

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
TAMPA, FLORIDA**

**SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY'S
GUIDE TO THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM**



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INTRODUCTION

Mission & Goals of the School of Accountancy, Doctoral Program of Study

The doctoral program of study offered through the School of Accountancy at the University of South Florida will develop and prepare individuals for academic careers in accounting. This overall goal is accomplished through:

1. Acquisition of in-depth knowledge in an area of specialization.
2. Development of research skills that enable significant intellectual contributions to the accounting discipline's literature and field of knowledge.
3. Development of teaching skills appropriate for higher education.

The primary market for graduates of the doctoral program will be universities with accounting programs. The doctoral program will be a cohesive program that, because of its small size, offers students the opportunity to work one-on-one with faculty mentors.

Purpose of This Guide

The purpose of the School of Accountancy's Guide to the Doctoral Program is to supplement and reinforce information provided by the University of South Florida Graduate Catalog and the College of Business Handbook for Doctoral Students. However, the Guide will not answer all questions that may arise. For answers to questions not addressed in the Catalog, Handbook or Guide, students should consult the School of Accountancy's doctoral program coordinator.

Student Responsibilities

Doctoral students are responsible for knowing and complying with the policies and procedures contained in the University of South Florida Graduate Catalog, the College of Business Handbook for Doctoral Students and the School of Accountancy's Guide to the Doctoral Program. Students are also responsible for knowing about and complying with any policy updates or changes.

COMMITTEES

Program Committee

Upon being admitted to the doctoral program, the student is assigned a program committee and program advisor. The School of Accountancy (SOA) doctoral committee serves as the program committee, and the doctoral program coordinator serves as the student's advisor. It is the responsibility of the student to plan his/her course of study. Based on the student's interests and program requirements, the doctoral program coordinator will advise the student concerning his/her course of study. The doctoral committee will approve the student's course of study. Students should have a completed course of study available for committee approval by the end of the first year of program coursework.

Dissertation Committee

The following information supplements the information provided in the College of Business Handbook concerning admission to candidacy and the dissertation.

Once the student has successfully completed all required coursework, successfully completed the first-year paper requirements, successfully passed the qualifying exams (comprehensive exams), demonstrated the qualifications necessary to successfully complete degree requirements, formed a dissertation committee and completed the required paperwork, the student will be admitted to candidacy. The SOA requires that the dissertation committee consist of at least three SOA faculty members and one outside committee member. The student must ask a SOA faculty member to serve as dissertation chair (major professor).¹

In selecting a dissertation chair and committee members, the student should consider his/her research interests and the research interests of the faculty members who will be asked to serve on the committee. Committee members should be selected based on their ability to meet the student's dissertation research needs. The dissertation chair approves committee selections and the student's admission to candidacy. The dissertation committee is responsible for approving the student's dissertation topic, reading and approving the dissertation, and conducting the dissertation defense.

At the beginning of the dissertation process, the student and dissertation chair should agree on a dissertation topic that will be acceptable to the student and the dissertation committee. It is the student's responsibility to develop and complete the dissertation in a timely manner. The dissertation chair and other committee members provide valuable advice during the dissertation process. The student is expected to present a pre-proposal paper, a dissertation proposal, and a final dissertation defense. Presenting a pre-proposal paper provides the student with insight into any potential problem areas prior to the actual dissertation proposal.

¹ Students may have one dissertation chair, or two dissertation chairs (co-chairs). The subsequent discussion assumes only one dissertation chair.

PROGRAM OF STUDY

Required Coursework

Students entering the doctoral program in the SOA are expected to have, or obtain, the equivalent of a Master of Accountancy (MAcc) degree. If a student does not have a MAcc degree when admitted to the program, the additional coursework needed to obtain a MAcc will be required.

The course requirements for a doctoral degree are outlined in the College of Business Handbook and the accompanying course scheduling grid (see pages 6 and 7). Generally, a student is expected to complete all required coursework within two years. Each student is to submit a completed coursework plan to the SOA doctoral program committee by the end of the student's first year of study. It is expected that the support field classes will relate to the student's chosen specialty area. Requests for changes to an approved coursework plan must be approved by the SOA doctoral program coordinator (acting on behalf of the SOA doctoral program committee) prior to taking alternative courses. The need to change an approved plan may arise because of scheduling changes by colleges and departments, requiring a student to substitute one elective course for another or one support field course for another.

