

**GOLDEN GATE UNIVERSITY**  
**GGU WORLDWIDE - UPGRAD PROGRAMS STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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## WELCOME MESSAGE

Welcome to Golden Gate University Worldwide upGrad partnership programs (GGU WW upGrad). On behalf of the Dean of GGU WW, Faculty Director for upGrad programs, faculty, staff, and alumni, we congratulate you on your admission to the university.

This Student Handbook outlines rules, policies, procedures, and deadlines for GGU WW upGrad programs. All students at GGU WW upGrad programs are bound by the Student Handbook and the university's rules, policies and procedures. Students in *Study Abroad* and *Immersion* programs must obtain appropriate non-immigrant visas to participate in their programs. Additional university rules, as well as laws and policies governing SEVIS registration and student visas are applicable to all international students studying on campus.

**This information is non-negotiable, and strict adherence to it is required by the university for all students. It is the student's responsibility to know the information contained in the Student Handbook and the university's website. A student's failure to read university policies does not absolve that student from knowing and complying with the policies, procedures, and deadlines.**

**Please note policies, rules, procedures, and deadlines in the Student Handbook are subject to change by the university. If we make any changes to the Student Handbook, students will be notified about them via email. For the information available on GGU website, it is the student's responsibility to regularly review them as we update them regularly. Students will not receive any notification about changes on the GGU website.**

## ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1901, Golden Gate University (GGU) is a private, nonprofit institution dedicated to serving the needs of working adults. A leader in online education for more than 30 years, GGU delivers instruction in both hybrid and online modalities—giving students the flexibility to learn in ways that fit their lives. As of 2025, GGU alumni form a global network of nearly 70,000 graduates leading and innovating across industries and communities. Golden Gate University prepares individuals to lead and serve by providing high quality, practice based educational programs as a nonprofit institution in an innovative and challenging learning environment that embraces professional ethics and diversity.

GGU is accredited by WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), the organization that accredits universities in California and Hawaii, including Stanford, University of San Francisco, UC Berkeley, and San Jose State University. WSCUC is one of six regional associations that accredit public and private schools, colleges, and universities in the United States and is nationally recognized by the US Department of Education. GGU has been accredited by WSCUC since 1959.

GGU is an institutional member of Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and has chosen not to seek AACSB accreditation like many schools that have a professional practice focused mission. AACSB accreditation is primarily for research focused institutions and considering GGU's mission, we are not qualified nor seeking to obtain its accreditation.

## State Authorizations

### Alaska

Conspicuous statement: Golden Gate University online programs are exempt from authorization under AS 14.48 and 20 AAC 17.015 because the program is online or distance delivered and GGU does not have a physical presence in the state.

## Texas

Conspicuous Notice: Per Tex. Educ. Code, §132.202, a school or educational institution described by Section 132.001(1)(B) shall post a conspicuous notice on the homepage of its website. This statement serves as this notice and that **1)** the career school or college is not regulated in Texas under chapter 132 of the Texas Education Code; **2)** GGU is regulated by the Bureau of Private and Post-Secondary Institutions and Western Association of Schools and College; these bodies approve and regulate the school's programs in the state where the school is physically located and in which it has legal authorization to operate; and **3)** any complaints or contact information for regulatory agencies can be found here.

## States other than California

Authorized	Exempt, No Internships	Exempt, Internships OK	Not Authorized
AK	FL	AZ	AL
CA	KY	CO*	AR
CT	LA	HI	DC
IA	NH	ID*	DE
MI	TN	IL	GA
MT	TX	IN*	KS
OH*	WA	MA	MD
OK		ME*	MN
NY		MO*	MS
ND		NE	NC
OR		NV	NJ
PA		SC	NM
RI		SD	WI
UT		VT	
VA**			
WY			
WV			

\*These states are limited in internships.

\*\*These states are authorized but cannot offer internships.

