



Culverhouse  
College of Business

Faculty Executive Board Meeting

February 20, 2019

8:30-10:30 am

Dean's Conference Room

**Members Present:** Dr. Anup Agarwal, Dr. Tom Baker, Dr. Steve Buchheit, Dr. Brad Casselman, Dr. Peter Magnusson, Prof. Joyce Meyer, Dr. Paul Pecorino, Dr. Uzma Raja, Dr. Eric Williams, Dr. Marilyn Whitman

Non-Voting Members Present: Ms. Lauren Bennett, Mrs. Kati Hardemon (serving as recorder)

Prof. Joyce Meyer opened the meeting at 8:32 am.

1. **Approval of FEB Meeting minutes from 01/16/2019** - A motion was made by Dr. Buchheit to approve the minutes as written. **The motion was seconded by Dr. Baker and passed unanimously.**
2. **Economics PhD Program Changes** –The Economics field has become more weighted to empirical work, so we would like to have more metrics courses for the students. We would like to give them more econometrics content and add some supplemental courses to give more content for possible dissertation topics. This Economics faculty did vote and approve this proposal 13 to 1. A motion was made by Dr. Baker to send this item to the PhD Programs Committee. **The motion was seconded by Dr. Buchheit and passed unanimously.**
3. **Finance PhD Program Changes** –This proposal address to comprehensive exam format, where written comprehensive exams. The changes have been compiled in a manual that will be streamlined by Dr. Mortal from the EFLS Department. This item was approved unanimously by the Finance Faculty. The course will be offered on a rotating basis so the content of the exam can be adjusted to meet the needs of students based on where they are in their coursework. A motion was made to send the item to the PhD Programs Committee by Dr. Baker. **The motion was seconded by Dr. Pecorino and passed unanimously.**

**The meeting was concluded at 8:43 am.**



Kati Hardemon &lt;kfhardemon@cba.ua.edu&gt;

**Fwd:**

1 message

**David Mothersbaugh** <dmothers@cba.ua.edu>

Mon, Feb 11, 2019 at 10:32 AM

To: Kati Hardemon &lt;kfhardemon@cba.ua.edu&gt;, Lauren Bennett &lt;labennett@cba.ua.edu&gt;

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Laura Razzolini** <lrazzolini@cba.ua.edu>

Date: Mon, Feb 11, 2019 at 9:57 AM

Subject:

To: Ed Schnee &lt;eschnee@cba.ua.edu&gt;

Cc: David Mothersbaugh &lt;dmothers@cba.ua.edu&gt;

Hello Ed!

Attached please find documents supporting proposed changes to the Phd programs in both Economic and Finance.

ECONOMICS - Proposed changes

- 1) Eliminate ST 554 - Mathematical Statistics as a required course and include necessary topics from ST 554 in EC 600 - Advanced Mathematical Economics.
- 2) Create the Seminar in Macroeconomic Theory II (to be developed and taught by Dr. Ghazi) to replace EC 616 - Monetary Economics in the first-year macro sequence and be included in macroeconomics qualifying exams.
- 3) Divide all field courses into 2 groups: A - tool and B - topic. Students must take 6 field courses and at least 2 of those courses must be from Group A.
- 4) In addition to the field courses, we suggest students be required to take at least 2 supplementary courses. The supplementary courses can be taken in any semester of their second or third year in the program for Pass or Fail grade.
- 5) Require students to take EC 698 from the third year on.

Attached are the new guidelines (file name: EconPhD Guidelines.doc) and the Faculty vote in support of the changes (file name: Econ Faculty Vote.doc).

FINANCE - Proposed changes

- 1) introduce a written comprehensive exam in the summer of the second year
- 2) the preliminary qualifying exam will remain, however the subject to be tested will now be microeconomics. The exam will cover questions from the two microeconomics courses: FI 601 Advanced Microeconomic Theory and FI 660 Game Theory

- 3) Students can choose two finance electives (500 level courses). Before they were required to take FI 512 Money and Capital Markets and FI 515 Quantitative Investment Analysis
- 4) There are other few changes made to reflect current practices in the program, such as we no longer grade comprehensive exams on a letter grade, but on High pass, pass, etc.

Attached are the new guidelines (file name: FinanceGuide Guidelines.doc) and the Faculty vote in support of the changes (file name: FinanceFaculty Vote.doc).

Thanks. L.

