

Doctoral Dissertation Handbook

Doctor of Business Administration

In Management

American Business Management and

Technology College, Switzerland

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1. Introduction

Welcome to American Business Management and Technology College (ABMTC) - doctoral degree program.

American Business Management and Technology College (ABMTC), doctoral degree prepares you to achieve the highest level of formal study as scholar-practitioners. Completing your doctoral degree program also represents a new beginning: your entry into the community of scholars within a field of study. Your doctoral studies will empower you to support the discovery of new knowledge and contribute to your professional field through scholarship, practice, and service.

Reading and returning to this manual as well as to the ABMTC Dissertation Guide and ABMTC Academic Progress, Academic Probation and Academic Dismissal Policy frequently will help you understand the components and specific requirements of your degree program and maintain satisfactory academic progress. Careful attention to the way the components of your program work together will inform your decision making and success throughout your studies.

The entire ABMTC community is here to support you, and we hope this resource will provide guidance that strengthens your sense of purpose and promotes your scholarly development at each stage of your degree program. We wish you a rewarding academic journey and great success as you pursue a doctoral degree at ABMTC.

1.1 Introduction to DBA Dissertation Handbook:

The DBA Dissertation Handbook is designed to make the process of writing proposals and dissertations rigorous, yet as efficient as possible. It does not, however, constitute a contract between students and American Business Management and Technology College (ABMTC). Nothing in this guide is intended to alter the admission or graduation requirements of a program as published in the official Catalog. American Business Management and Technology College (ABMTC) reserves the right to update or amend this guide at any time according to American Business Management and Technology College (ABMTC) DBA program needs. The dissertation is a requirement for earning a DBA degree. It also provides a permanent record of original research. American Business Management and Technology College (ABMTC) is committed to the preservation and dissemination of this research. The first section of this guide provides a general overview of degree requirements and

policies. The subsequent sections address dissertation requirements, procedures, and responsibilities of the Dissertation Committee Chair and members, Dissertation Guide and mentors. The guidelines for writing, formatting, and publishing the dissertation are contained in the separate Dissertation Publication Guide.

1.2 Degree Requirements:

The degree requires a total of 60 Credit hours of coursework and dissertation thesis. Of these 45 credits include 12 courses/36 credit hours of didactic coursework on selected business management topics and 3 courses/ 9 credit hours focused on research, methodology and scholarly writing skills. In the 9 credits interlocking suite of 3 courses, the student is required to complete the embedded qualifying comprehensive exam in the form of a research paper/capstone project preferably the outline of the student’s research proposal/plan. Following the completion of the coursework and admission to DBA candidacy, the students will continue to work on their dissertation which is of 15 credit hours.

1.3 Dissertation Timeline:

The time to complete the dissertation courses for doctoral students may not exceed three years in total without written approval by the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) and/or the CAO’s designee. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the DBA degree within their two year track, based on their Academic Plan (AP).

1.4 Grading:

1.4.1 The Institutional Grading Scale for the 15courses/45 credit hours is:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
F	69 and Below

1.4.2 The Institutional In-Progress Grading Scale for the 15 credit dissertation

S.....Satisfactorily Progress

1.5 Dissertation Requirements:

American Business Management and Technology College (ABMTC) DBA programs require a five-chapter dissertation format. Through their dissertation, students must demonstrate a synthesis of their doctoral study, knowledge, and scholarship with a significant research project that contributes to general principles of knowledge in the field(s) potentially affected by the research.

2. Dissertation Chapters:

A dissertation is an extensive original kind of research task in which the student generates his/her own research topic and research proposal/plan. With the help, assistance and guidance of the dissertation guide and the dissertation committee, the student executes his/her research proposal/plan. Please refer to the online ABMTC Dissertation Process Guide for more details. Although every dissertation is unique, the dissertation process moves through a similar sequence of major steps/milestones and most dissertation manuscripts have five major chapters.

