

Executive Doctor of Philosophy in Business Administration

WILEY UNIVERSITY

Marshall, Texas | Division of Graduate and Online Studies

Three Concentrations: AI, Data Science & Business Innovation | Entrepreneurship | Faith-Based Administration

Program Curriculum & Requirements

Target Launch: Spring 2027 | 100% Online with Optional Residency Intensives

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1. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Executive Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Business Administration at Wiley University is a rigorous doctoral program designed for senior-level professionals, executives, and emerging leaders who seek to integrate advanced research skills with practical business expertise. The program is delivered 100% online with optional residency intensives, structured in ten 8-week intensive terms.

The program is designed for completion within two years (20 months) for students who maintain continuous full-time enrollment. Consistent with doctoral norms nationally, the average time to completion is expected to range from 2.5 to 3 years, particularly as students progress through the dissertation phase. Dissertation continuation enrollment (BUSA 7970) is a normal and expected part of the doctoral process and does not reflect academic deficiency.

This Executive Ph.D. program distinguishes itself through three specialized concentrations—AI, Data Science & Business Innovation; Entrepreneurship; and Faith-Based Administration—that allow students to develop deep expertise in areas of strategic importance to contemporary organizations. The program embeds the dissertation development process throughout the curriculum, enabling students to progressively build their doctoral research.

Approximately 30% of the program's coursework (18 of 60 credit hours) is cross-referenced from Wiley University's existing Master of Business Administration (MBA) program, carrying distinct doctoral-level course codes (BUSA 7xxx series) with enhanced doctoral expectations including peer-reviewed literature analysis, doctoral-level research papers, integration with dissertation topics, and oral scholarly presentations. The remaining 42 credit hours (70%) are uniquely doctoral.

Program Highlights

- 60 total credit hours (post-master's), consistent with nationally benchmarked Executive Ph.D./DBA programs
- 10 terms of 8-week intensive sessions
- Target completion: 2 years; average expected completion: 2.5–3 years with dissertation continuation as normal practice
- Integrated dissertation development embedded across all terms beginning in Term 4
- Three distinctive concentrations: AI, Data Science & Business Innovation | Entrepreneurship | Faith-Based Administration
- Cohort-based model fostering peer collaboration and professional networking
- 30% cross-referenced coursework from the MBA program (18 credit hours); 70% uniquely doctoral content (42 credit hours)
- Target audience: Executives with 5+ years of professional experience and a master's degree

2. PROGRAM STRUCTURE & CREDIT HOUR SUMMARY

The Executive Ph.D. in Business Administration requires 60 post-master's credit hours. This total is consistent with benchmarked Executive Ph.D. and DBA programs at peer institutions nationally, including programs at the University of North Alabama (54 hours), UT Dallas (72 hours), Keiser University (60 hours), Kennesaw State University (48 hours), and California Intercontinental University (60 hours). The 60-credit structure balances rigor with the accelerated 2-year timeline.

Component	Courses	Credit Hours
Research Foundation Courses	4 courses	12
Advanced Business Core Courses	5 courses	15
Concentration Courses	5 courses	15
Dissertation Sequence	6 enrollments	18
Total Credit Hours Required for Graduation		60

Cross-Referenced MBA Courses: 18 of the 60 credit hours (30%) are cross-referenced from existing MBA courses. These courses carry doctoral-level course codes in the BUSA 7xxx series and include enhanced doctoral expectations. The remaining 42 credit hours (70%) are uniquely doctoral, including all research foundation courses, the full dissertation sequence, and the majority of concentration courses.

Cross-Reference Distribution

Component	Total Hrs	Cross-Ref Hrs	New Doctoral Hrs
Research Foundation	12	0	12
Advanced Business Core	15	15	0
Concentration — AI, Data Science & Business Innovation	15	3 (BUSA 7415)	12
Concentration — Entrepreneurship	15	3 (BUSA 7440)	12
Concentration — Faith-Based Administration	15	0	15
Dissertation Sequence	18	0	18
Totals	60	18 (30%)	42 (70%)

Note: Maximum cross-referenced hours per student = 18 (AI, Data Science & Business Innovation or Entrepreneurship tracks) or 15 (Faith-Based Administration track). All concentrations maintain the 80% uniquely doctoral threshold at the concentration level.

3. CORE COURSES

A. Research Foundation Courses (12 Credit Hours)

These courses develop the advanced research competencies required for doctoral-level scholarship and dissertation development. All research foundation courses are unique to the Executive Ph.D. program and have no MBA cross-reference.

Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hrs	Note
BUSA 7310	Doctoral Research Methods & Design	3	New
BUSA 7320	Advanced Quantitative Analysis for Business Research	3	New
BUSA 7330	Qualitative & Mixed Methods Research	3	New
BUSA 7340	Applied Statistics & Data Analytics	3	New
Research Foundation Subtotal		12	

Course Descriptions — Research Foundation

BUSA 7310 — Doctoral Research Methods & Design (3 hrs.) Introduces the philosophical and methodological foundations of doctoral-level research in business administration. Students examine epistemological frameworks (positivism, interpretivism, pragmatism), develop research questions, and construct preliminary study designs with emphasis on alignment between questions, theoretical frameworks, and methodological choices.

BUSA 7320 — Advanced Quantitative Analysis for Business Research (3 hrs.) Advanced treatment of statistical methods for doctoral research in business, including regression analysis, structural equation modeling (SEM), factor analysis, and multivariate techniques. Students are expected to develop proficiency in at least one statistical software platform, including but not limited to R, SPSS, STATA, or SAS. Applications emphasize business research contexts, data quality, and interpretation of results for scholarly publication.

BUSA 7330 — Qualitative & Mixed Methods Research (3 hrs.) Theory and application of qualitative and mixed-methods approaches for doctoral research in organizational and business contexts. Topics include case study design, grounded theory, content analysis, thematic analysis, and mixed-methods integration. Qualitative analysis platforms such as ATLAS.ti or NVivo are introduced. Students develop a qualitative research design applicable to their dissertation topic.

BUSA 7340 — Applied Statistics & Data Analytics (3 hrs.) Applied examination of statistical and data analytics methods for doctoral research and executive decision-making. Topics include descriptive and inferential statistics, data visualization, predictive analytics, and the ethical dimensions of data use. Students will use platforms such as R, SPSS, or Python (introductory level) to complete applied assignments. Assignments bridge statistical literacy with dissertation methodology.

B. Advanced Business Core Courses (15 Credit Hours)

These courses build on MBA-level foundations with doctoral-level depth. All five courses in this component are cross-referenced from the existing MBA program with distinct doctoral course codes (BUSA 7xxx) and enhanced expectations including peer-reviewed literature analysis, doctoral-level research papers, integration with dissertation topics, and oral scholarly presentations.

Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hrs	Note
BUSA 7350	Advanced Managerial Economics, Decision Science & Economic Theory Seminar	3	MBA Cross-Ref
BUSA 7355	Advanced Financial Strategy & Capital Markets	3	MBA Cross-Ref
BUSA 7360	Organizational Theory & Executive Leadership	3	MBA Cross-Ref
BUSA 7365	Advanced Strategic Marketing & Market Analytics	3	MBA Cross-Ref
BUSA 7370	Corporate Governance, Ethics & Social Responsibility	3	MBA Cross-Ref
Advanced Business Core Subtotal		15	

Course Descriptions — Advanced Business Core

BUSA 7350 — Advanced Managerial Economics, Decision Science & Economic Theory Seminar (3 hrs.) (*Cross-ref: ECON 5310.*) This doctoral seminar extends managerial economics into rigorous theoretical territory, emphasizing micro and macroeconomic theory, game theory, behavioral economics, and conceptual modeling of market structures. Students engage with seminal and contemporary scholarly literature, critique theoretical frameworks, and apply economic modeling to dissertation-relevant research questions. Doctoral expectations include a theoretical literature synthesis and an original economic analysis paper.

BUSA 7355 — Advanced Financial Strategy & Capital Markets (3 hrs.) (*Cross-ref: FINA 5315.*) An advanced doctoral examination of financial strategy, capital markets, and corporate finance decision-making for senior executives. Topics include capital structure, cost of capital, valuation methods, mergers and acquisitions, and the alignment of financial strategy with organizational goals. Students engage with peer-reviewed literature and complete a doctoral-level financial strategy analysis integrating scholarly sources with a real-world organizational context.

BUSA 7360 — Organizational Theory & Executive Leadership (3 hrs.) (*Cross-ref: MGMT 5320.*) Advanced examination of organizational theory and leadership from a doctoral perspective. Topics include classical and contemporary organizational theories, institutional theory, resource dependence, executive leadership frameworks, and organizational change. Students analyze organizations through multiple theoretical lenses and apply leadership theory to real-world executive challenges.

BUSA 7365 — Advanced Strategic Marketing & Market Analytics (3 hrs.) (*Cross-ref: MARK 5330.*) Doctoral-level treatment of strategic marketing theory and market analytics. Topics include consumer behavior theory, brand equity, segmentation and positioning strategy, digital marketing analytics, and marketing's role in organizational value creation. Students conduct a doctoral-level market analysis integrating theoretical frameworks with empirical data.