**Laura Razzolini** | Department Chair

Department of Economics, Finance, and Legal Studies  
Culverhouse College of Commerce  
**The University of Alabama**  
206 Alston Hall  
Box 870224  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487  
Phone 205-348-8067

--

**David L. Mothersbaugh, Ph.D.**

Associate Dean for Undergraduate and International Programs

Office of the Dean  
**The University of Alabama**  
461 Alston Hall  
Box 807223  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487  
Phone 205-348-7449  
dmothers@cba.ua.edu



---

#### 4 attachments



**EconPhD Guidelines.docx**  
17K



**Econ Faculty Vote.docx**  
16K



**FinanceGuideJanuary Jan 2019.docx**  
83K



**FinanceFaculty Vote.docx**  
19K

## Re: Economics PhD Program Revision.

Inbox



**Paan Jindapon**

Mon, Jan  
28, 10:04  
AM

to EC/FI/LGS

Hello,

Thank you very much for your responses and comments. Here are the results:

Yes: 13 (92.9%)

No: 1 (7.1%)

### Comments:

More modern program. Would like to see a causal inference course at sometime in the future.

It seems likely that the math econ course over the summer will need to add additional hours per day to cover all of the topics.

Good work. The P/F statement can be possibly removed.

Best wishes,  
Paan

**Economics Ph.D. Program  
Revision Proposal (January 2019)**

**Proposed Coursework**

1st-year students must take all 7 core courses.

**Core courses** (21 hours)

(i) Theory courses (included in qualifying exams)

- EC 610 – MICRO I: Seminar in Microeconomic Theory (FALL Y1)
- EC 611 – MACRO I: Seminar in Macroeconomic Theory (FALL Y1)
- EC 660 – MICRO II: Game Theory (SPRING Y1)
- EC 597\* – MACRO II: Seminar in Macroeconomic Theory II (SPRING Y1)

(ii) Quantitative courses

- EC 600 – Advanced Mathematical Economics (SUMMER Y1)
- EC 670 – Econometrics (FALL Y1)
- EC 671 – Seminar in Econometrics: Panel Data (SPRING Y1)

After passing the qualifying exams, students must take 6 field courses and at least 2 supplementary courses. These courses can be taken during their second and third year of Ph.D. study.

**FIELD COURSES: Topic and Tool courses** (18 hours – 6 courses)

Students must take 6 topic and tool courses for a letter grade. At least 2 courses must be from Group A. The courses in Group A are considered tools for economics research. Different research areas require different tools. Students are encouraged to consult with the Ph.D. Program Director or their dissertation advisor regarding tool courses selection.

**Group A - TOOL COURSES** (At least 6 hours)

- EC 672 – Financial Econometric Modeling
- EC 673 – Nonparametric Econometrics
- EC 674 – Experimental Economics
- EC 597\* – Bayesian Econometrics (Ph.D. Level/Liu)

**Group B – TOPIC COURSES** (At least 6 hours)

**MICRO**

- EC 612 – Seminar in Industrial Organization
- EC 623 – Public Expenditure and Policy Analysis
- EC 624 – Political Economy
- EC 640 – Theory of Risk and Insurance
- EC 597\* – Environmental Economics (Ph.D. Level – Price)
- EC 597\* – Urban Economics (Ph.D. Level – Ross)
- EC 597\* – Behavioral Decision Theory (Ph.D. Level – Schneider)

**MACRO**

- EC 616 – Seminar in Monetary Economics
- EC 631 – Seminar in International Finance
- EC 676 – Advanced Monetary Policy
- EC 597\* – Dynamic Stochastic General Equilibrium (Ph.D. Level – Givens)
- EC 597\* – Other Special Topics (Ph.D. Level)

**Supplementary courses** (at least 6 hours)

Students must choose at least 2 additional courses from Group A or Group B. If students choose a supplementary course from Group B, they are allowed to register as pass/fail.

Note that core courses, topic and tool courses (Groups A and B), and supplementary courses from Group A must be taken for a letter grade. Only supplementary courses from Group B can be taken as pass/fail.

**Research development courses**

- EC 698 - Research in Economics
- EC 699 - Dissertation Research

Students start taking EC 698 and EC 699 in their 3rd year.

**Proposed Changes**

We propose four changes in the Economics Ph.D. Program.

- 1) Eliminate ST 554 - Mathematical Statistics as a required course and include necessary topics from ST 554 in EC 600 - Advanced Mathematical Economics.
- 2) Create the Seminar in Macroeconomic Theory II (to be developed and taught by Dr. Ghazi) to replace EC 616 - Monetary Economics in the first-year macro sequence and be included in macroeconomics qualifying exams.
- 3) Divide all field courses into 2 groups: A - tool and B - topic. Students must take 6 field courses and at least 2 of those courses must be from Group A.
- 4) In addition to the field courses, we suggest students be required to take at least 2 supplementary courses. The supplementary courses can be taken in any semester of their second or third year in the program for Pass or Fail grade.
- 5) Require students to take EC 698 from the third year on.

# Re: Guide to the PhD program in Finance

Inbox

**Sandra Mortal**

Fri, Feb 1, 2:51  
PM (10 days  
ago)

to Finance, me

Dear Laura,

The finance faculty voted unanimously to pass the changes to the PhD program proposed: 7 faculty members voted yes, not counting the 4 members of the Finance PhD program committee that proposed the changes (Doug, Shawn, Josh and I). So, there are a total of 11 people in favor.