2.1 The typical ABMTC dissertation consists of five chapters:

1. Chapter 1: Introduction
2. Chapter 2: Literature Review
3. Chapter 3: Methodology
4. Chapter 4: Results/Findings
5. Chapter 5: Discussions, Implications and Recommendations

2.2 Some major approaches and elements in writing the dissertation...The DBA candidate will write descriptive chapters using a number of research methodology and approaches. The complete written dissertation will comprise the sum of these chapters. Reasonable flexibility is allowed and encouraged to meet specific needs of each dissertation, but the majority of dissertations will follow the format approved by ABMTC. Some major approaches used in writing dissertations are:

1. Conceptualization and Introduction: Where and How to begin...One of the most difficult aspects of research -- and one of the least discussed -- is how to develop the idea for the research project in the first place. It is based on concept mapping method and/or other methods discussed in the 3 interlocking

suite of courses DBA 1013,1014 and 1015. These courses and professors help student to clarify and map out the key research issues in an area, to help them operationalize the programs or interventions or the outcome measures for their study. The concept mapping method isn't the only method around that might help researchers formulate good research problems and projects. Virtually any method that's used to help individuals and groups to think more effectively would probably be useful in research formulation. Some of the methods that might be included in our toolkit for research formulation might be: brainstorming, nominal group technique, focus groups, Delphi methods, and facet theory. And then, of course, there are all of the methods for identifying relevant literature and previous research work.

2. Organizational Perspectives: Networking and sharing...organizational perspectives is one of the important aspects of research. It covers the different areas of different organizational perspective which will enhance the student's ability to work in group; team and also it will enable students to take individual responsibilities.

3. Research Methodology: Which method is appropriate and why...A thorough grounding in research methods, quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods and in the literature related to area of inquiry, will prepare student to read and evaluate others' research, to conduct their own DBA level research. To achieve proficiency in research design and methodology, student need to develop proficiency in at least two research areas before they engage in own research:

- 3.1.1 A "survey" of research methods will familiarize with different types of qualitative, quantitative and mixed research methods including the skills needed to read and critique others' research.
- 3.1.2 A focused reading program will develop proficiency in the specific research method(s) intended to be used for research.
- 3.1.3 There are many types of research methods available, both traditional and non-traditional. ABMTC recognizes that scholarship on the interdisciplinary margins may lead to new research concepts. Qualitative, quantitative and mixed research methods acceptable in the DBA Program include, but are not limited to the following:
 - Case studies
 - Content analysis
 - Field studies
 - Participant observation
 - Action and action-advocacy research
 - Evaluation research
 - Biographical, literary and historical research
 - Theoretical and conceptual bibliographic research
 - Feminist research methods
 - Arts-based research methods

- Exploratory research

Regardless of which research design and methods student choose, dissertation proposal must include an explicit, detailed discussion of the research methods student propose to use and a rationale for selection of methods. Discussion of methods should be framed in such a way that other scholars will understand and can critically evaluate them.

3. Dissertation Tasks

3.1 Identify Area of Research and General Research Questions:

When a student takes the first course in the program, he/she will begin to review literature and identify a general research topic of interest based on their interest, background, and academic goals. The student should follow the instructions stated in the courses. The student's professors, mentors and dissertation guide will assist the student to evaluate, record progress and send feedback based on which the student can make revisions to his/her research.

3.2 State Research Questions

As students continue in the program, they are expected to narrow down their research questions as part of the course assignments. The professors, mentors and dissertation guide can help the students to evaluate and use the rubric to record progress and send feedback on the LMS. Students can make revisions based on feedback.

3.3 Draft of Problem Statement and Introduction

Students will continue to review literature and interact with their professors, mentors and dissertation guide on their own research; identify their study knowledge gap; and develop a draft of the problem statement and introduction.

3.4 Draft Research Methodology

Students will start describing the methodology section of their dissertation research when they take methodology courses. Students should follow the instructions stated by the dissertation guide.

