Accountancy Ph.D. Program Guide

Department of Accountancy
College of Business
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I. Preface

This document describes the doctoral program in Accountancy and some of the policies of the graduate school that pertain to Accountancy students. It is not intended to be a complete description of the policies and procedures of the Graduate College or the University. Students and faculty are advised to consult the Handbook for Graduate Students and Advisers. The website address for the Handbook is http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook.

Students are also expected to know and abide by the information provided in the Code of Policies and Regulations Applying to all Students. The website address for the manual is: http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/

II. Program Objectives

The Ph.D. program in Accountancy prepares scholars for successful careers in teaching and research at leading academic institutions. The program prepares students to advance accounting knowledge by integrating institutional knowledge with developments in outside disciplines such as economics, psychology, finance, and other behavioral sciences. Student’s coursework and classroom experiences prepare them for a career marked by quality research and teaching. Research collaboration between students and faculty is encouraged throughout the program. The supervised doctoral dissertation, which provides an original contribution to accounting knowledge, is the culmination of the program. Students are encouraged to progress swiftly to the level of scholarship necessary to produce a successful dissertation and to cultivate a lifelong desire to pursue and disseminate accounting knowledge. The faculty expects that students will endorse and personify the highest ideals of academic integrity and scholarship.

Accountancy faculty provide extensive involvement to maintain our successful Ph.D. program. Faculty involvement includes teaching Ph.D. courses and seminars, encouraging Ph.D. students to participate in research projects, guiding research performed by Ph.D. Students, supervising dissertations, and participating in the administrative functions of the Ph.D. program. Faculty and Ph.D. students should maintain scholarly dialogues at all stages of the program.

III. Administrative Roles for the Ph.D. Program

Ultimate responsibility for the academic integrity of the Ph.D. program rests with the Accountancy faculty. Administratively, the program authority and responsibility is delegated to the Head of the Accountancy Department (Head). The Head, in turn, has delegated much of the program management to the Ph.D. Program Director. A Ph.D. Program Committee, appointed by the Head of the Department in consultation with the Director, provides an administrative sub-structure with respect to program policy and curriculum, student review and evaluation, and student recruiting and admissions matters. The specific responsibilities for these administration positions are described in more detail throughout this document.
IV. Admissions to the Ph.D. Program and Program Size

The Ph.D. Program Committee will evaluate applications for admission to the Ph.D. program and recommend to the Ph.D. Program Director actions on such applications. The committee makes these recommendations in a manner that is consistent with the department’s objectives concerning the size, student mix, and quality of the Ph.D. program. Appendix A describes how to apply to our program and the general evaluation criteria we use to assess applications.

The Accountancy Faculty will attempt to maintain a program size of approximately fifteen Ph.D. students in residency. Barring extraordinary circumstances, students will spend a maximum of five years in residency. As such, we will target an entering class of approximately three students each year.

V. Faculty Mentors

The Ph.D. Program Director, in consultation with the Ph.D. Program Committee, will appoint a temporary faculty mentor for each student during the student’s first term on campus. Faculty mentors provide advice and counsel to their students. Moreover, faculty mentors ensure that their students are completing course and other program requirements in a timely manner and are otherwise making satisfactory progress in the program. As the student solidifies a primary area of interest, the student should take the initiative in identifying a more permanent faculty mentor and securing his/her agreement to serve in this capacity. Ultimately, this faculty mentor will likely become the chairperson of the student’s dissertation advisory committee, the purpose of which is discussed later in this document.

VI. Program Requirements

The Ph.D. program is structured to accommodate the background, interests, and future expectations of the student, subject to the guidance of the student’s faculty mentor and the approval of the Ph.D. Program Director. To successfully complete the program, the student must meet the requirements listed below.

A. Program Coursework

Background Requirements

Background requirements establish foundational skills in accounting, economics, and mathematics. To fulfill the accounting background requirement, we prefer students to have the equivalent of an AACSB accredited undergraduate business degree with a major in accounting. Students without an undergraduate accounting degree will fulfill this background requirement with at least fifteen hours of accounting coursework. To fulfill the economics and mathematics background, students must take an intermediate undergraduate microeconomics course, and
undergraduate courses in calculus (differential and integral) and linear algebra. Students who already have these skills upon entering the program may waive these courses. We expect that students who lack this background will acquire these skills and take any corresponding courses as soon as possible after being admitted to the program, preferably in the summer before their first year.

