• The use, impact, and economics of Information Technology with managerial, organizational, and societal implications
• Professional issues affecting the information systems field

Information Technology Management Journals
• Academy of Management Journal
• Association of Computer Machinery Transactions
• Communications of the Association of Computer Machinery
• Communications of the Association of Information Systems
• Data Base Journal
• Decision Sciences Journal
• Decision Support Systems
• European Journal of Information Systems
• IEEE Computer Journal
• IEEE Transactions Journal
• IEEE Transactions on Software Engineering
• Information and Management Journal
• Information and Software Technology
• Information Systems Journal
• International Journal of Information Technology and Management
• Journal of Information Systems Research
• Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology
• Journal of Computer Information Systems
• Journal of Enterprise Transformation
• Journal of Healthcare Information Management
• Journal of Information Technology
• International Journal of Information Technology and Decision Making
• Journal of Information Technology Research
SOBT TOPIC AREAS

- Journal of MIS
- Journal of Strategic IS
- Journal of Systems Engineering
- Management Science
- MIS Quarterly
- Organization Science
- Sloan Management Review
- Journal of Service Science
- Journal of Service Science and Management
- International Journal of Service Science, Management, Engineering, and Technology
- International Journal of Services Sciences

**Information Technology Instrument Examples**

Quantitative studies in Information Technology dissertation research require measures supported by peer-reviewed evidence of validity and reliability. The following instruments serve as examples of valid and reliable measures found in the Information Technology literature. Consult a Capella Librarian for assistance finding other instruments.


**Handbooks of Instruments**

- Development of an Instrument to Measure the Perceptions of Adopting an Information Technology Innovation
- Handbook of Information Technology in Organizations and Electronic Markets
- Handbook of Management Scales/Information and communication technologies implementation
- Handbook of Management Scales/Information technology experience
- The Handbook of Management Scales in its index lists several Information Technology related items
STRATEGY AND INNOVATION SPECIALIZATION

Guidelines

The Strategy and Innovation Specialization for the PhD Business Management (and PhD Organization and Management) program faculty suggests learners use this information as guidelines. If your research plans include theories and topics other than those listed below or research methods other than those listed in the current SoBT PhD Dissertation Guidebook, you are encouraged to discuss your research plans with your mentor and then gain topic approval (Milestone 2) by the Faculty Chair for Strategy and Innovation.

The Strategy and Innovation specialization provides learners with a theoretical and practical orientation to the strategies organizations use to create and sustain disruptive innovations and compete in today’s business environment. The curriculum emphasizes evidence-based practices for analyzing global trends and competitive information, seeking innovation opportunities, developing breakthrough strategies, and creating an organizational environment that enables innovation and change. Learners explore trend analysis and foresight planning; processes for identifying risks and innovation opportunities; and strategies for building continued organizational innovation, sustainability, and adaptation. Successful completion of this specialization prepares learners to lead, consult, or teach in the area of organizational strategy.

Theoretical Perspectives

- Innovation models linked to competitive growth strategy (e.g. business model; disruptive; open; blue ocean; fast 2nd)
- Strategic analysis: competitive strategy analytical models
- Scenario development and trend evaluation
- Strategic risk management and decision structures
- Sustainable competitive and innovation strategy and corporate social responsibility
- Leadership and strategy development and execution
- Models of leverage applied to growth strategy
- Measuring competitive strategy execution

Strategy and Innovation Topic Areas

The following are a general list of topics that are appropriate in the Strategy and Innovation field. Not all potential topics are included here, so please work with your mentor to select a more detailed topic

- Competitive advantage
- Develop industry competitive analysis
- Analyze tools, techniques and data sources to plan, monitor and evaluate the development of foresight, strategic planning and forecasting processes
- Analyze decision making processes for strategic foresight and effective analysis trends
- Evaluate the impact of strategy on external and internal initiatives
- Strategic risk management
- Leaders and strategy
- Assess models for creating strategic opportunities
- Collaborative creation of strategic opportunities
- Development of alternative future scenarios
- Use a systems thinking approach to create processes for mitigating the limitations of strategic assumptions in strategy development
- Analyze industry competition in light of theories of discontinuous change
SOBT TOPIC AREAS