School of Accountancy Seminar Schedule

All SOA doctoral seminars are 7000 level courses. Currently, the SOA provides the five required doctoral seminars on the following schedule:

Accounting information systems seminar	spring semester of even numbered years
Auditing seminar	fall semester of odd numbered years
Experimental design seminar	spring semester of odd numbered years
Financial accounting seminar	spring semester of odd numbered years
Management accounting seminar	fall semester of even numbered years

Tips for Planning Coursework

Many doctoral seminars are only offered every other year. Additionally, very few seminars or graduate level courses are available during the summer semester. As a result, students must plan carefully to ensure that they are able to fulfill the coursework requirements within a two-year time period. While the following tips will not guarantee a perfect coursework plan, the information is intended to be helpful:

1. Decide your research interests and specialty area early in the program.
2. Based on your interests, talk with the SOA doctoral program coordinator and other professors about courses they believe would be helpful.
3. Talk with Ph.D. students in the SOA and other areas about the courses they have taken and the courses they suggest.
4. Use old course schedules and contact the departments concerning when classes and seminars likely will be scheduled.

5. While Ph.D. students will not have problems enrolling in doctoral seminars within the College of Business, students should register as early as possible to ensure enrollment in 6000 level College of Business courses or courses outside the college.
6. Students with assistantships are to complete a minimum of nine credit hours each semester during the academic year and six credit hours during the summer.

First Year Paper Requirement

In the spring semester of a PhD student's first year in the program, the student will take either the Accounting Information Systems Seminar or the Experimental Design Seminar. As part of the seminar, a research proposal will be required. The research proposal from the spring seminar or another seminar (with the seminar instructor's approval) will become the student's first year paper project. The following will be required as a part of the first year paper project.

1. The student must complete the study begun in the Accounting Information Systems Seminar, the Experimental Design Seminar, or other seminar and write a working paper for the study during the student's first summer in the Ph.D. program.
2. Students will present their first year paper at a SOA workshop during the fall semester of their second year.
 - Students failing to present during the fall semester, will not receive any funding to attend the following AAA annual meeting.
 - Students who have their first year paper accepted for presentation at an AAA mid-year meeting will receive additional funding to attend the annual AAA meeting.
 - Students will be unable to take comprehensive exams until the first year paper has been completed and presented.
3. Students are encouraged to submit the first year paper for publication.

Comprehensive Exams

When a student has successfully completed coursework requirements and the first-year paper requirements, comprehensive exams are scheduled. The comprehensive exams assess a student's ability to analyze and synthesize research in accounting and related fields. Additionally, the exams assess a student's proficiency in the use of research methods and statistical procedures to answer empirical research questions.

Comprehensive exams are generally scheduled early in the fall semester of a student's third year in the Ph.D. program. The comprehensive exam consists of a written and an oral component. The written exam is a two-day event. Students have eight hours on each of the days to write the examination. Questions on the first day explore the student's broad-based knowledge and include questions from the four subject area accounting seminars: accounting information systems, auditing, financial accounting, and managerial accounting. Questions on the second day focus on the student's specialty area and research methods. Seminar professors prepare the questions for the written comprehensive examination. In addition to the questions provided by the SOA seminar professors, exam questions may be prepared by professors from the student's designated support area.

Each answer is graded by two evaluators. The final grade for an answer is the average of the two evaluators' scores. Students are expected to pass each question with an average score of 2 on a 0-4 point scale. Any student who fails one question may still pass the written component if: 1) the failing grade is not in the student's specialty area of study, 2) the extent of the failing grade is not severe, and 3) sufficient strengths are evidenced in the remaining questions. Although a student can achieve a minimum passing score for any individual question, we expect the student's overall performance to be above a minimal level. Marginal overall performance will be evaluated by the doctoral program committee to decide whether a passing or failing indication on the written component of the exam is appropriate.