**Core Accounting Courses**

All students must take the following five accounting seminars:

- Introduction to Accounting Research (ACCY 592)
- Behavioral Accounting Research (ACCY 593B)
- Financial Archival Research (ACCY 593C)
- Constructs in Accounting Research (ACCY 585)
- Advanced Accounting Seminar (ACCY 594), where students will either take the course section focusing on the experimental methods or the section focusing on archival methods

- Second Year Paper Course (ACCY 593S), described in more detail below

**Economics**

All students must take Microeconomics at the graduate level (Econ 500). Additionally, students must take either an elective course in economics [e.g., Economics of Risk (ECON 469) or Economics of Information (ECON 490)] or a graduate-level finance seminar.

**Statistics**

All students must take a two semester sequence. For students on the archival track, the typical sequence includes STAT 400 and STAT 410. For students on the experimental track, the typical sequence includes STAT 400 or PSYC 406 and PYSC 407.

**Electives**

All students must take at least six elective courses. We have two primary goals for these elective courses. First, one subset of the elective courses should help students further sharpen their analysis skills in methods relevant to the student’s research interest. As such, we recommend one to two courses beyond the required statistics sequence. Second, electives help provide theoretical foundations to support student’s specialized area (e.g., behavioral economics, financial economics, or psychology). At least four electives must come from outside of Accountancy. Moreover, we strongly recommend that at least four electives include non-method related courses.
**Thesis Research**

Students must have at least 32 hours of Thesis Research (ACCY 599). Students typically start signing up for Thesis Research hours starting in the third year of the program.

**B. Research Requirements**

Each doctoral student is required to write a research paper on a question of interest to the student and faculty supervisor(s) in the summers following the student’s first and second spring semesters. The papers must be completed by August 31st in each summer.

**First-Year Paper**

First-year papers should be a replication of a previously published paper. The objective of this paper is to expose students to an area of the academic literature in accounting, and to give students an introduction to methodological tools. The paper also gives students the opportunity to conduct a study of publishable quality from beginning to end without the necessity of developing either the research question or the research design. Even though the assignment is a replication, students should approach the paper critically, and they should look for ways in which the paper being replicated can be extended in such a way as to make a contribution to the academic literature.

Each student completing a first-year paper shall select a faculty member to supervise the effort. In general, the role of the faculty member is to advise the student in such a way that, in the faculty member’s opinion, the learning opportunities of the student will be maximized. In the event that it appears that a publishable extension of the paper being replicated is possible, students are encouraged, though by no means required, to enter into a co-authoring relationship with the faculty member. In the event that there is a co-authoring relationship, the student and the faculty member should determine the degree of faculty assistance that will be provided before the paper due date, taking into consideration both the learning experience of the student and the efficiency with which the research is conducted.

A subset of members of the PhD Program committee in consultation with the faculty advisor will evaluate each paper. In making their assessment, these members will consider the following attributes of each paper:

- Whether the student appears to understand the replicated paper, including its position in the surrounding literature.
- Whether the student is able to execute the data collection and analysis from the original paper.
- Whether the paper is well-organized and well-written.

Students must register for an independent study course, and this course can satisfy one of the program electives. Students will receive a letter grade for this course as follows. A grade of “A”
is reserved for papers that are above average for first-year doctoral students on the attributes listed above. A grade of “B” is assigned to papers that reflect an average performance for a first-year doctoral student on the attributes listed above. A grade of “F” is assigned to papers that reflect an unacceptable performance for a first-year doctoral student on the attributes listed above.

Second-Year Paper

Second-year papers should be an original research issue that has the potential to make a contribution to the existing academic literature in accounting. We have several objectives for the second-year paper. First, this paper provides students with the opportunity to initiate original research in accounting, and to carry that research project through from beginning to end. Second, the paper provides an opportunity for a faculty member or faculty members to mentor students on the research process. That is, this project allows students the opportunity to learn from at least one faculty member as to how to conduct a research project before the student must pursue a research project on their own in the dissertation stage of the program. Third, the second-year paper will hopefully generate a published article that will benefit both the student and the faculty member(s).

In addition to writing the paper, each student must present the paper at a research colloquium early in the third year in the program. This presentation provides the student with the opportunity to present ideas and respond to questions and criticisms. The faculty does not expect the version of the paper presented in the research colloquium to be ready for submission to a research journal. However, the student must submit and present a complete research paper. Moreover, the student should attempt to identify a clear path that can lead to a publishable paper.