BUSA 7370 — Corporate Governance, Ethics & Social Responsibility (3 hrs.) (*Cross-ref: BUSI 5390.*) Advanced examination of corporate governance structures, ethical frameworks, and social responsibility from a doctoral perspective. Topics include board governance theory, stakeholder theory, ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) frameworks, regulatory compliance, and the relationship between corporate ethics and organizational performance.

4. CONCENTRATION COURSES (15 Credit Hours)

Students select one of three concentrations. Each concentration consists of five courses (15 credit hours). To preserve doctoral-level distinctiveness, each concentration includes a maximum of one course cross-referenced from the MBA elective catalog (3 credit hours), with the remaining four courses (12 credit hours) developed as uniquely doctoral offerings. This ensures that 80% of each concentration's content is distinctly doctoral in nature.

Concentration A: AI, Data Science & Business Innovation

This concentration prepares executives to lead at the intersection of artificial intelligence, data science, and business innovation. Students develop both strategic leadership competencies and doctoral research literacy in AI and data-driven organizational contexts. Four of five courses are newly developed doctoral offerings; one course (BUSA 7415) is cross-referenced from the MBA program, maintaining the program's pipeline for MBA graduates while preserving the 80% doctoral content threshold.

Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hrs	Note
BUSA 7810	Foundations of AI Strategy & Business Transformation	3	New
BUSA 7820	Data Science for Executive Decision-Making	3	New
BUSA 7830	Generative AI, Innovation & Organizational Disruption	3	New
BUSA 7840	AI Ethics, Governance & Policy in Business Contexts	3	New
BUSA 7415	Strategic Information Systems & Digital Transformation	3	MBA Cross-Ref
AI, Data Science & Business Innovation Subtotal		15	1 Cross-Ref (20%)

Cross-Ref: BUSA 7415 is cross-referenced from BUSI 5310 (Strategic Information Systems and Quantitative Approach for Decision Making). 1 of 5 courses (20%) cross-referenced.

Course Descriptions — AI, Data Science & Business Innovation

BUSA 7810 — Foundations of AI Strategy & Business Transformation (3 hrs.) This course examines the strategic implications of artificial intelligence for modern enterprises, with emphasis on how executives lead AI adoption, manage organizational change, and align AI investments with competitive strategy. Students explore AI maturity models, enterprise readiness frameworks, and case studies of AI-driven business transformation across industries.

BUSA 7820 — Data Science for Executive Decision-Making (3 hrs.) An applied examination of data science methodologies and their direct application to high-stakes business decisions. Topics include predictive modeling, data visualization, machine learning fundamentals, and the interpretation of algorithmic outputs for strategic leadership contexts. Emphasis is placed on data literacy for executives who must evaluate, commission, and act on data science outputs rather than produce them.

BUSA 7830 — Generative AI, Innovation & Organizational Disruption (3 hrs.) This course investigates the emergence of generative AI technologies and their disruptive impact on industries, business models, and workforce structures. Students analyze real-world applications of large language models, generative design tools, and AI-driven automation, with particular focus on how organizations innovate responsibly and competitively in a generative AI environment. Guest practitioner engagement from industry expected.

BUSA 7840 — AI Ethics, Governance & Policy in Business Contexts (3 hrs.) A critical examination of the ethical, legal, and regulatory dimensions of AI deployment in organizational settings. Topics include algorithmic bias, data privacy, AI governance frameworks, regulatory compliance (including emerging federal and international AI policy), and the corporate social responsibility dimensions of AI adoption. Students develop organizational AI governance proposals as a signature assignment.

BUSA 7415 — Strategic Information Systems & Digital Transformation (3 hrs.) *(Cross-referenced from BUSI 5310.)* Examination of strategic information systems and their role in organizational transformation and competitive positioning. Topics include enterprise systems architecture, digital strategy, data-driven decision making, and the alignment of technology investments with organizational goals. Doctoral sections include enhanced expectations: peer-reviewed literature analysis, a doctoral-level research paper, and integration with dissertation topics.

Concentration B: Entrepreneurship

This concentration equips executives with the theoretical frameworks and applied research skills necessary to launch, scale, and sustain innovative ventures, with emphasis on venture creation, social entrepreneurship, and intrapreneurship within established organizations.

Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hrs	Note
BUSA 7440	Advanced Entrepreneurship Theory & Venture Creation	3	MBA Cross-Ref
BUSA 7445	Venture Capital, Private Equity & Entrepreneurial Finance	3	New
BUSA 7450	Social Entrepreneurship & Sustainable Enterprise	3	New
BUSA 7455	Corporate Entrepreneurship & Intrapreneurship	3	New
BUSA 7460	Global Entrepreneurship & Emerging Markets Strategy	3	New
Entrepreneurship Subtotal		15	1 Cross-Ref (20%)

Cross-Ref: BUSA 7440 is cross-referenced from MGMT 5350 (Innovation and Entrepreneurship Management). 1 of 5 courses (20%) cross-referenced.