## GGU WORLDWIDE & UPGRAD PARTNERSHIP

GGU Worldwide was launched in 2022, and it is built on Golden Gate University's three decades of experience offering high-quality, practice-based online education that is globally accessible in multiple languages. GGU Worldwide partners with [upGrad](#), a global leader in online higher education, to serve degree-seeking students from around the world to collaboratively offer high quality online education for working professionals aligned with GGU's mission. GGU's international programming platform includes a growing portfolio of practice-based degree programs taught by experienced practitioners and thought leaders. GGU Worldwide faculty are highly qualified, student-focused, full-time and adjunct professors and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) from around the world who meet GGU's rigorous academic and professional standards.

For degree programs taught in English, GGU Worldwide welcomes native English speakers, bilingual students, students from countries where English is an official language, and those who studied in English language schools. GGU WW upGrad Programs are offered on a cohort basis, requiring continuous course enrollment through degree completion. **The GGU Worldwide upGrad programs are not eligible for U.S. Federal Student Aid, Canadian Federal Aid, or Provincial Student Aid programs. upGrad collects all admission deposits, tuition, fees, and penalties for every program. All financial matters—like tuition or fees—are handled directly through upGrad. For all financial matters, students must work directly with upGrad, who are available to provide support throughout the process.**

## **IMMERSION PROGRAM**

The Immersion Program is designed for students who seek to learn directly from the global epicenter of innovation—Silicon Valley. Over the course of five days, students will be immersed in the Bay Area’s dynamic innovation ecosystem, engaging with its financial, technological, political, cultural, economic, environmental, and social justice dimensions that make the San Francisco Bay Area one of the most innovative, competitive, and livable regions in the world. Through a structured series of workshops, study tours, and lectures, students will gain valuable insights into the business models, innovation strategies, and organizational cultures of leading companies. Key topics include innovation, livability, and the unique characteristics that define the San Francisco–Silicon Valley ecosystem. Guided industry visits will provide students with firsthand exposure to real-world business operations, helping bridge the gap between academic theory and practical application.

Students will return with actionable knowledge, global best practices, and expanded professional networks. The program also emphasizes staying informed on emerging technology trends and aims to inspire students to become forward-thinking leaders and catalysts for innovation within their respective fields and communities. Upon completing the five-day program, students will receive a Certificate of Completion as formal recognition of their active participation.

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the workshops, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an advanced understanding of entrepreneurship and innovation within the San Francisco–Silicon Valley ecosystem.
- Analyze the operations, organizational cultures, and strategic approaches of leading startups, corporations, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations.
- Explore and apply insights related to emerging, evolving, and state-of-the-art technologies across various sectors.
- Establish professional networks with entrepreneurs, Golden Gate University faculty, staff, senior leadership, and a diverse international student body.
- Engage in immersive learning experiences through on-campus classes, company visits, and expert-led sessions.
- Discover the region’s distinctive livability, cultural diversity, accessibility, and vibrant social landscape.

## **STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM**

Students enrolled in the Study Abroad degree programs may opt to complete their last year of study at GGU’s San Francisco Campus under the Study Abroad program. This provides students with experiences both inside and outside the classroom, including internships and post-completion practical training.

### **Minimum Requirement to be Eligible to Apply for I-20**

- Students must submit the Golden Gate University Certificate of Finances along with official financial document(s) verifying the minimum amount required, as stated in the Certificate of Finances. All financial documents must be legitimate and verifiable. GGU reserves the right to deny issuance of the Form I-20 to any student found to have submitted falsified financial documentation. Such violations may result in permanent ineligibility to participate in the on-site program.
- The Form I-20 will be issued upon successful completion of the first three courses with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. Final grades must be officially reported and reflected in the GGU system. Students who completed more than three courses but do not meet the minimum GPA requirement are not eligible for the I-20.
- Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 by the completion of the online portion of the program. Failure to meet this requirement will result in ineligibility for the Form I-20 and the cancellation of their SEVIS record.
- An I-20 may be issued up to one year after a student completes the online portion of the program. If the

student does not make progress in their visa application or enter the U.S. within this one-year period, they must reapply through the standard Golden Gate University admissions process, where the student might be subject to a non-refundable \$250 tuition deposit.