Each student completing a second-year paper shall select a faculty member or faculty members to supervise the effort. In general, the role of faculty member(s) is to advise the student in such a way that, in the faculty member’s opinion, the three objectives of the assignment are furthered and the learning opportunities for the student are maximized. Students are encouraged, though by no means required, to enter into a co-authoring relationship with their faculty advisers. In the event that there is a co-authoring relationship, the student and faculty members should determine the degree of faculty assistance that will be provided during the second year. That said, faculty members are encouraged to play an active role in the identification and design of the research study. However, faculty members are also encouraged to ensure their students are largely responsible for writing the draft of the paper submitted to the Ph.D. Program Committee and presented to the faculty in fulfillment of the second-year paper requirement.

The PhD Program Committee in consultation with the faculty advisor(s) will evaluate each paper. In making their assessment, these members will consider the following attributes of each paper:
• The quality of the research question and whether the question is sufficiently focused that a well-executed study could provide insights.
• The quality of the research design and whether the design is appropriate to the question.
• The quality of the analysis and whether the analysis produces credible results.
• The quality of the conclusions and whether they are appropriate given the results and any limitations of the design.
• The quality of the exposition and whether the paper is complete and clearly written.
• The quality of the presentation and whether the presenter clearly responded to questions and comments.

Students must register for ACCY 593S in the fall semester of their third year. This course is required for all students in the program. Students will receive a letter grade for this course. However, faculty member involvement will likely vary from project to project which complicates the assignment of a grade. As such, most students that meet the committee’s expectations for a second-year doctoral student will receive an “A”. Most students not meeting the committee’s expectations for a second-year doctoral student will receive an “F”.

C. Accountancy Core Exam (ACE):

The ACE is an evaluation of a student’s qualifications for independent research. Satisfactory completion of the examination is necessary to enter the final stage of the Ph.D. Program, which is largely devoted to research and the dissertation. Students will typically take the ACE in early summer following their second year. The ACE is designed to test the following:

• **In-depth knowledge of accounting research.** The student is expected to have a working knowledge of research from the most recently-offered required accounting seminars and reading lists supporting these required seminars.

• **Ability to critically evaluate current accounting research.** The student is not only expected to comprehend contemporary published research, but also to question its internal and external validity and apply these skills to a specific research study.

• **Competence in designing and conducting research.** For a stated issue, the student is expected to plan a research design, select a set of appropriate methodologies, outline the approach to the problem, and describe advantages and limitations associated with the suggested design.

The ACE consists of:

• Written responses to between two and six questions. These questions will be answered in a ten-hour period in a classroom setting. No outside resources will be permitted for the in-class portion of the exam.
• A written critique of a research paper designated by the committee. This critique will be completed within a twenty-four hour period outside the classroom.

To reduce student uncertainty about the exam, the Ph.D. Program Director will communicate the format of the exam (e.g. number of questions, open or closed book) as soon as the Ph.D. Program Committee has set up the exam.

The Ph.D. Program Committee shall assign two faculty members to evaluate each of the individual questions and the critique. These faculty members collaboratively evaluate the student’s performance, assigning one of the following four grades:

• A grade of “4” indicates a “High Pass.” This category indicates distinguished, outstanding performance. Such performance is one indicator that the Ph.D. program committee considers in identifying students who have demonstrated excellence in the doctoral program.
• A grade of “3” indicates a “Pass.” This category indicates satisfactory performance.
• A grade of “2” indicates a “Low Pass.” This category indicates that the students generally understand the material, but significant portions of the student’s answer are deficient.
• A grade of “1” indicates “Fail.” This category indicates unsatisfactory performance. If this level of performance occurs on any part of the ACE, it will constitute sufficient evidence of unsatisfactory progress in the doctoral program.

The faculty responsible for grading the ACE will attempt to complete the evaluation of the examinations within three weeks of the exam date. When the grading is complete, the Ph.D. Program Committee will communicate scores and qualitative feedback on each part of the exam as well as assign and communicate an overall grade as follows:

HIGH PASS: The student achieved an average score across all parts of the exam of at least a 3.5 and did not receive a score of less than 2.0 on any part of the exam.

PASS: The student achieved an average score across all parts of the exam of at least 2.5 and did not receive a score of less than 2.0 on any part of the exam.

