Overview

Singapore Management University’s Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) is a doctoral programme for scholars and senior management who have aspirations to pursue practice-driven research that has the potential to create business impact. On top of research training, candidates will examine the industrial applications of theory through coursework and develop pedagogical competencies through specialised workshops.

The goal of the SMU DBA is to enable candidates to develop a portfolio of skills for influencing management practice, conducting applied and field research, and teaching competently.

Potential Candidates

The programme seeks to admit business leaders, senior management and rising managers who are motivated to go through formal doctoral training to solve the business problems of their worlds. The SMU DBA is also ideal for practice faculty who are just starting their academic careers. Candidates will study SMU’s innovative pedagogy and benefit from the University’s centres of excellence for teaching and faculty development.

Programme Duration

The minimum duration of the programme is three years while the maximum candidature could be extended up to seven years subject to approval from the University. Most students, however, are expected to take approximately four years to complete the coursework, workshops, introductory research project and doctoral dissertation.

The on campus coursework is designed to fit the schedules of working professionals. Candidates will complete a 3-day residential segment per course, typically from Friday through Sunday. Courses will feature a combination of interactive seminars, assignments and project work.

Curriculum

The curriculum consists of coursework, competency workshops, an introductory research project and the doctoral dissertation project (please refer to Figure 1.0).

Coursework (12 credit units)

Candidates will spend up to the first two years completing the coursework requirements, which emphasise on requisite skills in research, teaching and presentation, and the ability to recognise, formulate and solve problems in practice. The core courses are structured to provide broad exposure across key business disciplines, while students can advance their understanding of a particular field by the choice of elective courses. The two foundation courses help prepare students to review suitable research designs and methodologies for their dissertation project.
Qualifying Examination

Upon completing the coursework, students will take the Qualifying Examination which assesses their ability to apply the coursework concepts to practical scenarios.

Introductory Research Project (1 Credit Unit)

In the second year, students will spend approximately 12 weeks on the mini or introductory research project, which serves as a preparatory step towards the dissertation, providing students with the opportunity to design a research study and write a short paper. The introductory research project can vary from conducting a literature review on a chosen research area, to working on an empirical analysis of a topic of interest, or the application of a tool in a business discipline.

Competency Workshops (1 CU)

Competency workshops are courses that are shorter in duration and count for 0.25 credit units each. These are typically 1-day courses which impart participants with research, teaching, presentation and practice-oriented skills. Students in their second year are expected to form a Dissertation Committee and confirm a
Dissertation Supervisor. The Dissertation Supervisor will serve as the Chair of the Dissertation Committee, which will comprise 4-5 members (inclusive of the Chair). The Dissertation Committee should include at least three SMU faculty members and one industry representative.

In Term 2 of the second year, students will prepare their Dissertation Proposal. Students are expected to submit the written Dissertation Proposal and orally defend the proposal to the Dissertation Committee by the end of Term 3.

In the third year, students will commence work on their Doctoral Dissertation under the Dissertation Committee’s supervision. While students can work on their dissertation project off-campus, they are expected to meet regularly with their Dissertation Supervisor and advisory committee until the successful completion of their doctoral dissertation. The student is expected to submit a written report of the completed dissertation by the end of Term 2 of the fourth year.

After reviewing the written dissertation report, the Dissertation Committee will conduct a final examination in which the student will orally defend his/her dissertation. The Dissertation Committee may also require the dissertation to be revised and resubmitted. After examining the dissertation, the Dissertation Committee will make a recommendation to the SMU Office of Postgraduate Research Programmes regarding the fulfilment of the dissertation requirements for the degree.

Note: It is expected that all dissertation work is to be performed by the student and that his/her report is to be 100% original unless properly cited.

Faculty

With one of the strongest and most diverse faculties in Asia and the world, SMU has been the fastest school in history to garner AACSB accreditation for both its graduate and undergraduate business programmes. In this DBA programme, students will interact with senior professors who have extensive teaching, practice and consultancy experience, and whose research work focus on user-driven issues. Students may also benefit from SMU’s network of visiting scholars, who may teach in some courses or deliver research seminars.
Admission Requirements

To be admitted into the programme, applicants must hold at least a bachelor’s degree and have a minimum of 10 years’ work experience. A Master degree is a plus but not mandatory.

A good GRE or GMAT score is needed for admission into the programme. Applicants are encouraged to sit for the SMU admissions examination if they do not have a GRE or GMAT score. This requirement can be waived for graduates from the Singapore Management University, National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University and Singapore University of Technology and Design. Applicants are required to take TOEFL or IELTS if they are from countries where English is not the medium of instruction.

Applicants will also be required to submit letters of recommendation and a personal statement detailing how the Doctor of Business Administration programme ties in with their career aspirations, as well as whether they have identified a problem/topic for the dissertation project. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an interview with the Admissions Committee.

Application

The application window for the Academic Year 2015 intake will open from 14 July to 31 August 2015. Please contact us at DBA@smu.edu.sg to find out more about the application process.

Programme Fees

There is an application fee of $300 (non-refundable) and the programme tuition fee is $120,000 before GST for a period of 4 years.

The student is to pay $45,000 during the first year of study, and $25,000 each during the second, third and fourth year. After the 4th year, the tuition fee is $10,000 (before GST) per year until completion or expiry of the maximum doctoral study period.

Class Dates

Classes will begin in term 1 (October) of each academic year.

Contact Us

Website: https://business.smu.edu.sg/doctor-business-administration
Email: DBA@smu.edu.sg
Phone: +65 6828 0997 | +65 6808 5374