Below is a summary of the most significant changes:

- introduce a written comprehensive exam in the summer of the second year
- the preliminary qualifying exam will remain, however the subject will now be microeconomics. It covers questions from the two microeconomics courses: FI 601 Advanced Microeconomic Theory and FI 660 Game Theory
- Students can choose two finance electives (500 level courses). Before they were required to take FI 512 Money and Capital Markets and FI 515 Quantitative Investment Analysis
- There are other changes made to reflect current practices in the program, like e.g., we no longer grade comprehensive exams on a letter grade, but on High pass, pass, etc.

Bob Brooks suggested I streamline the guide, and I concur, so I will do that next, once we finish with the recruiting, but that will not change the content of the guide.

Please advise what we need to do next.

Sincerely,  
Sandra

**Sandra Mortal** | Associate Professor of Finance

---

Culverhouse College of Business  
[The University of Alabama](#)  
223 Alston Hall  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487  
Phone 205-348-7076  
[scmortal@culverhouse.ua.edu](mailto:scmortal@culverhouse.ua.edu)



CULVERHOUSE  
COLLEGE OF COMMERCE

ECONOMICS | FINANCE  
AND LEGAL STUDIES

## GUIDE TO GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN FINANCE

July 2018

### *Introduction*

The finance faculty has compiled this *Guide to Graduate Programs in Finance* in order to communicate our program's goals, activities, and policies to current and prospective graduate students. Graduate study can and should be a rewarding and challenging experience. Given the wide variety of programs and diversity of courses offered in a major comprehensive university, the new or prospective student may find it difficult to select a program of study best matching the student's interests, foundation skills, and long-term career goals. Furthermore, rules and regulations are dispersed throughout different administrative documents, thereby making it difficult to completely understand requirements and options for each program. This *Guide* brings together various administrative rules and provides answers to the most frequently asked questions concerning graduate programs in finance. It augments, but does not supersede *The University of Alabama Graduate Catalog*. *The Graduate Catalog* sets forth academic policies and requirements applicable to students throughout all divisions of the University and also the particular policies and requirements of the Culverhouse College of Business. The *Guide* is not comprehensive; however, it provides greater specificity about important finance program options and requirements than does the *Graduate Catalog*. The additional details in the *Guide* are pertinent only to the finance graduate programs. The Graduate Finance Programs Committee for the Department of Economics, Finance, and Legal Studies keeps the *Guide* current and presents significant changes to the department faculty for approval.



Dr. Sandra Mortal is the graduate advisor for the Ph.D. finance program. She can be reached at 205-348-7076 or by email at [scmortal@culverhouse.ua.edu](mailto:scmortal@culverhouse.ua.edu) .

#### **I. The Department of Economics, Finance, and Legal Studies**

The department offers separate masters (MS) and doctoral (Ph.D.) degrees in economics and finance with a combined faculty. The integration of finance and economics is a distinguishing mark of our programs. The faculty, who specialize in many sub-disciplines of economics and finance, provide students a breadth of training with exposure to both fields. The faculty has a solid record of scholarly research published in major professional journals and are active participants at national and international conferences. A separate departmental report, *Faculty Research Profiles*, lists the faculty, their backgrounds, and research interests. This report is available upon request.

The department faculty are productive researchers and effective teachers because the College and University provide positive support for research and teaching. There is extensive access to databases, computers, computerized classrooms, specialty software, research stipends, travel support, bibliographic resources, and so forth. The physical plant for the Culverhouse College of Business consists exclusively of state-of-the-art facilities: Alston Hall opened in 1991 has faculty offices and auditoriums; refurbished Bidgood Hall opened in 1994 has graduate student offices with individual computers, conference rooms, and general purpose classrooms; the Angelo Bruno Business Library opened in 1994 and provides access to on-line information resources, corporation reports, hundreds of periodicals and serials, licenses for some fifty business databases, thousands of electronic journals, and approximately 194,000 book volumes; the Bashinsky Computer Center opened in 1994 provides access to laboratory classrooms, a network of personal computers and software, and expert consulting services.

Several research institutes lie within the Culverhouse College of Business and are pertinent to graduate programs in finance: The Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) serves as the central reservoir within the state of Alabama for business, economic, and demographic data.

CBER originates independent research projects and seeks contracts and grants for research by faculty and graduate students.

In conclusion, the graduate programs in finance offered by the Department of Economics, Finance, and Legal Studies blend the strengths of its faculty, both theoretical and empirical, with the unique resources provided by the College and the University. The programs are rigorous and contemporary. By accepting talented graduate students into its programs, the department moves toward its objective of training individuals to better serve society.