3.5 Draft of Dissertation Proposal/Plan

After the student's completion of DBA 1013, 1014 and 1015 and the qualifying comprehensive exam, a dissertation Committee is assembled and a dissertation guide will be appointed. The student will work with the dissertation guide on refining his/her proposal. The student should have a substantial draft of the proposal. The student should contact his/her dissertation guide at least once biweekly to discuss progress and any issues in the proposal. Substantive drafts of the working proposal will be uploaded to the LMS and the Guide will provide feedback. The final version submitted in the session will be evaluated by the dissertation guide before forwarding said document to the dissertation committee. Please refer to ABMTC online Dissertation Process Guide for more details and milestones.

3.5.1 The draft Dissertation Proposal/Plan: A Focus on Structure

As the term itself suggests, this is a proposal for the final dissertation project, which should persuade the committee members that the proposal should be a valuable, interesting, and of complex questions. This is a shorter paper than the final dissertation, but it's equally as important because this is the point when student will think of a significant question and set up a plan for assembling information and writing the paper.

Structure of Dissertation Proposal/Plan:

- Dissertation title
- Objectives - Aim for up to three objectives. If it is too extensive at this point, it will seem like students plan doesn't have a focus, so students need to narrow it down.
- Literature –You are expected to list some specific references in this section. Furthermore, You should at least need to mention the areas of study, schools of thought, and other sources of information you are going to use during the research stage.
- Research - This is the main section, where student will elaborate the ideas of research question. Students will clearly outline the area of research.
- Methodology - The dissertation project can be non-empirical (if the resources come from previously published projects) or empirical (if student collect data through questionnaires or other methods). In this section, you need to explain the methods of collecting data.
- Potential outcomes - Where do you think you'll end up after all the research and analyzing? Explain the outcome you expect to come down to.
- Timeframe - Create a schedule that explains how you will manage all stages of dissertation writing within a specific timeframe.
- List of references –You are supposed to include this part using the APA Style of scholarly writing.

4. Final Dissertation Proposal/Plan

The Dissertation Committee will review the student's dissertation proposal to ascertain that the student's knowledge, skills, and conceptual framework are sufficient for undertaking rigorous inquiry into the student's designated field. All three Committee members will review the dissertation proposal and determine if the proposal is ready for undertaking this research study. Once again, please refer to ABMTC online Dissertation Process Guide for more details.

5. Dissertation Manuscript...Writing, Writing and more Writing

5.1 Elements of the Dissertation

Preliminary Pages

Title Page

The Title of the Dissertation Your title must be exactly the same one as submitted on your dissertation proposal.

Your Name

You must use your “name of record” on the title page. This is your official name as recorded by the Office of Student Enrollment Services. You may not include job titles or organizational affiliations (your diocese, your military unit, your employer, etc.). For clergy and religious, the titles “Rev.,” “Sr.,” or “Br.” are acceptable, while “Fr.” is not acceptable. Although you may have been sponsored and supported in your studies, your dissertation is your own work, for which you are solely responsible. You may recognize sponsors in an acknowledgement or dedication.

The Copyright Symbol ©

Copyright privileges vest with you as author immediately upon creation of your dissertation, whether or not you include the © symbol on your title page, and whether or not you register your copyright with the U.S. Copyright Office in the Library of Congress. You must decide whether to place the © symbol on your title page.

The Date

The date on the title page of your dissertation is the year (no day or month) in which your dissertation will be published. This is also the year in which you graduate and your copyright takes effect.

Abstract

You are required to write an abstract of your dissertation. The text of the abstract should be double-spaced, and should provide a concise summary of the following information:

- A statement of the problem
- A description of the research procedure or method
- An explanation of the results of the research
- A summary of your conclusions

Body of Text

Introduction

An introduction is optional. If you choose to include it, please follow your discipline-specific guidelines in deciding whether to make the introduction an independent section or to consider it formally as your first chapter. In either case, the introduction is the equivalent of a first chapter of your text and will be numbered accordingly. It is not a part of your preliminary materials.

Text

This section will cover the main body of your Dissertation.