- Evaluate theories and models of disruptive, value, business model, and open innovation
- Assess organizational elements of their impact on innovation strategy
- Evaluate organizational processes and systems that support/inhibit change and innovation
- Design an innovation strategy to build a leading organization, considering the impacts of disruptive and enabling technologies
- Compare models and perspectives on strategic innovation at a global level
- Select appropriate models to promote innovation for the industry and organization
- Compare organizational design models and systems that drive innovation including external networks, alliances, and joint ventures
- Apply organization design models to assess an organization’s innovation competencies, capabilities, and deficiencies
- Create an innovation strategy that drives dynamics change, learning and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
- Integrate competitive and innovation strategy with supporting processes and essential metrics and decision making analytics

Strategy and Innovation Journals

- Academy of Strategic Management Journal
- Business Strategy and the Environment
- Global Competitiveness
- International Journal of Innovation Management
- Journal of Brand Management
- Journal of Business Ethics
- Journal of Business Strategy
- Journal of Entrepreneurship
- Journal of Forecasting
- Journal of Global Business & Technology
- Journal of Internet Commerce
- Journal of Knowledge Management Practices
- Journal of Management and Strategy
- Journal of Market Development & Competition
- Journal of Planning Literature
- Journal of Product Innovation Management
- Journal of Strategic Marketing
- Journal of Strategy and Management
- Long Range Planning
- Marketing Theory
- Research Technology Management
- Strategic Change
- Strategic Management Journal
- Strategy & Leadership
The PhD in Business Management with a specialization in Project Management is designed for learners with a working knowledge of project management, for example those with a Project Management Professional (PMP®) certification or at least one master's-level project management course. The specialization focuses on current and emerging methodologies, frameworks, and models; contemporary leadership theories and practices; communications approaches; social networking theories; and complexity theories for improving project and program results. Learners investigate and acquire the knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques necessary to effectively lead projects and programs in a variety of settings, and to conduct appropriate research to improve project management practices. Topics include advanced project and program management methodologies, risk management, portfolio optimization, and leadership. Successful completions of this specialization prepare learners to lead, consult, perform research, or teach in the field of project management.

**Theoretical Perspectives**
- Actor network theory
- Adaptive structuration theory
- Agency theory
- Behavioral decision theory
- Chaos theory
- Complexity theory
- Contingency theory
- Critical success factors theory
- Diffusion of innovations theory
- Organizational culture theory
- Organizational learning theory
- Portfolio theory
- Real options theory
- Resource dependency theory
- Social capital theory
- Technology acceptance model
- Theory of planned behavior
- Unified theory of acceptance and use of technology

**Project Management Topic Areas**
The following are a general list of topics that are appropriate in the Project Management field. Not all potential topics are included here, so please work with your mentor to select a more detailed topic.

**Hot Topics**
- Agile methods in project management
- Project management office approach to portfolio management
- Leadership skills in project management

**Other Topics**
- Project integration management
- Project scope management
- Project time management
- Project cost management
• Project quality management
• Project human resource management
• Project communications management
• Project risk management
• Project procurement management
• Project stakeholders management
• Program strategy alignment
• Program cycle management
• Program benefit management
• Program stakeholder engagement
• Program governance

**Project Management Journals**

• Project Management Journal
• Project Management Network
• Agile Journal
• International Journal of Project Management
• Project Decision and Risk Analysis Journal
• International Journal of Project Organization and Management (IJPOM)
• PROJECT Magazine
• NASA – Project Risk Library
MARKETING SPECIALIZATION

Guidelines

The marketing specialization is designed for doctoral learners that want to develop expertise in the concepts and theories of marketing science. The program allows learners to build knowledge through the application of tools and research. The courses in the program are structured to help learners understand the global nature of business; thus, they are built to integrate global business in marketing strategy and execution. The Scholar – Practitioner model will prepare learners to become solutions oriented professionals with a deep base in research.