FAIL: The student did not achieve an average score across all parts of the exam of at least 2.5 and/or received a score of less than 2.0 on any part of the exam.

Students are expected to pass the ACE on their first attempt. Students who fail the ACE must petition the Ph.D. Program Director for permission to take another ACE. To be successful, the petition must outline a sufficient program of remedial courses and other scholarly tasks developed in consultation with and ultimately approved by the PhD. Program Committee. Moreover, the student must have the support of at least one tenured member of the accounting faculty who will advise the student during the third year and be willing to serve as dissertation supervisory committee chairperson should the student pass the ACE on the second attempt. If the Ph.D. program committee approves the petition, the student will be allowed to
remediate during the third year and retake the ACE a second time in early summer following their third year. If the Ph.D. Program Committee does not approve the petition, the failing student will be terminated from the Ph.D. program. Students will not be allowed to take the ACE more than twice under any circumstances.

D. The Ph.D. Dissertation

Selection of a Dissertation Topic and Development of Dissertation Proposals

The students should have personal interest and intellectual curiosity about the topic that they select; otherwise, the dissertation becomes a meaningless task that is unlikely to be acceptable to the Accountancy faculty. Discovery of a suitable dissertation topic generally requires planned in-depth reading and research on the part of students that is beyond the content of their specific coursework. Students are encouraged to seek the advice of their faculty mentors, coursework instructors, and other faculty members.

Development of an acceptable dissertation proposal is an evolutionary process that should begin with coursework in an intended area of specialization. Every student is encouraged to obtain the comments from Accountancy faculty and fellow Ph.D. students by presenting his/her dissertation ideas or pre-proposals in an Accountancy Department brown bag.

Judging the sufficiency of a dissertation proposal requires evaluating its potential academic substance. Such judgment is based on the:

- Importance of the research issue to be addressed;
- Relevance of the research questions to the research issue;
- Appropriateness and adequacy of the research methods, procedures and design to be employed;
- Validity of the reasoning that will lead from the research to the conclusions.

The primary criterion that should guide assessing the sufficiency of a dissertation proposal is the originality of the proposed research. Originality has two aspects, the first of which is potential contribution to the accountancy literature. Contribution may take the form of sufficient addition (change) to accountancy and/or interdisciplinary knowledge, and/or sufficient (change) to research methods employed within accountancy and/or inter-disciplinary research. The second aspect of originality is that the contribution to be made will be primarily through the efforts of the Ph.D. student. To facilitate assessing dissertation proposal sufficiency, proposals must include adequate statements, descriptions and discussions of:

- The research issue to be addressed (including the student’s motivation and objectives for addressing this issue and justification of issue’s importance to the scholarly accounting community).
• The research question to be addressed (including the relevance of such questions to the research issue of interest).
• The research methods, procedures and design to be employed (including justification of the use of such methods).
• An indication of the conclusions expected to be drawn from the research. This includes discussions of the expected implications of the research for the research questions.

**Dissertation Supervisory Committees**

Students form a dissertation supervisory committee prior to completing the Graduate College preliminary examination discussed below. A dissertation supervisory committee consists of at least four voting members of the Graduate College, at least two of whom are tenured. The dissertation supervisory committee chairperson is a member of the Graduate College and has an appointment to the University, and at least three committee members are from Accountancy and at least one member is from a faculty other than Accountancy.

The dissertation chairperson, in consultation with the dissertation supervisory committee, should:

• Supervise the student’s conduct of his/her dissertation,
• Ensure that the student is progressing satisfactory on his/her dissertation,
• Advise the student with respect to scheduling his/her Accountancy Forum presentation,
• Advise the student with respect to scheduling his/her Graduate College preliminary examination and conduct the examination,
• Supervise the student’s subsequent response to comments obtained from the Accounting Forum and preliminary examination,
• Advise the student with respect to scheduling the Graduate College final dissertation examination and conduct the examination.

**The Graduate College Preliminary Examination**

The preliminary examination provides an opportunity for the dissertation supervisory committee to review the feasibility and appropriateness of a student’s dissertation proposal, providing guidance where appropriate. Specifically, the dissertation supervisory committee will have the opportunity to formally assess whether the student’s dissertation proposal represents an independent research effort that, if appropriately conducted, would be sufficient to warrant conferring a Ph.D. degree in Accountancy.