Concentration C: Faith-Based Administration

Grounded in Wiley University's institutional mission and heritage, this concentration prepares executives to lead faith-based organizations, religious institutions, nonprofit ministries, and mission-driven enterprises with both scholarly rigor and values-centered leadership. All five courses in this concentration are uniquely doctoral with no MBA cross-reference, reflecting the specialized nature of this track.

Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hrs	Note
BUSA 7470	Leadership Theory in Faith-Based Organizations	3	New
BUSA 7475	Nonprofit Governance, Stewardship & Financial Management	3	New
BUSA 7480	Theology, Ethics & Organizational Mission Alignment	3	New
BUSA 7485	Strategic Planning for Religious & Mission-Driven Institutions	3	New
BUSA 7490	Community Development, Social Justice & Servant Leadership	3	New

Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hrs	Note
Faith-Based Administration Subtotal		15	0 Cross-Ref (0%)

Cross-Ref: No MBA cross-references in this concentration. 0 of 5 courses (0%) cross-referenced. All courses are uniquely doctoral.

5. DISSERTATION SEQUENCE (18 Credit Hours)

The dissertation development process is integrated throughout the 2-year program. Rather than isolating dissertation work to the final year, students progressively build their doctoral research across six sequential enrollments, beginning in Year 1 and culminating with a formal defense. This embedded approach ensures continuous scholarly development and timely completion within the accelerated timeline. All dissertation courses are uniquely doctoral with no MBA cross-reference.

Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hrs	Term
BUSA 7910	Dissertation Seminar I: Topic Identification & Literature Review	3	Term 4
BUSA 7920	Dissertation Seminar II: Theoretical Framework & Proposal Development	3	Term 6
BUSA 7930	Dissertation Seminar III: Methodology & IRB Preparation	3	Term 7
BUSA 7940	Dissertation Research I: Data Collection & Analysis	3	Term 8
BUSA 7950	Dissertation Research II: Findings & Discussion	3	Term 9
BUSA 7960	Dissertation Research III: Final Writing, Defense & Publication	3	Term 10
Dissertation Sequence Subtotal		18	

Dissertation Milestones

- Term 4: Dissertation topic approved; preliminary literature review completed; dissertation format selected (Option 1 or Option 2)
- Term 6: Theoretical/conceptual framework established; dissertation proposal drafted; target journal list included (Option 2 students)
- Term 7: Full methodology chapter completed; IRB application submitted; proposal defense completed
- Term 8: Data collection completed; preliminary analysis conducted
- Term 9: Comprehensive findings written; discussion chapter drafted
- Term 10: Complete dissertation defended before committee; revisions finalized; manuscript submitted; articles submitted to target journals (Option 2 students)

Dissertation Format: Two Options

Candidates select one of two dissertation formats in consultation with their committee chair. Both formats are considered equally rigorous and appropriate for the Executive Ph.D. in Business Administration. The format is selected no later than the end of Term 4 and documented in the dissertation proposal.

OPTION 1 — Traditional Five-Chapter Dissertation & Defense

A comprehensive, original dissertation consisting of five chapters:

1. **Chapter 1 — Introduction:** Statement of the problem, purpose, research questions, significance, and overview.
2. **Chapter 2 — Literature Review:** Comprehensive synthesis of theoretical and empirical literature relevant to the research problem.
3. **Chapter 3 — Methodology:** Research design, data collection procedures, instrumentation, and analytical approach.

4. **Chapter 4 — Findings:** Presentation and analysis of data with appropriate tables, figures, and statistical or thematic results.
5. **Chapter 5 — Discussion, Implications & Conclusion:** Interpretation of findings, theoretical and practical contributions, limitations, and recommendations for future research.

Defense: The candidate presents and defends the completed dissertation before the full dissertation committee in a formal oral examination open to the university community.

OPTION 2 — Three-Article Model

A portfolio-based dissertation consisting of three scholarly articles unified by a common research theme, accompanied by integrative front and back matter. This format demonstrates the candidate's capacity for sustained, publication-quality research production.

Components:

6. **Integrative Introduction:** A standalone chapter situating the three articles within a unified research agenda, theoretical framework, and dissertation purpose.
7. **Article 1, Article 2, Article 3:** Each article must be a complete, independent scholarly manuscript with its own literature review, methodology, findings, and discussion, meeting the standards of the article's target peer-reviewed journal.
8. **Integrative Conclusion:** A standalone chapter synthesizing the contributions of all three articles, discussing theoretical and practical implications, limitations, and directions for future research.