Theoretical Perspectives

- Blue ocean theory
- Brand identity theory
- Cognitive dissonance theory
- Channel expansion theory
- Character theory
- Cognitive appraisal theories of emotion
- Cognitive dissonance theory
- Collective intelligence theory
- Comparative advantage theory
- Diffusion of innovations theory
- Field theory
- Gatekeeping theory
- Game theory
- Gatekeeping theory
- General theory of marketing
- Generational marketing theory
- Groupthink theory
- Implicit personality theory
- Information manipulation theory
- Market for loyalties theory
- Mass-market theory
- Media richness theory
- Media systems dependency theory
- Media theory
- Media theory of composition
- Medium theory
- Network theory
- Opponent-Process theory
- Persuasion theory
- Planned behavior theory
- Play theory
- Political marketing theory
- Post modern marketing theory
- Priming theory
- Product life cycle theory
- Prospect theory
- Repeat-buying theory
- Retail gravitation theory
- Relationship marketing theory
- Services marketing theory
• Situational crisis communications theory
• Social cognitive theory
• Social exchange theory
• Social identity theory
• Social impact theory
• Social learning theory
• Social marketing theory
• Social network theory
• Social penetration theory
• Social presence theory
• Strategic contingencies theory
• Theory of planned behavior
• Theory of constraints
• Technology acceptance model theory
• Uses and gratifications theory

Marketing Topic Areas

Relationship Marketing

• Evaluating customer Life Time Value Buying Models
• Evaluating switching costs as effective barriers to customer churn
• Examining consumer motivations and expectations behind loyalty
• Evaluating Relationship marketing-traditional marketing
• Product quality affect on customer loyalty
• Developing barriers to switching strategies
• Evaluating Customer loyalty in online environments
• Market Segmentation
• Marketing research
• Customer Relationship Marketing

Branding

• Examining the relationship between perceived risk and brand equity
• Understanding a company’s brand value.
• Building Brand Equity
• Importance of tangible and intangible brand values across product types
• Transferring brand image between industries.
• How does unethical behavior affect brand image?
• How do firms use corporate social responsibility to build brand equity
• Using social media to build equity

Direct Marketing

• Do customers respond differently to short- and long-term offers
• Evaluating sales strategies
• Nationality (accents) of telemarketers influence on customer response
• Do consumers know how to protect themselves from unscrupulous direct marketing tactics?
• How does message length affect the success of direct marketing messages
• Using direct marketing to build customer relationships
• Evaluating prospecting methods in online and offline environment
• Direct Selling
SOBT TOPIC AREAS

Marketing across Cultures
- Multi-cultural Marketing
- How does language impact upon brand identity?
- How does social class influence relationship-building activities
- How do marketers take into account regional differences in “national” culture
- How does individualism-collectivism influence sales
- Comparative studies between national cultures in marketing
- Using national culture to help them promote major exports
- Influence of demographic shifts

Marketing and Consumer Psychology
- Consumer motivations and marketing messaging
- Antecedents of word-of-mouth communications
- Word-of-mouth communication turns negative
- How does gender effect information processing among consumers
- What role does learning play among functional online advertisements?
- The importance of beliefs and attitudes across low and high involvement products

Marketing Online
- Customizing and personalizing products
- How can firms successfully combine online and offline shopping features
- Product attributes most valued by consumers in search
- Consumer reaction to brand alliances online

Mobile Marketing
- Conveying brand image in a mobile marketing environment
- Mobile marketing techniques
- What do customers want from mobile marketing messages
- Location influence mobile marketing communications
- Advantages and disadvantages of push and pull mobile marketing
- Mobile marketing as a viral marketing tool
- Applying customer relationship management (CRM) in a mobile marketing environment
- Examining the 4Ps (Price, Product, Promotion, Place) of marketing mix
- Services Marketing
- Marketing and Social Networks
- Marketing Ethics
- Services Marketing

Marketing Journals
- Journal of Marketing
- Journal of Marketing Theory
- Journal of Marketing Research
- Journal of Consumer Research
- Marketing Science
- Journal of Retailing
- Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science
- Management Science
PHD PROGRAM IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Program Guidelines

The doctoral program in Information Technology provides learners with a deep understanding of Information Technology theory, research, and practice. The curriculum focuses on information technology, Information Technology education, Information Assurance and security and management of Information Technology projects. In addition, core courses will equip learners with a strong global, interdisciplinary and sociotechnical perspective. Beyond the core curriculum, learners gain advanced knowledge and skills in research design and application. Successful completion of the PhD in Information Technology degree program prepares learners to lead, consult, or teach in the field of Information technology with a theoretical and pragmatic perspective, creating practical solutions to real-world problems.

The PhD in Information Technology program faculty suggest learners use this information as guidelines. If your research plans include theories and topics other than those listed below or research methods other than those listed in the current SoBT PhD Dissertation Guidebook, you are encouraged to discuss your research plans with your mentor and then gain topic approval (Milestone 2) from the Faculty Chair for the PhD in Information Technology program.