Scheduling a Graduate College preliminary examination requires an e-mail to the Ph.D. Program Director from the student. The e-mail should include the names of the dissertation supervisory committee, a working title of the dissertation, and a brief description of the dissertation topic. Moreover, the dissertation supervisory committee must be included on the e-mail, as indication of their willingness to serve and their consent that the student is ready for the preliminary
examination. If the Ph.D. Program Director approves the request, s/he will forward it to the Ph.D. Program administrative aide, who will send the request to the Graduate College. Once scheduled, the preliminary examination will follow the protocol outlined in the Graduate College Handbook.

Accountancy Forum

All students must present a paper from their dissertation at an Accountancy Forum before interviewing for academic positions at outside institutions. Scheduling a forum date requires an e-mail to the Ph.D. Program Director from the student. The dissertation supervisory committee chairperson must be included on the e-mail, as indication of his/her consent that the student is ready for the Accountancy Forum. Students must have a version of the paper ready for distribution to the faculty at least eight days before the scheduled forum date.

The Graduate College Final Dissertation Examination

Scheduling a Graduate College final examination requires an e-mail to the Ph.D. Program Director from the student. The dissertation supervisory committee must be included on the e-mail, as indication that they all believe that the dissertation represents an independent research effort that is sufficient to warrant conferring a Ph.D. degree in Accountancy. If the Ph.D. Program Director approves the request, s/he will forward it to the Ph.D. Program administrative aide, who will send the request to the Graduate College. Once scheduled, the final examination will follow the protocol outlined in the Graduate College Handbook.

VII. Accountancy Forum Series and Department Brown Bags

We host an Accountancy Forum Series largely for the benefit of our doctoral program. These forums provide a relatively low cost way to get exposure to established experts and/or up-coming stars in our discipline. From the perspective of guests from outside the department, giving a workshop in front of an active group of doctoral students makes a favorable impression of not only the department and its doctoral program, but also the individual contributors.

We expect all Ph.D. students in residency to attend the Accountancy Forum Series. This expectation extends both to internal and external forum presenters. Moreover, Ph.D. student participation in the forums, through comments and questions to the presenters, is strongly encouraged.

To facilitate participation for forums involving external speakers, one faculty member (typically the speaker host) will host a pre-forum workshop where students can talk about and refine their comments and questions in a small-group setting before raising them in the forum. The pre-forum workshops are required for all first and second year doctoral students and optional for those beyond the second year. However, students who are not actively participating in the
forum series will be strongly encouraged, by the Ph.D. Program Director, to attend the pre-forums.

In addition to our forum series, subgroups of faculty frequently host reading groups and brown bags involving less-formal research discussions and presentations. Ph.D. students are strongly encouraged to participate in the brown bags and reading groups that align with their research methodology and research interests.

VIII. Teaching Requirement

Experience in teaching is considered a vital part of the graduate program and is required as part of the academic work of all Ph.D. candidates in this program. Depending on departmental needs, this requirement will normally be achieved by teaching two sections of a course during the five years of the program. The courses that students teach during the doctoral program will preferably be in or close to their area of study, and thus will be similar to those the student will teach in their first few years as a faculty member. Faculty members in the Department serve as an invaluable resource in helping students develop the requisite skills for providing an outstanding classroom experience. In addition, the University and College are strongly committed to quality teaching.

IX. Financial Support and Departmental Service

As documented in each student’s offer letter, financial support from the department is provided in exchange for teaching assistantships, research assistantships, and teaching. This financial support includes tuition waivers and the stipend listed in the student’s offer letter that will be paid out over the course of the year. The precise payment schedule for this stipend will be communicated by the administrative aide of the Ph.D. program.

Students’ typical service obligation to the department is as follows:

- Students will teach a course in the summer following their first year. In their first two semesters in residency, they will serve as a teaching assistant for the course in which they will teach.
- Students will teach a course in the summer following their second year in the program.
- Students will serve as a research assistant for a faculty member during their third and fourth years of the program.
- Depending on the needs of the department, students will most likely either serve as a teaching assistant or serve as a research assistant during the fifth year of the program.

High-performing students may be eligible for fellowships from outside the department. Students receiving these fellowships in lieu of department funding will have a reduced service obligation to the department.
In addition to tuition waivers and stipends, the department provides students with funding to support technology and research. When entering the program, each student receives a fellowship of $2,000 to purchase a computer, software, and other technology-related resources. After successfully completing the Accountancy Comprehensive Exam, students receive an additional fellowship of $1,500 to support technology-related purchases.