## **II. Overview on Graduate Studies**

### ***A. Admissions***

Admission decisions are made by relying on test scores (Graduate Management Admissions Test, "GMAT"), the grade point average and content of previous collegiate work, letters of recommendation, and the applicant essay (Statement of Purpose) contained within the Graduate School application. Students are advised to consult the detailed information about the application process contained in the *Graduate Catalog*. The catalog and an application may be obtained electronically at the Graduate School's website <http://graduate.ua.edu/>

The choice of undergraduate major does not preclude successful completion of graduate studies in finance. It is important to realize, however, that most graduate finance courses assume that all students are familiar with a common core of fundamental concepts in accounting, statistics, calculus, linear algebra, economics, and finance. Students with deficient backgrounds in these core courses, especially calculus and microeconomics, should prepare for the graduate courses, prior to commencing the program. Either through self-study or formal registration/audit students should master the content of foundations courses in accounting, calculus, statistics, economics and finance. Selected courses include:

- AC 210-Introduction to Accounting

- MA 121-Calculus and Its Applications or MA 125-Calculus I (prefer MA 126-Calculus II, MA 227-Calculus III and MA 237-Linear Algebra and Matrix Theory.)
- ST 260-Statistical Data Analysis
- EC 308-Intermediate Microeconomics
- EC 309-Intermediate Macroeconomics
- FI 302-Business Finance

1. *Expedited Admission*

Undergraduate finance majors enrolled at The University of Alabama who have completed at least 91 hours and have an overall GPA of 3.0 or better may be eligible for a simplified admission process. An expedited application is available at the graduate school website at [www.graduate.ua.edu](http://www.graduate.ua.edu). For additional information, contact Debra Wheatley, by telephone: 205-348-6683, or by e-mail: [dwheatley@culverhouse.ua.edu](mailto:dwheatley@culverhouse.ua.edu).

2. *Admission to the Masters as a Step Toward the Ph.D.*

Admission standards are more stringent for the Ph.D. than for the Master of Science in Finance (MSF). Some applicants qualified for the MSF program may not be qualified for the Ph.D. The applications for the MSF and Ph.D. programs are independent. An applicant denied admission to the Ph.D. is not automatically considered for the MSF. The applicant desiring admission for the Ph.D. and believing they are qualified, should make application to the Graduate School for admission to the Ph.D. program. On the other hand, a student desiring the Ph.D. yet believing their application too weak to warrant admission may elect to make application to the Graduate School for admission to the MSF program. After achieving exceptional performance in the MSF coursework, the student then might be able to present a stronger application for the Ph.D. program. The Department does not guarantee that students successfully completing the MSF program will be admitted into the Ph.D. program.

3. *Seniors in The University of Alabama taking Graduate Courses*

A senior who lacks fewer than 30 hours to complete the requirement for a bachelor's degree and who has at least a 3.0 overall grade point average may petition the department head to take a graduate course in finance. A senior who is not a part of the University Scholars Program may accumulate no more than 9 hours of graduate credit. For students not in the University Scholars Program, taking graduate courses as a senior does not reduce the number of credit hours required to obtain the MSF; the student may be in a position, however, to waive requirements if indeed they subsequently enter the MSF program.

4. *The MBA and Graduate Courses in Finance*

Students in the MBA program are eligible to take graduate courses in Finance. The MBA program is not administered through the Department of Economics, Finance, and Legal Studies, nor is the department directly involved in the admissions process for the MBA. Students in the MBA program are required to take Financial Management (FI 504). Furthermore, students intending to concentrate in finance must take at least four additional courses in finance. Students interested in more information about the MBA may contact The MBA Program, Manderson Graduate School of Business, (205)-348-9122, Box 870223, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0223.

**B. *Financial Aid***

Assistantships are held by most Ph.D. students in our graduate program. Assistantships require 10 hours ("quarter-time") or 20 hours ("half-time") per week as a research, teaching, or classroom assistant. For international students, a minimum TOEFL of 213 computer-based, 550 paper-based, 79 internet-based or the equivalent of the new TOEFL (IELTS), is required for a teaching assistantship. The IELTS minimum score for admission to a degree program or non-degree is 6.5. International students must attend and pass the course at the English Language Institute in order to renew an assistantship. (See the *Graduate Catalog* for information on the

Institute.) Assistantship experience is considered an integral part of the academic training in the Ph.D. program.

Fellowships, assistance for minority students, and other financial aid programs such as work-study and loans generally are available through the University or other external agencies. A number of our students have received Graduate Council Fellowships, which are administered by the University Graduate Council on a competitive basis. In recent years, a GPA of 3.75 and test scores in the 95th percentile were required to be considered for Graduate Council Fellowships.

#### *Assistantship Renewal*

Once an assistantship is awarded there is no guarantee that it will be renewed. Satisfactory performance of assistantship duties and maintenance of academic standards usually are sufficient to warrant renewal. Decisions concerning renewal are made on a semester-by-semester basis. The department does not normally award an assistantship to students after their fourth year in the program.