Information Technology General Specialization

Guidelines

Learners in the doctoral General Information Technology specialization may select courses from one or more specializations, provided that they meet all general specialization requirements and any course prerequisites. Learners are expected to choose electives that provide a coherent foundation for research in one or more areas of information technology. Successfully completing the General Information Technology specialization prepares learners to lead, consult, or teach in the field of Information Technology.

Theoretical Perspectives

Information Technology is a hybrid discipline and borrows heavily from many reference disciplines such as Psychology, Organization Behavior, Economics, Operation Research, Electrical Engineering, and Computer Science. (Capella does not currently support the latter two categories.).

The process of identifying a topic for your dissertation study begins with a review of the peer-reviewed literature to establish either a gap in the knowledge base, a problem requiring a resolution, or a new model needed to support innovative work in the field. This generally requires corroborative evidence from a number of different articles and authors from peer-reviewed journals. Once you have decided on a topic, then you must review the literature, including other dissertations, in greater detail to determine the key foundational theories or models, often based in fields such as business, psychology, or education, that address the knowledge gap or problem or model you intend to study.

Since Information Technology is a recently emerging discipline and is cross-functional in nature, Information Technology researchers not only use technology specific theories but also often borrow theories from other reference disciplines to study Information Technology problems. The list below provides a sample of common theories encountered in recent Capella dissertations. While not exhaustive, it does include a
number of theories related to Information Technology, Business, Social/Psychology/Behavioral fields that may be relevant to your particular study.

**Technology Related**
- Boundary object theory
- Chaos theory
- Complexity theory
- Critical success factors theory
- Diffusion of innovations theory
- General systems theory
- Information processing theory
- International information systems theory
- Media richness theory
- Media synchronicity theory
- Process virtualization theory
- Task-technology fit
- Technology acceptance model
- Technology dominance theory
- Unified theory of acceptance and use of technology
- Work systems theory

**Social/Psychology/Behavioral Related**
- Actor network theory
- Adaptive structuration theory
- Administrative behavior, theory of
- Behavioral decision theory
- Cognitive dissonance theory
- Cognitive fit theory
- Cognitive load theory
- Critical social theory
- Expectation confirmation theory
- Flow theory
- Illusion of control
- Keller's motivational model
- Organizational learning theory
- Social cognitive theory
- Social exchange theory
- Social learning theory
- Social network theory
- Theory of planned behavior
- Theory of reasoned action
- Transactive memory theory
- Yield shift theory of satisfaction

**Business/Economics Related**
- Absorptive capacity theory
- Agency theory
- Competitive strategy (Porter)
- Contingency theory
- Dynamic capabilities
- Equity theory
- Game theory
• Institutional theory
• Knowledge-based theory of the firm
• Portfolio theory

General Topic Areas

Hot Topics
• Corporate social networking
• Information Technology infrastructure for Big Data

Other Topics
• Mobile computing
• Business intelligence/analytics
• Cloud computing
• Big data
• Data solutions
• Customer engagement/social media

Information Technology Journals
• Communications of the Association for Computing Machinery
• Decision Support Systems journal
• IEEE Transactions
• Journal of Decision Sciences
• Journal of Information Systems Research
• Journal of Management Information Systems
• Journal of Management Science
• Management Information Systems Quarterly
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROJECT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIZATION

Guidelines
The PhD in IT with a Project Management specialization offers a terminal degree option for information technology project management professionals and Information Technology professionals who have a master’s degree in technology or a related field. Specialization topics include project and program management, risk management, project governance, and portfolio optimization. This specialization provides learners with advanced research, scholarly writing, and Information Technology project management skills, and culminates in a dissertation that advances the body of Information Technology project management knowledge. Upon successful completion of this specialization, learners are prepared to pursue careers as Information Technology project management consultants, managers, or educators.

The process of identifying a topic for your dissertation study begins with a review of the peer-reviewed literature to establish either a gap in the knowledge base, a problem requiring a resolution, or a new model needed to support innovative work in the field. This generally requires corroborative evidence from a number of different articles and authors from peer-reviewed journals. Once you have decided on a topic, then you must review the literature, including other dissertations, in greater detail to determine the key foundational theories or models, often based in fields such as business, psychology, or education, that address the knowledge gap or problem or model you intend to study.