## GRADING RULES & POLICY

All programs are being offered through upGrad Learning Platform (LMS or platform). Students must learn about the platform and all its functions, submission process and deadlines, and ways in which they need to submit assignments and documents on the platform. **All submissions must be done by provided deadlines. Submission deadlines are NOT NEGOTIABLE and adherence to them is required. Exceptions to any policies, procedures, and deadlines are not acceptable.** Students must submit all components of assignments at the time of submission. Incomplete or late submissions are not acceptable. For example, unfamiliarity with the platform or submission process, rules and policies, or inability to access Turnitin or generate Turnitin reports (for doctoral students) are not acceptable reasons for late or missing assignments.

Grades for each submission will be available on the LMS, and the grades for each course should be available on the GGU Portal within 21 days of the submission and course deadline respectively. If the student has taken an extension, scores and grades will be made available within 21 days after the extended deadline.

## GRADING POLICY

- Course Grading:** All courses are graded according to the table below
- Assessment Marks and Weighting:** The marks given for each assessment, scaled by the weight assigned to that assessment, contribute to the overall score for the course
- GPA Scale:** The Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated on a four-point scale
- CGPA Calculation:** The GPA for each course, weighted by its respective credit proportion, adds up to the Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) for the entire program
- Score Truncation:** Please note that scores will be truncated, not rounded. For example, if 86.99% corresponds to a Grade B, it will remain as 86.99%, not rounded to 87%
- Percentage Thresholds:** The percentage thresholds are illustrated in the Chart below:

Grade	Overall Score Range	Percentage
A+	4	100%
A	4	93-99.9%
A-	3.7	90-92.9%
B+	3.3	87-89.9%
B	3	83-86.9%
B-	2.7	80-82.9%
C+	2.3	77-79.9%
C	2.0	73-76.9%
C-	1.7	70-72.9%
D+	1.3	67%-69.9%
D	1	63-66.9%
D-	0.7	60-62.9%
F	0	0-59.9%
IF	0	-

## SPECIAL SYMBOLS (NO EFFECT ON GPA)

Symbol	Description
CR	Credit Received
NC	No Credit Received

For some programs, such as the DBA ET program, the percentage thresholds for each GPA are determined by the course faculty and will be communicated to participants in advance.

### GRAD POINT AVERAGE (GPA) CALCULATION

Students' grade point averages (GPAs) are calculated by dividing the total grade points they have earned by the total academic units they have completed. In addition, courses that are graded on a CR/NC (pass/fail) basis are not included in students' GPA calculations. The table below illustrates how a student's GPA would be calculated:

Course	Grade	Academic Units	Grade Points	Grade Point Average
Course 1	A-	3.0	11.1	
Course 2	B+	3.0	9.9	
Course 3	A	1.0	4.0	
Total		7.0	25.0	GPA = 3.57

### ASSESSMENT & GRADING TIMELINES

The GGU WW upGrad program is designed so that the entire cohort progresses through each course together. Students will have sufficient time to complete the modules and assignments within the deadlines. A calendar with the schedule for all upcoming modules and assignments will be shared via email and made available on the platform calendar before each course begins. **All submissions must be done by provided deadlines. Submission deadlines are NOT NEGOTIABLE and adherence to them is required. Exceptions to any policies, procedures, and deadlines are not acceptable.** Students must familiarize themselves with all deadlines in their courses in advance to ensure all submissions are made by deadlines. For any questions about assignments and deadlines, reach out to the Program Coordinator or the Student Support.

#### Automatic Exception

Students can request more time to submit their assignments by clicking the “**Raise for an Extension Request**” icon on the platform, depending on their program. They will receive up to 7 extra days from the original deadline to make their submissions. Exceptions beyond the 7-day deadline will NOT be granted under any circumstances except in cases of verified serious and unavoidable situations—such as a documented medical emergency, death in the immediate family, major accident, or a natural disaster. Requests that do not meet these criteria will be denied without exception. They will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Students must email Student Support as soon as possible to request an extension. The email should include official documents with a full and clear explanation why the exception is needed. Sending a request does **not** guarantee approval. Student Support will review the request and inform the student whether accepted or rejected.