Students awarded assistantships are required to maintain their eligibility. The criteria for continued eligibility include maintaining a "B" average in their finance major field courses, satisfactory performance evaluation by faculty of assistantship duties, active participation in department seminars, and, when appropriate, passing the Ph.D. examinations. International students must attend and pass the course at the English Language Institute during their first semester. Students not maintaining their eligibility may have their assistantship revoked or reduced.

#### **C. *Considerations when the Masters is a Step toward the Ph.D.***

When the student intends to pursue the Ph.D. after completion of the MSF, certain variations of the above curriculum are advisable.

The first year of studies for the Ph.D. satisfies some but not all MSF requirements. Because the Ph.D. curriculum replaces many of the MSF required courses with their more advanced

versions, the Ph.D. student should follow the Ph.D. curriculum. The director of the MSF program may approve course substitutions for MSF required courses to facilitate this.

The MSF students typically register for four courses per semester whereas the Ph.D. students with half-time assistantships typically register for only three courses. The student in the MSF program that intends to enter the Ph.D. program may elect to take only the three Ph.D. courses, or they may register for a fourth course, such as FI 519 or FI 522, and so forth.

The MSF student having completed the first year's Ph.D. curriculum may sit for the *Preliminary Qualifying Exam* during August concluding the first year (see Section IV. C on Ph.D. Comprehensive Exams). A high mark on the exam and formal admission to the Ph.D. program through the Graduate School allows the student to proceed with the Ph.D. program.

Standards for admission to the Ph.D. program are high. Students in the MSF program hoping to proceed into the Ph.D. program should demonstrate superior academic performance in their coursework.

#### ***D. Course Waivers***

Some students may possess sufficient training to waive a required course and take another graduate finance course in its place. For example, students obtaining an undergraduate degree in finance at the University of Alabama should elect to waive FI 510. The advisor and department head must give permission for a course to be waived. Forms may be picked up in 200 Alston. Please return completed form to Debra Wheatley, 204 Alston. Waiving a course does not alter the total number of required courses nor other aspects of the program.

### **III. The Ph.D. Program in Finance**

#### ***A. Mission Statement***

The Ph.D. program in finance primarily prepares students to pursue research and teaching careers at institutions of higher learning. In order to properly train students, the Ph.D. program consists of courses in three areas: finance, economics, and quantitative methods (statistics and

econometrics). Students completing the curriculum have solid training in financial economics. The Ph.D. Finance program instills in students the capability to:

- (1) understand prevalent research in the major functional areas of finance
- (2) identify opportunities for research in finance,
- (3) effectively conduct state-of-the-art financial research, and communicate the results thereof,
- (4) communicate financial principles to audiences consisting of students, peers, faculty, and business professionals.

The Ph.D. program requires that a student demonstrate advanced knowledge about the functional areas of finance, a minor area, and research methods. In addition, the student must demonstrate research competence by completing a dissertation representing a significant contribution to human knowledge.

Students accepted into the program are not required to have obtained an undergraduate degree in business. Before commencing the program, however, the student is advised to have completed the undergraduate equivalent of courses in accounting, statistics, calculus, economics, and finance. Students lacking a strong foundation in economics, finance, or mathematics, or if they have been out of school for a long time, are advised to take electives in these subjects prior to taking the upper level courses.

#### ***B. Degree Requirements for the Ph.D. Finance***

The courses listed below represent the minimum course requirements for the Ph.D. in finance. Students may take additional electives in areas such as real estate, insurance, research

methods, financial engineering or other topics which will further their research interests. The required 48<sup>1</sup> credit hours may be partitioned as follows.

*Finance major field courses (24 hours)*

FI 512 Money and Capital Markets  
FI 515 Quantitative Investment Analysis  
 FI 601 Finance Theory I  
 FI 602 Finance Theory II  
 FI 610 Seminar in Financial Management  
 FI 614 Seminar in Investments  
 FI 624 Seminar in Financial Markets  
 FI 697 Research in Finance  
FI elective (e.g. FI 512 Money and Capital Markets)  
FI elective (e.g. FI 515 Quantitative Investment Analysis)

**Commented [MS1]:** Can select others

*Economics Minor (12 hours)*

EC 600 – Advanced Mathematical Economics  
 EC 610 Advanced Microeconomic Theory  
Either EC 611 Advanced Macroeconomic Theory or EC 660 Game Theory  
EC 570 Mathematical Economics  
 EC elective

**Formatted:** Font: Garamond, 12 pt

*Quantitative methods courses (12 hours):*

EC 670 – Econometrics  
EC 671 – Seminar in Econometrics: Panel Data  
ST 521 – Statistical Data Management  
Elective

**Formatted:** Font: Garamond, 12 pt

**Formatted:** Indent: Left: 1.31", No bullets or numbering

**Formatted:** Font: Garamond, 12 pt

**Formatted:** Indent: Left 9.45 ch

**Formatted:** Font: Not Italic

Students~~The student~~ must select ~~four~~ quantitative ~~electives~~ with approval of the graduate advisor.