Each student also receives a research allowance of $1,500 a year. This allowance can be used for research related activities such as data acquisition and conference travel. However, this allowance cannot be used for technology-related purchases. Any unspent allowance rolls forward and can be used in subsequent years.

X. Student Evaluation and Performance

Each year, the Ph.D. Program Director will collect evidence on the academic performance and progress of every student. During the initial stages of the program, this evidence includes course grades, Accountancy Comprehensive Exam scores, summer paper evaluations, and teaching evaluations. Moreover, this evidence includes faculty evaluations of overall performance in the program including Accountancy seminar performance and Accountancy Forum participation. During the dissertation stage of the program, evidence also includes the assessments of faculty working on joint research projects and assessments from the dissertation supervisory committee as to the student’s research progress, including performance during the preliminary exam and the student’s Accountancy Forum.

Based on this evaluation, each student will receive written feedback from the Ph.D. program committee at the end of each academic year. Moreover, the Ph.D. Program Director will meet with each student each year to discuss the evaluations. Based on these evaluations, the Ph.D. Program Committee will recommend to the Ph.D. Program Director actions to be taken, if any. These actions include the selection of representatives to accounting conferences, the departmental endorsement of a student’s external fellowship applications, continued financial support, recognition of superior academic performance, and recognition of superior teaching performance.

These evaluations will also serve as inputs to determine whether the student should be terminated from the program. Evidence suggesting that the student is making insufficient progress which could lead to program termination include:

- Unsatisfactory performance in coursework. A student is required to maintain at least a 3.0 GPA.
- Unsatisfactory performance on the first and second year research papers.
- Unsatisfactory performance on the Accountancy Comprehensive Exam.
- An inability to find a faculty member willing to serve as a mentor/dissertation supervisory committee chairperson for a period of two months.
- Insufficient progress on the dissertation.
XI. Duties of Ph.D. Program Administrators

Duties of the Ph.D. Program Director

- Responsible for managing the strategic direction of the Ph.D. program.
- Responsible for managing all day-to-day operations of the Ph.D. program.
- Responsible for making financial aid decisions for Ph.D. students within budget parameters jointly determined with the Head of the Department.

Duties of the Ph.D. Program Committee

1. Policy and Curriculum

- Monitor the Ph.D. program requirements.
- Consistent with the program requirements and students’ interests, identify desired accountancy Ph.D. course offerings in the Department, and make appropriate recommendations to the Ph.D. Program Director.
- Consistent with the Department’s objectives concerning the Ph.D. program, evaluate Ph.D. courses outside of Accountancy and make appropriate recommendations to the Ph.D. Program Director.
- Bring to the faculty further revisions of the existing Ph.D. program requirements as they become necessary, and prepare documentation for their approval at the Department, College, and University levels.
- Keep faculty and students apprised of the existing program requirements and issue documentation.
- Evaluate students’ petitions for variances from program requirements, and make appropriate recommendations to the Ph.D. Program Director.
- Perform other duties about Ph.D. program policy and curriculum matters as they arise or are assigned by the Ph.D. Program Director.

2. Student Review and Evaluation

- Evaluate each student’s progress and provide written feedback as documented above.
- Prepare, administer, and evaluate the Accountancy Comprehensive Exam as documented above.
- Remain informed about external scholarship opportunities and their eligibility and application requirements. Identify potential applicants and assist their applications.
- Perform other duties related to Ph.D. program evaluation procedures as they arise or are assigned by the Ph.D. Program Director.
3. **Student Recruiting and Admissions**

- Identify, as early as possible, potentially superior applicants, evaluate applications for admission to the Ph.D. program, and recommend to the Ph.D. Program Director actions on such applications. In consultation with the Director, invite appropriate applicants for campus interviews, and supervise their interviews.
- Analyze each newly admitted student’s academic background with respect to the program requirements, and determine the appropriate coursework for the student to eliminate any deficiencies.
- Appoint a faculty mentor for each new student during the student’s first term on campus.
- Perform other duties about Ph.D. student recruiting and admissions matters as they arise.