Requirements:

- The dissertation proposal must include a list of target peer-reviewed journals for each of the three articles.
- All three articles must be submitted to their target peer-reviewed journals on or prior to the dissertation defense.
- The committee chair must confirm that each article meets the scholarly standards of the designated target journal prior to approving the defense.

Defense: The candidate presents and defends the three-article portfolio before the full dissertation committee in a formal oral examination open to the university community. The defense includes a presentation of the overarching research agenda and individual article contributions.

6. PROGRAM SEQUENCING BY TERM

The following sequence maps all 60 credit hours across 10 terms of 8-week intensive sessions. Students enroll in two courses per term (6 credit hours per term). The dissertation sequence is woven into the second course slot beginning in Term 4. The comprehensive examination occurs at the end of Term 5, after all research foundation courses and the majority of advanced core courses are completed.

Term	Course Code	Course Title	Category	Credits
YEAR 1 (Terms 1–5) — 30 Credit Hours				
1	BUSA 7310	Doctoral Research Methods & Design	Research	3
1	BUSA 7350	Advanced Managerial Economics, Decision Science & Economic Theory Seminar	Core	3
Term 1 Subtotal				6
2	BUSA 7320	Advanced Quantitative Analysis for Business Research	Research	3
2	BUSA 7355	Executive Financial Strategy & Capital Markets	Core	3
Term 2 Subtotal				6
3	BUSA 7330	Qualitative & Mixed Methods Research	Research	3
3	BUSA 7360	Organizational Theory & Executive Leadership	Core	3
Term 3 Subtotal				6
4	BUSA 7340	Applied Statistics & Data Analytics	Research	3
4	BUSA 7910	Dissertation Seminar I: Topic & Literature Review	Dissertation	3
Term 4 Subtotal				6
5	BUSA 7365	Advanced Strategic Marketing & Market Analytics	Core	3
5	BUSA 74xx / 78xx	Concentration Course 1 (varies by track)	Concentration	3
Term 5 Subtotal COMPREHENSIVE EXAM (end of Term 5)				6
YEAR 2 (Terms 6–10) — 30 Credit Hours				
6	BUSA 7370	Corporate Governance, Ethics & Social Responsibility	Core	3
6	BUSA 7920	Dissertation Seminar II: Framework & Proposal	Dissertation	3
Term 6 Subtotal				6
7	BUSA 74xx / 78xx	Concentration Course 2 (varies by track)	Concentration	3
7	BUSA 7930	Dissertation Seminar III: Methodology & IRB	Dissertation	3

Term	Course Code	Course Title	Category	Credits
Term 7 Subtotal PROPOSAL DEFENSE (by end of Term 7)				6
8	BUSA 74xx / 78xx	Concentration Course 3 (varies by track)	Concentration	3
8	BUSA 7940	Dissertation Research I: Data Collection	Dissertation	3
Term 8 Subtotal				6
9	BUSA 74xx / 78xx	Concentration Course 4 (varies by track)	Concentration	3
9	BUSA 7950	Dissertation Research II: Findings	Dissertation	3
Term 9 Subtotal				6
10	BUSA 74xx / 78xx	Concentration Course 5 (varies by track)	Concentration	3
10	BUSA 7960	Dissertation Research III: Defense	Dissertation	3
Term 10 Subtotal DISSERTATION DEFENSE				6
Total Program Credit Hours				60

Key Milestones: The comprehensive examination is administered at the end of Term 5, after completion of all research foundation courses. Students must pass the comprehensive examination to be admitted to candidacy. The dissertation proposal defense occurs by the end of Term 7. The final dissertation defense occurs in Term 10.

7. MBA-TO-EXECUTIVE PH.D. PIPELINE & CROSS-REFERENCED COURSES

A hallmark of this program is the strategic alignment between Wiley University's Master of Business Administration (MBA) and the Executive Ph.D. in Business Administration. This pipeline model is consistent with best practices at institutions nationwide where doctoral programs in business cross-reference master's-level courses—assigning distinct course codes and enhanced doctoral-level expectations—to streamline resources and create a natural progression from one degree to the next.

The 30% cross-referencing ratio (18 of 60 credit hours) positions the program within the recommended range for SACSCOC-accredited institutions, ensuring resource efficiency while maintaining a clear preponderance of uniquely doctoral content (70%). This ratio supports compliance with SACSCOC substantive change requirements for new doctoral program approval.