If the student passes the written component, the oral component is scheduled. The oral comprehensive examination generally takes place within two weeks of the date on which the SOA doctoral program coordinator informs the student that he or she has passed the written comprehensive examination. Each student will schedule the oral examination with the SOA doctoral program coordinator. The SOA doctoral program coordinator will discuss the oral examination process and expectations with the student.

The oral examination committee shall consist of at least two members of the SOA doctoral program committee and may include additional members who represent either the student's specialty area of study, an area on which the student performed poorly on the written comprehensive examination, or both.

Program Committee

Name	Signature	Date

Ph.D. coordinator: _____

Student: _____

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Assistantships

Students with graduate assistantships have accepted 12-month appointments with a 20-hour per week work commitment. The work commitment is divided between teaching and research. In the SOA the division is as follows:

Year in Program	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Summer Semester
1 st	20 hours research	1 section of mass lecture 10 hours research	20 hours of teaching and/or research
2 nd through 4 th	Teaching and research assignments will be made based on the needs of the SOA and the research faculty. Students will be required to teach five classes during this period.		

Students receiving a University Graduate Fellowship will have their first teaching assignment the second year of the program. The remainder of the schedule will be unchanged.

The research assignments will be made by the SOA doctoral program coordinator each fall. Unless students are subsequently reassigned, the research assignment is good for one year. Students are reminded that the research assignment extends through the summer. Research assignments are intended to provide the student with an opportunity to learn how to conduct research. Depending on the professor, students may have the opportunity to learn how to conduct a literature review, collect and/or analyze data, design and/or conduct experiments, retrieve data from archival data sources, etc.

The student's first teaching assignment will generally have the student serving as a teaching assistant to the principles of financial accounting or principles of managerial accounting mass lecture instructor. Subsequently, students will be responsible for their own class. The scheduling of teaching assignments is made by the director of the SOA.

Fellowships

Students receiving fellowships, such as the University Graduate Fellowship (one year only) or the McKnight Foundation Fellowship are not required to serve as research assistants. However, because a student's development of research skills is a part of the annual performance evaluation, the student is **strongly** encouraged to identify a professor for whom he/she would like to work. If the professor is available, the student's request will be honored. Working as a research assistant provides the student with valuable experience that will not be available through coursework.

Regardless of the funding source, the SOA is committed to ensuring that all students obtain teaching experience while in the doctoral program. Therefore, to complete the program, fellowship students are required to commit to a teaching schedule.

Tuition Waivers

To be eligible for tuition waivers, a graduate student must, at a minimum hold a graduate assistantship appointment or be the recipient of a graduate fellowship. All graduate assistants should register for at least nine hours during each semester of the academic year and six hours in the summer. If a graduate student reduces his or her registration below the required minimum or does not meet employment criteria, the tuition waiver can be revoked. Students should not drop or withdraw from coursework that may reduce their hours below the requirements without the written permission of the SOA doctoral program coordinator.

School of Accountancy Travel Funds

The SOA will annually fund up to \$750 in approved doctoral student travel expense. Currently, travel funding is available for paper presentations at professional conferences, employment interviewing at professional meetings, and/or attending programs relevant to doctoral students offered in conjunction with an American Accounting Association annual or midyear meeting. In approving travel requests related to the midyear meeting the doctoral program coordinator will consider the relevance of the meeting's content to the student's field of interest, and the student's progress in the program. To receive funding for travel the student must complete a travel request and have it approved by the doctoral program coordinator and the chair of the faculty fund committee. **Approval must be obtained in advance of travel.** This policy is subject to modification.

College of Business Gaiennie Grants

Gaiennie grant funding is available to help defray travel costs for doctoral students presenting papers and the costs incurred in completing a dissertation. Additionally, students may use Gaiennie funding for travel to a conference for job interview purposes. Students are referred to the COB Handbook for Doctoral Students or the program Web-site for information on Gaiennie funding and application procedures. Travel fund requests must be approved in advance. Requests for Gaiennie funding are to be submitted first to the SOA doctoral program coordinator for approval, and then to the COB Ph.D. committee for approval.

RESEARCH

Research Focus of the Program

Research in the SOA is focused primarily on the application of behavioral research methods and theories to accounting-related issues, with emphasis on the factors that influence judgment and decision-making. Interest in archival research is also supported. A strong preference is given to research interests in accounting information systems combined with another area of accounting, such as auditing, financial, managerial or tax.