Since Information Technology is a recent emerging discipline and is cross-functional in nature, Information Technology researchers not only use technology specific theories but also often borrow theories from other reference disciplines to study Information Technology problems. The list below provides a sample of common theories encountered in recent Capella dissertations. While not exhaustive, it does include a number of theories related to Information Technology, Business, Social/Psychology/Behavioral fields that may be relevant to your particular study.

Theoretical Perspectives
- Actor network theory
- *Adaptive structuration theory
- *Agency theory
- Behavioral decision theory
- Chaos theory
- *Complexity theory
- *Contingency theory
- *Critical success factors theory
- Diffusion of innovations theory
- Organizational culture theory
- Organizational learning theory
- *Portfolio theory
- Real options theory
- Resource dependency theory
- Social capital theory
- *Technology acceptance model
- Theory of planned behavior
- *Unified theory of acceptance and use of technology
Project Management Topic Areas

The following are a general list of topics that are appropriate in the Project Management field. Not all potential topics are included here, so please work with your mentor to select a more detailed topic.

Hot Topics
- Agile methods in project management
- Program management office approach to portfolio management
- Leadership skills in project management

Other Topics
- Project integration management
- Project scope management
- Project time management
- Project cost management
- Project quality management
- Project human resource management
- Project communications management
- Project risk management
- Project procurement management
- Project stakeholders management
- Program strategy alignment
- Program cycle management
- Program benefit management
- Program stakeholder engagement
- Program governance

Project Management Journals
- Project Management Journal
- PM Network
- Agile Journal
- International Journal of Project Management
- Project Decision and Risk Analysis Journal
- International Journal of Project Organization and Management (IJPOM)
- PROJECT Magazine
- NASA – Project Risk Library
INFORMATION ASSURANCE AND SECURITY SPECIALIZATION

Guidelines

The PhD in IT with a specialization in Information Assurance and Security offers a terminal degree option for information security professionals in the information technology field and Information Technology professionals who have a master's degree in technology or a related field.

Specialization topics include information confidentiality, integrity, and availability. This specialization provides learners with advanced research, scholarly writing, and information security skills, and culminates in a dissertation that advances the body of information security knowledge. Successful graduates of this specialization are prepared to pursue careers as information security consultants, managers, or educators.

The process of identifying a topic for your dissertation study begins with a review of the peer-reviewed literature to establish either a gap in the knowledge base, a problem requiring a resolution, or a new model needed to support innovative work in the field. This generally requires corroborative evidence from a number of different articles and authors from peer-reviewed journals. Once you have decided on a topic, then you must review the literature, including other dissertations, in greater detail to determine the key foundational theories or models, often based in fields such as business, psychology, or education, that address the knowledge gap or problem or model you intend to study.

Since Information Technology is a recently emerging discipline and is cross-functional in nature, Information Technology researchers not only use technology specific theories but also often borrow theories from other reference disciplines to study Information Technology problems. The list below provides a sample of common theories encountered in recent Capella dissertations. While not exhaustive, it does include a number of theories related to Information Technology, Business, Social/Psychology/Behavioral fields that may be relevant to your particular study.

Theoretical Perspectives

- Technology acceptance theory
- Behavioral decision theory
- Communication theory
- Unified theory of acceptance
- Psychological contract theory
- Catastrophe theory
- Information flow theory

Information Assurance and Security Topic Areas

- Access control
- Telecommunications and network security
- Information security governance and risk management
- Software development security
- Cryptography
- Security architecture and design
- Operations security
- Business continuity and disaster recovery planning
- Legal, regulations, investigations and compliance
- Physical (Environmental) security
- Forensics
SOBT TOPIC AREAS

- Hacking
- Risk management in information security
- Enterprise information systems security
- Social engineering
- Internet of Things
- Social networking / privacy
- Employee monitoring
- Cybercrime / Cyber security
- Wireless security
- Cyber law

Information Assurance and Security Journals

- ACM Transactions on Information and System Security
- Computers & Electrical Engineering
- Computers & Security
- IEEE Transactions on Information Theory
- IEEE Transactions on Software Engineering
- IEEE Transactions on Dependable and Secure Computing
- Information Management & Computer Security
- International Journal of Information Security
- Journal of Information Privacy & Security
- The Journal of Computer Information Systems
- Journal of Information Security and Applications
- JOC - Journal of Cryptology
- IEEE Security & Privacy
- International Journal of Network Security
- IEEE Transactions on Information Forensics and Security
- IMCS - Information Management & Computer Security
- Information Security Journal: A Global Perspective
The PhD IT with an Information Technology Education specialization is intended for information technology professionals who have earned a master’s degree in technology or a related field.