Cross-Reference Mapping

Ph.D. Code	Ph.D. Course Title	MBA Code	MBA Course Title	Hrs
Advanced Business Core (5 courses — 15 credit hours)				
BUSA 7350	Advanced Managerial Economics, Decision Science & Economic Theory Seminar	ECON 5310	Managerial Economics	3
BUSA 7355	Executive Financial Strategy & Capital Markets	FINA 5315	Financial Management	3
BUSA 7360	Organizational Theory & Executive Leadership	MGMT 5320	Contemporary Mgmt & OB	3
BUSA 7365	Advanced Strategic Marketing & Market Analytics	MARK 5330	Marketing Strategy	3
BUSA 7370	Corporate Governance, Ethics & Social Responsibility	BUSI 5390	Ethics & Social Responsibility	3
Concentration Courses (1 course per applicable track — 3 credit hours each)				
BUSA 7415	Strategic Information Systems & Digital Transformation	BUSI 5310	Strategic Info Systems & Quant	3
BUSA 7440	Advanced Entrepreneurship Theory & Venture Creation	MGMT 5350	Innovation & Entrepreneurship	3
Total Cross-Referenced Credit Hours (30% of 60)				18

Note: Maximum cross-referenced hours per student = 18 (AI, Data Science & Business Innovation or Entrepreneurship tracks) or 15 (Faith-Based Administration track). Faith-Based Administration has no concentration-level cross-references.

Pipeline Benefits

- **Resource Efficiency:** Faculty who teach MBA courses can deliver doctoral sections with enhanced scholarly expectations, maximizing institutional capacity without requiring a fully separate faculty cohort for all courses.
- **Curricular Coherence:** Students advancing from the MBA to the Executive Ph.D. experience a seamless academic continuum with progressively deeper engagement with the same foundational domains.
- **Enrollment Pipeline:** MBA graduates become a natural feeder pool for the Executive Ph.D. program, supporting sustainable enrollment growth across both programs.
- **Accreditation Alignment:** The 30% cross-referencing model is well within the range established across SACSCOC-accredited institutions and supports compliance with substantive change requirements. The 70% uniquely doctoral content clearly demonstrates the program's terminal-degree distinctiveness.

8. ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Admission to the Executive Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Business Administration requires the submission of the following:

- Wiley University Admissions Application and Division of Graduate and Online Studies Doctoral Application (non-refundable fee of \$50)
- A master's degree in business administration, management, or a closely related field from a regionally accredited institution with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 on a 4.0 scale. Applicants with a GPA between 3.0 and 3.24 may be considered for probationary admission.
- A minimum of five (5) years of substantive professional or executive-level work experience, preferably with progressive leadership responsibility
- Official transcripts from all previously attended colleges and universities sent directly to the Division of Graduate and Online Studies
- A current curriculum vitae or professional resume
- Three letters of recommendation from professionals in academia, industry, or executive leadership who can attest to the applicant's scholarly potential, leadership capacity, and readiness for doctoral study
- A statement of purpose (1,500–2,000 words) articulating the applicant's research interests, professional goals, and rationale for pursuing the Executive Ph.D.
- A scholarly writing sample or professional publication (recommended but not required)
- An interview with the Executive Ph.D. Program Director and/or doctoral faculty committee
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT) scores may be waived for applicants with a master's degree GPA of 3.5 or higher, or a minimum of 10 years of executive-level professional experience

Admission Categories

Unconditional Admission: Applicants who meet all admission criteria with a master's GPA of 3.25 or above and demonstrate strong evidence of scholarly readiness and executive experience.

Probationary Admission: Applicants whose credentials do not fully meet admission criteria may be considered for probationary admission. Students admitted on probation must earn a GPA of 3.5 or above in the first 9 credit hours of doctoral coursework to be removed from probationary status.

9. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS & ACADEMIC POLICIES

To receive the Executive Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Business Administration, students must complete:

- Research Foundation Courses: 12 credit hours
- Advanced Business Core Courses: 15 credit hours
- Concentration Courses: 15 credit hours
- Dissertation Sequence: 18 credit hours
- Total: 60 credit hours with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25
- Successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination (end of Term 5)
- Admission to Candidacy following comprehensive examination passage
- Successful proposal defense (by end of Term 7)
- Successful final dissertation defense before a doctoral committee
- Submission of the approved final dissertation manuscript to the University Registrar and institutional repository

Academic Policies

Minimum GPA: Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or above throughout the program. Any grade below a "B" requires course remediation.