Developing Research Skills

A critical aspect of the doctoral program is developing a student's research skills. To aid in the development of research skills, students are provided with a number of opportunities, including the development of research proposals and projects as a part of required coursework, a first-year research paper, working as a research assistant for professors and co-authoring research studies with professors and/or fellow students. The degree to which a student exploits the opportunities available for developing research skills is driven, for the most part, by the student's motivation.

Research Workshops

Research workshops are scheduled throughout the semester. The workshops introduce students to research, and provide students with the opportunity to actively participate in discussions of on-going research. Students are required to attend, and actively participate in all scheduled research workshops. To facilitate student learning and discussion, students will submit a workshop form for the research paper that will be presented. The form is available on Blackboard under Organizations, Accounting Research Workshops, Information.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

All students conducting research involving human subjects are required to obtain approval from the IRB. Approval is required **before** conducting any experiment or survey involving human subjects. The requirement applies to pilot studies as well as to the actual study. It applies to surveys or experiments involving student subjects (undergraduate or graduate students), as well as those subjects outside the university (e.g., professionals). Additionally, it applies regardless of whether there is an intention to publish the study (e.g., as part of a class assignment).

Because students in the SOA are involved in social/behavioral studies, as opposed to medical studies, the IRB approval process is relatively simple. Once the paperwork request for approval to conduct research involving human subjects is completed, students may ask for expedited approval. Generally, it will take one or two weeks to receive approval from the IRB. Students should consider the time required for approval in planning research projects.

In addition to completing paperwork to obtain permission to conduct research involving human subjects, students should be aware of additional form requirements. Annual progress reports are

required for ongoing research. Additionally, a final report must be submitted when the research project is completed. For IRB purposes, note that a project is not considered complete until all data collection and analyses are completed, including such data analyses that may be required during the review process at a journal.

Before a researcher can initiate a project involving human subjects, he or she must complete an initial comprehensive IRB-approved certification course. Thereafter, the researcher is required to complete an annual IRB-approved continuing education course. The purpose of the initial course and the continuing education course is to make researchers aware of the precautions to be taken to protect subjects' interests when conducting research involving human subjects. The Division of Research Integrity and Compliance offers various options for meeting the initial certification and the annual continuing education requirement, including Internet courses that can take two or more hours to complete. If you have not already filed a certificate of course completion with the Division of Research Integrity and Compliance, you must submit a certificate when you initially apply for IRB approval of your study.

To keep up-to-date with IRB requirements and to obtain forms, visit the Division of Research Integrity and Compliance Web-site – www.research.usf.edu/cs/irb.htm

Experimental Research Participation Requirement

The SOA has instituted a policy concerning the participation of undergraduate and graduate students in experiments being conducted by faculty or Ph.D. students. Researchers are **required** to obtain approval to conduct any experiment involving SOA undergraduate or graduate students. Approval can be obtained by following the protocol established by the SOA. A written copy of the protocol can be obtained from Blackboard (Organizations/Accounting Research Workshops/Information). Contact the Research Participants Coordinator or the doctoral program coordinator for additional information concerning use of SOA students in experimental research. Failure to obtain approval will result in the loss of access to SOA students for future research projects.

Academic Integrity

Writing is a larger part of the doctoral program than any other degree program. Additionally, well-developed writing skills are important to an academic's success. Therefore, students are reminded of the importance of properly acknowledging another's work or ideas. It is expected that students know when they are relying on another's work, and know how to properly acknowledge such reliance. Ignorance, or forgetting that another's work has been relied upon, does not excuse the lack of proper acknowledgement. The penalties for academic dishonesty and plagiarism are severe. The University of South Florida Graduate Catalog outlines academic honesty and the punishment guidelines for violations of academic honesty. To reinforce the catalog information the following reiteration from the on-line Graduate Catalog (section 7) is provided.