This specialization provides doctoral learners with advanced Information Technology knowledge and skills, and assists them in developing solid research, scholarly writing, and advanced teaching abilities. This specialization culminates in a dissertation that adds to the existing body of Information Technology knowledge and prepares learners to pursue Information Technology faculty positions in K-12 and higher education settings.

The process of identifying a topic for your dissertation study begins with a review of the peer-reviewed literature to establish either a gap in the knowledge base, a problem requiring a resolution, or a new model needed to support innovative work in the field. This generally requires corroborative evidence from a number of different articles and authors from peer-reviewed journals. Once you have decided on a topic, then you must review the literature, including other dissertations, in greater detail to determine the key foundational theories or models, often based in fields such as business, psychology, or education, that address the knowledge gap or problem or model you intend to study.

Since Information Technology is a recently emerging discipline and is cross-functional in nature, Information Technology researchers not only use technology specific theories but also often borrow theories from other reference disciplines to study Information Technology problems. The list below provides a sample of common theories encountered in recent Capella dissertations. While not exhaustive, it does include a number of theories related to Information Technology, Business, Social/Psychology/Behavioral fields that may be relevant to your particular study.

**Theoretical Perspectives**

- Cognitive load theory
- Diffusion of innovations theory
- Organizational learning theory
- Social learning theory
- Social network theory
- Technology acceptance model

**Information Technology Education Topic Areas**

- MOOC
- Using technology to enhance learning
- Using technology to support teaching and teaching administration
- Teaching of information technology
- Assessment and e-folios
- Games & simulations
- International education in information technology

**Information Technology Journals**

- ACM Journal of Educational Resources in Computing
- Communications of the ACM
SOBT TOPIC AREAS

- Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education
- IEEE Transactions on Education
- International Journal of Engineering Education
- Journal of Computing Sciences in Colleges
- Journal of Information Technology Education
- Journal of Technology and Teacher Education
- Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration
CAPELLA RESEARCH, MILITARY RESEARCH, AND RESEARCH THAT
REQUIRES A CONTRACT OR DATA USAGE AGREEMENT

Research involving military personnel and/or military records
Capella University signed a Department of Defense Addendum, which allows learners to apply for military research approval. Military research includes any research that involves use of data owned by the military or recruitment of participants affiliated with the military. Each branch of the military has a distinct permission process, and often multiple layers of permission are required. In most cases, researchers must go through a lengthy formal review process, and in some cases requests are denied. Learners should contact the IRB Office to discuss the feasibility of and process for conducting military research. Learners considering the military as a recruiting site should have a Plan B in place in the event of a denial of their request. Consult the Military Permissions Guide for additional information on navigating this process.

Research that requires a contract or data usage agreement
Capella University’s legal department must review documents requiring Capella University signature. Mentors and academic leadership are prohibited from signing these agreements without University review. Additionally, Capella University requires learners--not mentors--to sign as principal investigators on all agreements. Learners may not be able to access some data due to stringent data security and monitoring requirements. Examples of this data are the ICSPR and Institute of Educational Sciences (IES) restricted data. Learners and mentors should contact the IRB Office, whose specialists can answer questions and facilitate a review.

Research with Capella University Faculty/Staff/Learners
Capella University site permission is required in order to recruit Capella University faculty/staff/learners, use Capella University social media sites for recruitment, or to access Capella University data. This permission process is separate from IRB approval. All researchers intending to use Capella University as a research site must undergo the formal permission process. The University grants approval in limited situations only. For more information on how to request Capella University site permission review and to explore feasibility, consult the Site Permission Guidance on iGuide. Contact Dissertation Support with any questions regarding this process.

Additional Resources
Certain topics may be high risk or unfeasible. Refer to this document and review the Sensitive Topics and Vulnerable Populations on iGuide for further information on these issues. If your study is on a sensitive topic or seeks to study a vulnerable population, you should discuss with your mentor and consult with the IRB Office.