Time to Completion: The target completion timeline is two years (10 terms) for students maintaining full-time continuous enrollment. The average expected completion is 2.5 to 3 years, particularly during the dissertation phase. Students who have not completed the dissertation within 2.5 years must register for Dissertation Continuation (BUSA 7970, 1 credit hour) each subsequent term until defense. Dissertation continuation is a normal and expected part of the doctoral process. Extensions beyond 3 years may be granted by the doctoral program committee under extenuating circumstances.

Continuous Enrollment: Doctoral students must maintain continuous enrollment throughout the program.

Transfer Credits: A maximum of 12 credit hours of post-master's doctoral-level coursework may be transferred from a regionally accredited institution with a grade of "B" or better, subject to program director approval.

Wiley MBA Graduate Transfer Credit Policy: Graduates of Wiley University's Master of Business Administration (MBA) program may petition to transfer up to 12 credit hours (4 courses) of applicable MBA coursework toward the Executive Ph.D. in Business Administration, reducing the total program requirement from 60 to 48 credit hours. Transfer eligibility is limited to the cross-referenced courses in the Advanced Business Core completed within five (5) years of Executive Ph.D. enrollment with a grade of "B" or better. Transfer petitions are reviewed by the Executive Ph.D. Program Director and must be submitted prior to the start of Term 1. Concentration-level cross-referenced courses, research foundation courses, and dissertation courses are not eligible for transfer.

Course Repeat Policy: Students may repeat a maximum of two courses (6 credit hours) across the program. A second failure in any course results in academic review and potential dismissal.

10. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The comprehensive examination is a milestone assessment administered at the end of Term 5, after students have completed all four research foundation courses and the majority of advanced business core courses. The examination evaluates students' readiness for independent doctoral research and admission to candidacy.

Examination Format

The comprehensive examination consists of two components: a written examination and an oral defense. The written component is a take-home examination administered over a 72-hour period, covering research methodology, quantitative and qualitative analysis, and advanced business theory. The oral defense is a synchronous session with the doctoral committee to evaluate the student's ability to articulate and defend scholarly positions.

Examination Coverage — Three Domains

- **Research Methodology:** Doctoral research design, quantitative and qualitative analysis, statistical interpretation, and methodological decision-making aligned with the student's dissertation approach.
- **Advanced Business Theory:** Foundational theories across economics, finance, organizational behavior, marketing, and ethics/governance covered in the Advanced Business Core courses.
- **Concentration-Specific Theoretical Mastery:** Students demonstrate command of major theoretical frameworks within their chosen concentration. Examples include: AI, Data Science & Business Innovation students demonstrating knowledge of technology adoption theory (TAM, UTAUT), data governance frameworks, and AI ethics scholarship; Entrepreneurship students demonstrating mastery of Resource-Based View, institutional theory, Schumpeterian innovation, and venture creation theory; Faith-Based Administration students demonstrating understanding of servant leadership theory, stewardship theory, and nonprofit governance frameworks.

Outcomes

- **Pass:** The student is admitted to doctoral candidacy and proceeds with dissertation proposal development.
- **Conditional Pass:** The student must remediate specific areas identified by the committee within 30 days before proceeding.
- **Fail:** The student may retake the comprehensive examination one additional time. A second failure results in dismissal from the program. Students who fail may be eligible for an off-ramp Master of Science in Applied Business Research (if approved).

11. DISSERTATION REQUIREMENTS

The dissertation is the defining scholarly achievement of the Executive Ph.D. program. It demonstrates the candidate's ability to conduct independent, original research that makes a meaningful contribution to the body of knowledge in business administration.

Dissertation Committee

Each doctoral candidate's dissertation committee consists of a minimum of three members: a committee chair (who serves as the primary dissertation advisor), a second internal faculty member, and one external member from academia or industry who holds a terminal degree. The committee chair is assigned no later than Term 4 and oversees the candidate's progress throughout the dissertation sequence.

Dissertation Format

Candidates select one of two dissertation formats in consultation with their committee chair. Both formats are equally rigorous and appropriate for the Executive Ph.D. in Business Administration.

- Option 1 — Traditional Five-Chapter Dissertation & Defense: A comprehensive study including introduction, literature review, methodology, findings, and discussion/implications chapters, followed by a formal oral defense before the dissertation committee.
- Option 2 — Three-Article Model: A portfolio of three scholarly articles targeting specific peer-reviewed journals for submission, unified by a common research theme, with an integrative introduction and conclusion chapter, followed by a formal oral defense. The dissertation proposal must include a target journal list for each article, and all articles must be submitted to their target journals on or prior to the defense. See Section 5 for full format requirements.

Defense Process

The dissertation defense is a formal oral presentation and examination conducted synchronously (in-person or via approved videoconference) before the full dissertation committee. The defense is open to the university community. Upon successful defense, the candidate submits the final approved manuscript to the University Registrar and institutional repository.