Completion of the above curriculum satisfies the Graduate School and the Culverhouse College of Business course requirements and automatically earns the student a minor in

<sup>1</sup> The Graduate School requires a minimum of 48 hours of course work for a Ph.D. The Manderson Graduate School Requirements are a minimum of seven courses in the major, four in the minor and four in quantitative methods. The Finance program requires EC 610, EC 611 or EC 660 and EC 570 which is ¾ of an economics minor.



Economics. The economics program does not require a written exam for those students who pass their minor coursework with a B or better.

In scheduling electives, students should keep in mind that electives should complement the intended finance concentration area. Students must write a dissertation on a specific topic and are advised to take all electives relevant to that topic.

Many of the courses require a fair degree of mathematical proficiency. For the student with limited (or rusty) mathematical training, we suggest that MA 125-Calculus I, MA 126-Calculus II, and MA 237-Introduction to Linear Algebra or MA 227-Calculus III be completed. Likewise, students with deficient background in economics, statistics, or accounting should consider taking courses prior to commencing the program. Often, these courses are available during the summer.

*Course Loads, Sequencing, and Time Required for Completion of the Degree*

A full-time graduate load for a student with a half-time assistantship is 3 courses per semester.

The table below shows a suggested schedule for such students.

***First Year***

<b><i>Fall</i></b>	<b><i>Spring</i></b>
EC 600 Mathematical Economics (Offered in <u>summer/July and regular Fall Semester</u> )	FI 671 <del>512</del> Money and Capital Markets Seminar in Econometrics
EC 610 Seminar in Microeconomic Theory Seminar in Microeconomics	EC 660 Game Theory FI 601 Finance Theory I
FI 601 Finance Theory I FI 515 Quantitative Investment Analysis	Finance elective Quantitative Requirement
ST 521 Statistical Data Management Quantitative Requirement	
EC 670 Econometrics	

***Second Year***

<b><i>Fall</i></b>	<b><i>Spring</i></b>
FI 602 Finance Theory II / FI Seminar* Finance EC Minor Requirement / EElective	FI 624 Financial Markets* Seminar FI 610 Seminar in Financial Management* EC Minor Requirement / Elective
EC FI Elective / Quantitative Requirement	EC / Quantitative elective FI Elective / Quantitative Requirement
FI 698 Research in Finance	FI 698 Research in Finance FI 697 Research in Finance

**Third Year**

<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
FI 614 Seminar in Investments* <del>02 Finance Theory II/FI Seminar</del>	FI Seminar
FI 698 Research in Finance <del>FI Elective/Quantitative Requirement</del>	FI 699 Dissertation Research (6 hrs.)†
FI Elective/Quantitative Requirement	<del>FI 698 Research in Finance FI 697 Research in Finance</del>

**Fourth Year**

<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
FI 699 Dissertation Research (9 hrs.)	FI 699 Dissertation Research (9 hrs.)
<del>FI 698 Research in Finance</del>	<del>FI 698 Research in Finance FI 697 Research in Finance</del>

\*~~FI 601~~, FI 602 and the three finance seminars FI 610, FI 614, and FI 624 are taught in rotating ~~semesters~~ years over two years. The actual course sequence will depend upon the year of admission.

†A minimum of 24 hours of dissertation research is required by the Graduate School for a Ph.D. A student must register for at least 3 hours of FI 699 each fall and spring semester until the dissertation is completed even if the 24 hour requirement has been met.

Students that are not on half-time assistantships may elect to register for four courses per semester during the first year. If so, then they should move forward required courses such as finance, statistics, or an economics elective into the first year.

Students take the *Preliminary Qualifying Exams* in the August following their first year; i.e., during the break between the second summer session and the fall semester. During the spring of the second year, and throughout the third year, the student develops a research program by preparing manuscripts for seminar courses, proposals and papers for conferences, and pursues independent research on potential dissertation topics.

Following completion of the second year of class work, the student is eligible to complete the *Comprehensive Exam* (see section D below). ~~It is recommended that the student complete the~~

~~Comprehensive Exam as early as possible. This allows time for completing and defending a dissertation proposal as early as possible.~~ After passing the Comprehensive Exam, the student focuses on the dissertation and research presentations or publications.

#### *Scholastic Requirements*

Students must maintain satisfactory progress, as enumerated below, or they may be asked to withdraw from the program.

- (1) If a student's cumulative grade average falls below 3.0, or if the student earns a "D" or "F" in a graduate course, the student may be asked to withdraw from the program.
- (2) If a student's grade average in their finance major field courses falls below 3.0, or if the student earns three demerit points, the student automatically will be dismissed from the program. A grade of "C" earns one demerit point, a "D" earns two demerit points, and an "F" earns three demerit points. The student may petition the Department Program Committee to grant an exception to the dismissal policy; the Program Committee decides whether extenuating circumstances warrant the exception.