**Duties of the Administrative Aide for the Ph.D. Program**

- Maintain the current list of faculty mentors, coursework advisory committee members, and dissertation committee members of Ph.D. students.
- Maintain the student evaluations by faculties and committee in student files.
- Process the scheduling of student’s Graduate College preliminary and final dissertation examinations and formally announce the examinations to the Accountancy faculty and Ph.D. students as they are scheduled.
- Maintain information brochures about, and/or application forms for, Ph.D. student external scholarship opportunities and university faculty positions. Announce these opportunities to the Accountancy faculty and Ph.D. students as information about the opportunities becomes available.
- Check Ph.D. dissertations as to their consistency with the Graduate College format requirements.
- Maintain the files of Ph.D. student applicants.
- Provide assistance to the Ph.D. Program Committee as needed.

**XII. Variances from Procedures and Programs**

*Program Coursework Waivers/Substitutions*

The Ph.D. Program Director must approve all program coursework waivers and substitutions. The student should e-mail the Ph.D. Program Director describing why the requested waiver/substitution is justified. The faculty mentor must be included on the e-mail, as indication of his/her consent for the waiver/substitution.
Extension of Program Time Limit

Barring extraordinary circumstances, students will spend a maximum of five years in residency in the Ph.D. program. As such, the department will only provide the financial support listed above for a maximum of five years.

As per Graduate College policy, the Ph.D. program time limit is seven years from the date of admission (six years with a prior master’s degree). Students who require an extension of their program time limit shall petition the Ph.D. Program Director. Time limit extension shall be limited to one 12-month period and only granted when the Ph.D. Program Committee is convinced that all program requirements will be completed by the end of the extension. Generally, petitions will not be approved for students who have not successfully completed their Graduate College preliminary examination. The petition shall include:

- The student’s justification for the extension, including an estimated date for his/her Graduate College final examination.
- An e-mail from the student’s dissertation supervisory committee indicating the extent of their support for the petition, evaluating the student’s progress toward completion of the program, and assessing the likelihood that the student would complete all Ph.D. program requirements by the end of the petitioned extension if granted.
- A copy of the student’s most recent dissertation proposal.

All Other Variances

All other variances from program requirements and procedures must be approved by the Ph.D. Program Director. The student should e-mail the Ph.D. Program Director with a statement in which the requested variance is described and justified, and the student’s faculty mentor must indicate in writing the extent of their support for the requested variance.
Appendix A – Admissions Requirements and Process

The Department welcomes applications from superior students who have a strong interest in and are committed to accountancy research, scholarship and teaching. Our objective is to provide a high level of faculty mentorship to all of our students to help prepare them for successful careers in teaching and research in leading academic institutions. To maintain excellence in our program in light of available faculty resources, the Department limits the program to approximately fifteen PhD candidates. Normally, two to four candidates are admitted to the program each year. As such, our admissions process is highly competitive.

Background knowledge prerequisites for the Ph.D. program include: at least a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university, an accounting background consisting of at least fifteen hours of accounting coursework, an intermediate undergraduate microeconomics course, and undergraduate courses in calculus (differential and integral) and linear algebra. Successful applicants who lack these background courses will complete them as soon as possible after being admitted to the program.

Students ordinarily are admitted to the doctoral program for the fall semester, but, if possible, we encourage starting course work during the preceding summer semester. The due date for applications and all supporting materials is December 1. While applications received before this deadline will receive first priority, we will continue to accept applications after this deadline.

To apply, the department must receive all of the following:

- Graduate College Admission Application. You can submit your application on-line at the Graduate College.
- Graduate College Application Fee
- All transcripts
- A personal statement that articulates an interest in accounting and a motivation to pursue a Ph.D. in accounting, as well as an informed understanding of the general nature of accounting research.
- Resume
- Three letters of recommendation, preferably from research-active faculty members, that give insight into the applicant’s potential as an accounting researcher and teacher.
- GMAT Score (institution code VKR TK 03) or GRE Score (institution code 1836)
- TOEFL iBT Score (institution code 1836) (only required for applicants whose native language is not English). Applicants whose native language is not English must take the TOEFL Internet-Based Test (iBT). Our Department requires a total score of ≥ 102 and a speaking score of ≥ 26. There are no exemptions for this requirement.

When making admissions decisions, the PhD Program Committee will evaluate an applicant’s entire record. We make selection on a competitive basis. We seek curious, hardworking, and persistent students. Moreover, we seek students who have demonstrated an ability to excel in
challenging and rigorous coursework through their prior education and have the quantitative, written, and verbal skills necessary to excel in our program. There are no cutoffs for GMAT/GRE test scores. That said, the average GMAT score of our incoming classes typically exceeds 700.