Notes/Footnotes/Bibliography

Footnotes are strongly preferred over chapter endnotes. A reader of a microfilm copy of your dissertation will have considerably greater access to information by including footnotes on each page. Generally, you should number footnotes consecutively throughout the entire paper. However, if there are more than 100 footnotes, number them consecutively by chapter. Endnotes, when used, should appear at the end of each chapter — never at the end of the entire paper

5.2a. Sample of Ideal Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PARTICULARS	Page No
ABSTRACT	XX
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION Introduction Problem Statement Research Question(s)	XX
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW Literature Review Theoretical Orientation and Conceptual Framework Hypotheses	XX
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY Research Design Study Population Data Collection Tools Variables - Independent and Dependent Variables Statistical Analysis	XX
CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS	XX
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION	XX
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5.2b Table of Contents.....More Details

ABSTRACT

- Concise, brief, rational statement of what was done in the study (150-200 words)

- Describes the key findings and conclusion of the study
- Main numeric results (effects, significance from statistical analyses) included.

INTRODUCTION

- Presents the context and the knowledge gap, the study purpose, what was done in the study and how it fills the knowledge gap.
- Clear and specific to the topic.
- Reflects the specific characteristics of the study that is already conducted.

Problem Statement

- Novel and significant study.
- Problem clearly identified; knowledge gap, study significance and novelty clearly addressed
- Study purpose and aims stem clearly from the problem statement and knowledge gap.
- Clearly presented, focused and specific
- Theory-based

Research Questions

- Question(s) clear, articulated and specific corresponding exactly to the study purpose.
- Thought provoking; provide original insights to the issues.
- Promise of contribution to discipline, and or communities is clear and compelling.
- Clearly addressing the knowledge gap.
- Comprehensive in scope. Includes main and sub questions.
- Refers to the main constructs and their relationships (relationships to be investigated in the study).

LITERATURE REVIEW

- There is a relevant synthesis of empirical and theoretical literature
- Critical understanding of literature is evident in style, organization and content
- Mastery of appropriate canon is evident. Sources cited are rich and diverse.
- Recent publications.
- Clearly Identifies and discusses the knowledge gap
- Comprehensive in scope.
- Key issues are included. Addresses all the components of the research question/s (main constructs and their associations)
- Multiple citations from diverse literature are woven together cogently.

Theoretical Orientation and Conceptual Framework

- The theory, theories, theoretical models, or mechanisms have been identified and are relevant to the research questions and associations under study.
- The concepts and the relationships among the constructs/variables are presented clearly and logically
- The Dependent Variables (D.V) and Independent variables (I.V.) are clearly assigned in the conceptual framework and there is a clarity of directionality
- There is a clear graphical presentation.

Hypotheses

- The hypotheses correspond to the research questions.
- The hypotheses are relevant and flow logically from the theory used.
- The hypotheses are accurately stated.
- The hypotheses are testable based on operationalized variables.

METHODOLOGY

- Research Design
- The design is accurately identified and described.
- The design is appropriate and it will answer the study's hypotheses.
- Includes sufficient information on protection for Human Subjects.

Study Population

- Populations have been identified and described
- Recruiting and sampling procedure have been identified.
- Power analysis, effect size have been calculated, are sufficient and correctly presented.

Data Collection Tools

- Measurement instrument, etc. are valid, reliable, and correctly presented.
- Measures exist for all variables.
- Variables - Independent and Dependent Variables (subheading).
- Operationalized variables are identified and discussed.
- Each variable described based on type (nominal, continuous etc.) and role in the analysis (IV/DV).

Statistical Analysis

- There is a correspondence between the research questions-measures variables-analysis

- Multivariate statistics was performed unless the study was a randomized double blind clinical trial for which equivalence of study groups is clearly demonstrated. Multivariate analysis is appropriate and specific for each research question and for type of DV and IV.

5.3 Submission of Final Draft Manuscript for Review by Dissertation Committee

The student with help, assistance and guidance of the dissertation guide prepares his/her draft dissertation manuscript for submission to the Dissertation Committee. Please refer the ABMTC online Dissertation Process Guide for more details.

6. Dissertation Defense

Students will get sufficient time to prepare for a defense. The institution wants graduate candidates to be as prepared as possible when attending a defense. It's important to keep in mind that if you go into a defense with the right attitude and preparation, failing is nearly impossible. The committee wants to see how well you know your subject and your research. Student will be put under pressure to think in handling critical scenarios as to face unknown questions, but as with a job interview, practicing ahead of time will lead to a successful defense.