Plagiarism

Definition: *Plagiarism* is intentionally or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own. It includes submitting an assignment purporting to be the student's original work which has

wholly or in part been created by another person. It also includes the presentation of the work, ideas, representations, or words of another person without customary and proper acknowledgement of sources. Students must consult with their instructors for clarification in any situation in which the need for documentation is an issue, and will have plagiarized in any situation in which their work is not properly documented.

Clarification:

1. Every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and must be properly acknowledged by parenthetical citation in the text or in a footnote or endnote.
2. When material from another source is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one's own words, that source must be acknowledged in a footnote or endnote, or by parenthetical citation in the text.
3. Information gained in reading or research that is not common professional knowledge must be acknowledged in a parenthetical citation in the text or in a footnote or endnote.
4. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, the use of papers, reports, projects, and other such materials prepared by someone else.

An additional Web-site that you may find helpful is:

<https://my.hamilton.edu/writing/style/plagiarism/plagiarism.html> (tips on writing and citations)

Depending on the serious of the offense, the University of South Florida Graduate Catalog (online version) provides the following sanctions for violations of academic integrity of which plagiarism is a component:

- An "F" or "Zero" grade on the subject paper, lab report, etc.
- An "F" in the course or activity in which credit may be earned,
- An "FF" in the course (leading to expulsion from the University)
- Academic Dismissal for any violations of academic dishonesty policies or regulations
- Possible revocation of the degree or Graduate Certificate following a thorough investigation

Graduate students who are assigned an "FF" grade will be academically dismissed from the University and will not be eligible to apply to any graduate program at USF.

The Graduate Catalog provides extensive information on academic honesty including definitions, sanctions and provisions specific to graduate students. All students are encouraged to read this section of the Graduate Catalog.

In the SOA, incidents of suspected plagiarism are to be brought before the SOA doctoral program committee. At the time a suspected plagiarism incident is discovered, it is brought before the committee by the discovering professor. ***SOA doctoral program committee action can result in dismissal from the program.***

TEACHING

Teaching Assignments

Another important component of a doctoral student's education is developing teaching skills. To complete the doctoral program, all doctoral students in the SOA are required to teach. Generally, a student's first teaching experience will be as a teaching assistant to the principles of financial accounting mass lecture instructor. A teaching assistant is able to benefit from the experience of the instructor prior to teaching a class on his/her own. After a semester as a teaching assistant, doctoral students are assigned their own section of principles of accounting.

Ph.D. Teaching Seminar

Doctoral students in the SOA are required to take a one credit teaching seminar prior to completion of their degree. The purposes of the one credit seminar are to provide students with the opportunity to observe a variety of teaching methods and have the student team-teach an upper level undergraduate course with an experienced professor. Students select an upper level accounting class in the student's chosen area of teaching specialty. During the team-teaching experience, the student will teach a module of the class, administer and grade an exam, and possibly administer and grade a project. The supervising professor will evaluate the student both informally after each class taught, and formally at the end of the semester. It is recommended that students register for the one credit seminar in the semester they do their team-teaching. However, the student may complete the requirements for the seminar over a number of semesters and may thus register for the seminar in any semester as long as it is prior to the completion of their degree. The course requirements and required paperwork for the one credit seminar are included in the appendix of this guide. **Students are responsible for ensuring that all paperwork is completed, and submitted to the SOA doctoral program coordinator.** For the College of Business requirements that are incorporated into the one credit seminar, students are referred to the College of Business Handbook. The USF Center for Teaching Enhancement maintains a record of those attending workshops. A student should obtain a copy of his/her attendance record as evidence that College of Business requirements have been met. As backup, it is also recommended that students retain documentation (such as handouts) for all workshops attended.

To assist students in developing their teaching skills, a faculty member will, on occasion, observe and provide feedback on the student's teaching. While observation will occur throughout the time the student teaches in the SOA, it is considered a part of the student's development under the one credit teaching seminar.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

In accordance with the policy outlined in the College of Business Handbook, annual performance evaluations will be conducted for each doctoral student. The performance evaluation is provided to assist the student in understanding the quality of his/her performance, and his/her progress through the program. Poor performance, including lack of program progress, can lead to dismissal from the program.