Off-Ramp Provision

Students who complete all coursework but do not complete the dissertation may be eligible to receive a Master of Science in Applied Business Research, subject to meeting minimum credit hour and GPA requirements and approval by the Division of Graduate Programs and Online Studies. This off-ramp provision ensures that students who cannot complete the full doctoral program still receive recognition for substantial graduate-level scholarly work.

12. RESIDENCY INTENSIVES

The Executive Ph.D. in Business Administration is delivered fully online; however, the program includes two optional Residency Intensives—one per academic year—designed to deepen the doctoral experience in ways that online instruction alone cannot fully replicate. While participation is not required for degree completion, students are strongly encouraged to attend, and the program is designed with the expectation that most cohort members will take advantage of this experience.

Purpose & Design

Residency Intensives serve two interconnected purposes: building community among the cohort and accelerating dissertation development. Executive doctoral students bring substantial professional experience and expertise to the program; residencies create the concentrated, face-to-face time necessary to forge the collegial relationships, intellectual trust, and peer accountability that sustain students through the rigors of doctoral study—particularly the dissertation phase.

Each residency is a 3–4 day intensive experience, typically held on Wiley University's campus in Marshall, Texas, or at a site agreed upon by the program. Sessions are facilitated by program core and supporting faculty, whose involvement ensures that academic expectations, scholarly standards, and mentoring relationships developed in the online environment are reinforced and extended during the residency experience.

Residency Schedule

Residency I (Year 1, End of Term 3 or Term 4): The first residency orients the cohort to the doctoral journey, establishes collaborative norms, and introduces dissertation development expectations. Students participate in workshops on scholarly identity, research design, and literature review methodology. Faculty present their own scholarly work, modeling the integration of professional expertise and academic inquiry central to the Executive Ph.D. model. Structured cohort sessions and informal social programming promote the peer relationships that sustain students through the program.

Residency II (Year 2, End of Term 7 or Term 8): The second residency focuses on dissertation advancement and scholarly momentum. Students present their dissertation proposals or preliminary findings to the cohort and faculty in a structured workshop format designed to simulate the scholarly exchange of an academic conference. Peer feedback sessions, writing retreats, and individual consultations with committee chairs are central features of this residency. Students preparing for proposal defense or data collection receive targeted support during this intensive.

Core Activities & Programming

Each Residency Intensive incorporates the following programmatic elements, facilitated by core and supporting faculty:

- **Dissertation Development Workshops:** Structured, faculty-led sessions targeting the specific dissertation milestone corresponding to each cohort's stage in the program sequence (e.g., topic refinement and literature synthesis in Year 1; proposal development, methodology, and data preparation in Year 2).
- **Peer Presentation & Scholarly Exchange:** Students present research-in-progress to the cohort and faculty in a supportive, conference-style format. This activity builds oral scholarly communication skills and prepares candidates for the comprehensive examination and dissertation defense.
- **Faculty Mentoring & Committee Consultations:** Scheduled individual and small-group time with faculty facilitators, including dissertation committee chairs. These consultations support academic progress, address methodological questions, and reinforce the advisor-advisee relationships critical to dissertation completion.
- **Cohort Community Building:** Intentional programming—including shared meals, facilitated reflection sessions, and collaborative problem-solving activities—designed to cultivate the trust, mutual accountability, and professional networks that define the cohort experience and persist beyond program completion.
- **Executive Engagement & Leadership Panels:** Invited practitioners, industry leaders, and alumni engage with the cohort to bridge doctoral scholarship with contemporary organizational challenges, reinforcing the program's commitment to scholar-practitioner development.

Faculty Role

Core and supporting faculty serve as the primary facilitators of the Residency Intensive experience. Faculty involvement during residencies is consistent with their broader program responsibilities and provides concentrated opportunities for mentorship, scholarly dialogue, and direct dissertation advising beyond what is possible in the asynchronous online environment. Faculty facilitators are expected to lead workshops, participate in peer presentation sessions, hold individual student consultations, and contribute to the intellectual community of the residency program.

Attendance & Logistics

Residency Intensives are optional for degree completion but are considered a high-impact component of the Executive Ph.D. experience. Students who are unable to attend in person may be offered a structured virtual participation option that preserves access to core programming, including dissertation workshops and faculty consultations, while preserving the integrity of the in-person cohort experience. Residency dates are announced no later than the beginning of each academic year to allow students adequate time to plan attendance. Travel, lodging, and incidental expenses associated with residency participation are the responsibility of the student. The University will provide logistical guidance and, where possible, negotiate group accommodations to reduce costs for participants.