Facing a defense can be stressful, but think of it as an opportunity to share what you've learned. Remember that you aren't arguing points when you defend your work. Instead, a proper dissertation defense gives you and your faculty advisers the chance to discuss your topic and research in greater detail

6.1 Pre-defense of Dissertation Manuscript with recommended corrections

After the student has submitted his/her dissertation manuscript to the dissertation guide, the Dissertation Committee will meet and reach one of three conclusions:

- The dissertation manuscript is approved as presented (with minor adjustments only).
- The dissertation manuscript is approved but with major adjustments. These adjustments must be reviewed and approved by dissertation guide before re-submission.
- The dissertation manuscript will be approved only after significant restructuring. The manuscript must be defended again after the restructuring; the second defense will be scheduled not earlier than two months after the first defense.

The student will upload the post-defense corrections as well as respond to all recommendations of the dissertation committee within 30 days of the receipt of dissertation committee's feedback. The Guide will review and provide feedback until all issues have been addressed.

6.2 Tentative Approval and Defense of Dissertation Manuscript

All corrections must be made within 30 days of the date of defense and posted again for review by the dissertation Guide.

6.3 Final Approval of Dissertation Manuscript by Committee

The Committee has reviewed the dissertation manuscript and has ascertained that the data analysis and discussion are sufficient and is a rigorous inquiry into the student's designated field. All three Committee members sign off indicating a satisfactory grade on the dissertation. .

6.4 Final Dissertation Approval by CAO

The Chief Academic Officer review and give final approval on behalf of ABMTC.

7. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1) When can I use the title Dr.?

You may use the doctoral title only after your DBA degree has been validated

2) What is the correct style to use? Is there a manual that explains

ABMTC endorses and uses APA style, as explained in the sixth edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. The APA style manual is your primary source for style guidance.

3) What font should I use to type my dissertation? What point size?

A serif font such as Palatino, Times New Roman, Century Schoolbook, Book Antiqua, or Garamond is required. Do not use Courier or New Courier. Tables and figures can use a sans serif font, such as Arial, to help improve readability and appearance. Particularly for Times New Roman, 12-point font size is preferred.

4) Which is right: italics or underlines? Can I use bold?

Italics are correct, rather than underlines. Use bold only in heading levels (APA 3.03), for certain mathematical copy (APA 4.45), and in tables and figures, sparingly, to improve readability.

5) How do I format citations of electronic sources?

APA changed its rules for electronic citations in 2009. See APA 6.31–6.32 for overall guidance and review examples of references to electronic sources (pp. 198–215).

6) Can I single-space block quotations and reference lists?

No. The sixth edition of the APA style manual specifies double-spacing for block quotations.

7) Do all the tables and figures come at the end of the dissertation? What about table titles and figure captions?

In dissertations, tables and figures (and their titles and captions) are inserted in the text as close to where they are referred to as possible. If you plan to publish your dissertation results in a journal, please see APA's many requirements for papers submitted for publication

8) What do I do if a table goes longer than one page?

Always try to fit the table on one page. If the table must run over onto the subsequent page, type the phrase table continues in parentheses flush right at the bottom of the table on the first page. Repeat the column headings, but not the table number or title, at the top of the subsequent page.

9) If including a long table or figure, can I format it in landscape instead of portrait?

Yes. The "top" of the page needs to have a margin of 1.5 in. to allow for binding. The page number is placed in the same spot as the rest of the manuscript. This formatting can be accomplished electronically in Microsoft Word.

10) Do I need a running header on my dissertation?

No. ABMTC does not use running headers on dissertations.

11) Does it matter if I write Chapter Two, Chapter II, Chapter 2, or CHAPTER 2?

Yes, it matters. Per APA, only the form Chapter 2 is correct in chapter headings. Note that in the Narrative text, chapter is capitalized when followed by a number (e.g., In Chapter 2 ...)