#### *Course Waivers*

In some circumstances beginning students already may possess sufficient training so that their interests would be served better by waiving a required course and instead taking another graduate finance course. The instructor of the course to be waived and the academic coordinator of the Ph.D. program must grant permission for the course to be waived. Waiving a course does not alter the total number of required courses or other aspects of the program.

#### *Participation at Department Seminars*

A requirement for assistantship renewal is that students attend the department research seminars. These seminars offer the opportunity to hear top researchers from across the nation and, on occasion, from overseas. Attendance at the seminars provides students with insight about research objectives, manuscripts, presentation style, etc. Students are encouraged to prepare

Formatted: Keep with next

manuscripts for presentation at the departmental brown-bag. Quite often, students that have manuscripts accepted for presentation at regional or national conferences use the brown-bag series as a practice session. The department strongly encourages students to develop research manuscripts for presentation at conferences. Participation at conferences is beneficial for the student's professional interests (financing for conference expenses may be available; see "Financial Aid" section.)

### ***C. Ph.D. Qualifying Examinations***

The *Preliminary Qualifying Exams (PQE)* are taken during August following completion of one full year in the program. The *PQE* asks ~~specific problem-oriented~~ questions that draw upon a knowledge-base that Ph.D. candidates are expected to have mastered.

*The following guidelines govern administration of the Ph.D. Qualifying exams.*

1. The Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Committee typically shall offer *Preliminary Qualifying Exams (PQE)* during the period from the end of the second summer session to the beginning of the Fall semester. Students satisfying the Scholastic Requirements described in the *Guide to Graduate Programs in Finance* will be eligible to sit for the exam once they ~~have~~ successfully ~~have~~ completed EC 610, FI 512, FI 515, and FI 604 and EC 660. The *PQE* draws upon material typically studied in these following courses:

FI 510, Financial Management;  
FI 512, Money and Capital Markets  
FI 515, Quantitative Investment Analysis  
FI 601, Finance Theory I

~~Students with undergraduate backgrounds in finance likely will have studied material typically contained in FI 510. This course therefore is not on the list of required courses for the Ph.D. program (see Section B, Ph.D. Degree Requirements). Students with deficient finance backgrounds should take this course prior to commencing the program.~~

Formatted: Keep with next

Formatted: Not Highlight

Formatted: Not Highlight

Formatted: Not Highlight

Formatted: Not Highlight

2. The *Preliminary Qualifying Exams* will be prepared by the Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam Committee. The exam committee should seek input from the course instructors while preparing the exams. Students must register for the exam at least four weeks preceding the test date.

3. Students earning a ~~an~~ “High PassA”, or “PassB”, or “Low Pass” at the PhD level on the *Preliminary Qualifying Exams* are eligible to continue in the Ph.D. program.

**Commented [MS2]:** I am changing this to reflect what we currently do.

4. Students earning lower than a “Low PassB” at the PhD level on the *Preliminary Qualifying Exams* may pursue the following courses of action:

(a). The student may elect to complete 30 hours of graduate coursework and receive a MSF degree. Course substitutions for specific MSF program requirements may be approved by the coordinator of the MSF program in order to facilitate completion of the degree in a timely manner. A “Low Mark” is regarded as a passing mark on the MSF Comprehensive Exams.

(b). If the student has two or fewer C's for all courses completed in the Ph.D. program, the student may request to retake the *Preliminary Qualifying Exams* the next time it is offered. The Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Committee will render a decision on the request.

In addition to their program requirements, students continuing in the Ph.D. program are required to take the following ~~five-six~~ finance courses:

FI 601 Finance Theory I  
FI 602 Finance Theory II  
FI 610 Seminar in Financial Management  
FI 614 Seminar in Investments  
FI 624 Seminar in Financial Markets  
FI 6987 Research in Finance

They also are encouraged to independently study classic readings in finance, to take electives in their desired specialization area, and generally to begin development of their research program. The student should prepare manuscripts (for seminar courses and otherwise) as well as conference presentations (internal and external to the department).

#### **D. Ph.D. Comprehensive Examinations**

During the summer following the completion of the second year of coursework, the student will be required to take a Comprehensive Exam. This exam has two components: a written and an oral component. The written exam will include questions from all 600 level finance courses offered in the prior two academic years. The written exam will follow the same guidelines as those governing the administration of the Ph.D. Qualifying exams, outlined in section C above.

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0"

During the summer following the completion of the second year of courseworkFor the oral component of the Comprehensive Exam, the student will be required to prepare an original research paper on a topic of interest to the student. It is recommended that the student complete the Comprehensive Exam as early as possible. This allows time for completing and defending a dissertation proposal as early as possible. The student will secure the participation of a faculty member to serve as the primary advisor in the preparation of the research paper. Generally, this will be a faculty member with a research interest in the student's chosen topic area. An advisor should be selected no later than May 31 following the student's second year in the program.