Performance evaluations will be conducted, on behalf of the SOA doctoral committee, by the SOA doctoral program coordinator in the late spring or summer of each year. The quantitative and qualitative information used for the evaluation will come from a variety of sources. The student's course grades, professors for whom the student is serving as a research assistant, professors who have observed the student's teaching, professors with whom the student is conducting research, the student's self-report, and any other appropriate source, will be used in evaluating the quality of the student's performance and progress through the program. At the time of the student's scheduled evaluation the student should provide the doctoral program coordinator with a written self-report that includes information relevant to the evaluation, such as research work in process, information on presentations made, teaching performance, goals for the coming year, etc.

A written and signed record of the student's performance evaluation will be provided to the student and added to the student's file.

SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY POLICY ON DUPLICATING MATERIALS

The following policy relating to photocopying by doctoral students is effective immediately.

Copying for the following purposes may be completed in the SOA workroom or COB copy center:

1. Copies of papers submitted to regional meetings of the American Accounting Association (AAA). Submissions are limited to two regional meetings per year and must be approved in advance by the student's dissertation chair or by the SOA doctoral program coordinator.
2. Copies of papers submitted to other academic meetings, e.g., AAA section meetings. Submissions must be approved in advance by the student's dissertation chair or by the SOA doctoral program coordinator.
3. Reasonable copying for classes that the student is teaching. All multiple copies (e.g. exams, handouts, etc.) should go to the COB copy center.
4. Copying related to classes that a student is taking.
5. Copying related to the student's job search (e.g. letters, papers, resumes, etc.)

Please note:

Copying for personal purposes is the student's responsibility and may not be completed in the SOA workroom or COB copy center.

Students should apply for a Gaiennie Grant to fund copying of materials related to dissertation research (background research and experiments). If a Gaiennie Grant request is rejected, the student may apply in writing to the director of the SOA for permission to use School and College resources.

Each doctoral student has a maximum copy budget of 2,000 copies per month from the SOA workroom.

Copy codes will be issued through Donna Pontonero in the SOA office.

Questions regarding this policy should be referred to the SOA doctoral program director, or the director of the SOA.

A TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY AND REQUIRED FORMS*

Time Period	Step in the Process	Forms (see COB Handbook for Doctoral Students)
January 2	Deadline for application to the Ph.D. program	See www.USFaccounting.com for on-line application forms
February-March	Offers are extended	
August	Classes start. Program advisor and program committee are assigned (see the section on Committees in this guide)	
End of first year	Completed coursework plan is submitted for approval (see the section on Program of Study in this guide)	See course scheduling grid, pages 6 and 7
Fall semester of the second year	First year paper is presented	
Fall semester of the third year	Comprehensive examinations – written and oral.	Complete <i>Certification of Completion of Required Coursework</i> form, and the successful completion of comprehensive exams memo
After successfully passing comprehensive exams	Dissertation committee is formed, followed by admission to candidacy. The student has two years from the time he/she is admitted to candidacy to successfully defend a dissertation proposal and four years to complete a dissertation (see the College handbook).	Complete the <i>Graduate Student Supervisory Committee Appointment Form</i> and <i>Admission to Doctoral Candidacy</i> form
Approx 5-8 months after admission to candidacy	Pre-dissertation proposal paper is prepared and presented at a SOA research workshop.	
Approx. 9-12 months after admission to candidacy	Dissertation proposal defense (see the College handbook for information on the dissertation proposal and defense). A public announcement is required.	Complete the <i>Certificate of Approval</i> for Ph.D. dissertation proposal form and public announcement form
Approx. 1 to 2 years after admission to candidacy	Dissertation defense (see the College handbook and University catalog). A public announcement is required. Submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School and application for graduation are separate procedures.	Complete the <i>Request for Dissertation Defense</i> form, the public announcement form, the <i>Successful Defense of the Ph.D./Ed.D. Dissertation</i> , and <i>Certificate of Approval Form for Theses & Dissertations: Manuscript Approval Form</i>

*The information provided is tentative. The time line provided is influenced by the motivation of the student and the type of study conducted. Forms provided by COB are examples. Electronic versions of some forms are on Blackboard, Organizations, Accounting Research Workshops, Information. Students are referred to the University Web-site (<http://www.grad.usf.edu>) for up-to-date information and the forms required by the University Graduate School.