A first draft of the research paper must be submitted to the primary advisor no later than October 1 of the student's third year in the program. A draft which attempts to address any concerns of the primary advisor, which are to be specified in writing, should be submitted to the primary advisor and the academic coordinator of the finance Ph.D. program no later than February 1 of the student's third year in the program. A response detailing how the student has addressed the concerns of the primary advisor should be submitted with this draft.

Formatted: Highlight

To satisfy the comprehensive examination requirement, the student must then orally defend the research paper before a committee of the graduate finance faculty, which may be a committee of the whole, but not less than four graduate finance faculty members, prior to May 1 of the student's third year in the program. Failure to defend by May 1 of the student's third year in the program constitutes a failure of the comprehensive exam. Notice of the defense date and time and

a copy of the paper will be made available to all graduate finance faculty at least two weeks prior to the defense date. ~~The primary advisor's initial concerns and the student's response to the primary advisor's concerns will be available to any graduate finance faculty member who requests them.~~

The oral defense of the paper may occur within existing mechanisms for presentation of faculty and student research. Following the oral defense, the aforementioned committee will determine whether the student has successfully met the requirements of the comprehensive examination.

If the committee determines, by majority vote, that the student has failed the examination it will provide its concerns in writing to the student, who will have one additional opportunity to successfully defend the research. A revised version of the research paper with a separate response indicating how the committee's concerns were addressed must be submitted to the primary advisor and the academic coordinator of the finance Ph.D. program no later than September 1 of the student's fourth year in the program. The student must then present the revised research paper to a committee of the faculty, constituted in the manner described above, no later than October 1 of the student's fourth year in the program. The committee determines the outcome of the second presentation in a manner similar to that described above. A student who has failed the exam by failing to defend by May 1 of the student's third year in the program must also successfully orally defend their research by October 1 of the student's fourth year in the program. Procedures for the oral defense in this case are identical to those for a timely first attempt with the exception that no further attempts are permitted. In any event, failure to successfully defend by October 1 of the student's fourth year in the program constitutes a second failed attempt. A second failure will result in dismissal from the program. Students dismissed for a second failure may apply for a MSF degree and are exempted from the MSF Comprehensive Exam requirement.

A student passing the comprehensive examination is eligible to defend a dissertation proposal. All dates specified herein are the latest dates at which the requirements can be met and

students are encouraged to complete the research paper and orally defend it at the earliest possible date.

### ***E. The Dissertation***

Each Ph.D. student is required to write a dissertation demonstrating the ability to do independent research. The following policies apply to the dissertation phase:

Throughout the dissertation phase the student must register and complete a minimum of 24 hours of "dissertation research" (FI 699).

The Department Head officially appoints the Dissertation Committee. The students ask a faculty member to serve as chairperson of his/her Dissertation Committee, after the student has passed the *Comprehensive Exams*. Other faculty members are selected by mutual agreement between the student and faculty member. The Committee is composed of not less than five members, and with one member must be from outside the student's major department, no more than three from the finance faculty and no fewer than one from outside the Department.

Formatted: Highlight

Formatted: Highlight

Formatted: Highlight

Commented [MS3]: FEB changed this to be in line with the grad school requirements.

The Committee Chairperson arranges a formal "Proposal Defense." The student should complete the form "Application for Admission to Candidacy" from the Graduate School website and take it to the proposal with them. The Proposal Defense is a preliminary oral examination during which the student orally presents and defends the proposal. The Committee may question the student's knowledge of the dissertation topic as well as the major, minor and quantitative areas. In unusual circumstances the Committee may direct the student to prepare further for the Proposal Defense and another meeting may be scheduled.

At the Proposal Defense the Committee should provide the student with sufficient guidance so that the student understands Committee's expectations about research to be performed for completion of the dissertation. Upon successful defense of the proposal the Committee members sign the "Application for Admission to Candidacy," the form then is forwarded to the Culverhouse College of Business Dean for signature, and finally to the Graduate School. When



the Dean of the Graduate School has signed the form the student is admitted to candidacy and has obtained "ABD" status (all but dissertation).

The student works on completing the dissertation in consultation with the Dissertation Committee. At some point the Committee chairperson schedules a final oral examination during which time the student must present and defend the dissertation. The chairperson must invite the college faculty to the Dissertation Defense and the student must make a copy of the dissertation available to all faculty (for example, leave one with the department secretary). Upon successful defense of the dissertation the appropriate forms must be signed by the Committee and forwarded to the Graduate School.

It is the student's responsibility to maintain contact with the Graduate School and be sure that all requirements, deadlines, forms, etc., are properly completed and submitted.