### GUIDELINES FOR RE-SUBMISSION

Students may request re-evaluation under the following circumstances. Requests for re-evaluation based on a comparison to another student's graded assignment are **strongly discouraged** and will **NOT** be considered. Requests that lack required information or are vague in nature will be considered **invalid** and will not be approved.

- The instructor deviated from the grading policies outlined in the course syllabus
- There were calculation errors
- There were factual errors or errors in judgment regarding the academic quality of the student's work
- The final course grade was influenced by factors other than the published grading criteria

Re-evaluation requests must be submitted within **3 days** of the declaration of results. For example, if the results are declared on **01/13/2025**, requests for re-evaluation must be made by **01/16/2025** (end of the day). A response to all re-evaluation requests will be provided within **1 week** after the re-evaluation deadline.

For assignment re-evaluation, students must request it on the LMS within 72 hours of the publishing of the grades and submit all the following in the comments:

- Clearly indicate the specific portion (question number) of the assignment that requires re-evaluation
- Provide remarks detailing the claimed discrepancy

### RE-SUBMISSION OPPORTUNITY FOR CREDIT-BEARING COURSES

The re-submission opportunity is applicable only to courses. If a student misses an assignment or a graduate student earns a course GPA below 1.7 or a doctoral student below 2.7 or an SJD student with No Credit (NC) would like an opportunity to improve their course grade, they may participate in the Re-Submission Window. The following is the re-submission process and deadlines:

- An **"I" (Incomplete)** grade will be temporarily added to a student's record.
- The student will be granted a **re-attempt window** based on the number of coursework submissions required:
  - **Courses with fewer than 5 submissions:** 7-day re-attempt window deadline
  - **Courses with 5 or more submissions:** 14-day re-attempt window deadline
- After the re-attempt window ends, the "I" grade will be replaced with the final letter grade earned, typically within **7–10 days**. If the student **misses the re-submission window**:
  - If they submitted work during the original course timeline, the **original grade will stand**.
  - If they submitted **no work** during either the original or re-submission window, students will receive an **"F" (Fail)** for the course.

### RE-ATTEMPT OPPORTUNITY FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Re-attempt is only applicable to doctoral programs and programs' milestones. There will be only ONE re-attempt opportunity that is available on the Student Calendar. Please find details for each program under each program's specific information.

### PROGRAM STATUSES

Status	Description
<b>Active</b>	The student is currently enrolled and attending classes or actively participating in the program. The student will be reviewed for Academic Standing.
<b>Stop-Out</b>	The student is temporarily not attending but plans to return. Upon notification to upGrad, students will be de-registered from all the upcoming courses. For courses already completed or started, earned grades will be updated on the transcript. The student will not be reviewed for Academic Standing while in this status. Upon student's return, the status will be updated and course registration will be resumed.
<b>Graduated/Completed Certificate</b>	The student has completed all program requirements and has officially conferred (for degrees) or completed a certificate.
<b>Deferred</b>	The student has been admitted but has postponed their start date. No coursework has been attempted yet.
<b>Application Cancelled</b>	The student has not been chosen to attend GGU before beginning any coursework. A refund has been issued.
<b>Withdrawn</b>	The student voluntarily left the program prior to completion.
<b>Administrative Withdrawal</b>	The student has been involuntarily removed from the program by GGU and/or upGrad due to academic, financial, or conduct-related issues.



## WITHDRAWN & ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWAL

**Withdrawn:** Students who voluntarily leave the program before completing it, either officially or unofficially will fall under this category. Examples are Refunded, Program Change (Outside of GGU).

**Administrative Withdrawal:** Students who are involuntarily removed from the program by the university and/or upGrad for, for example, failure to meet academic standing requirements, payments, and/or violation of university/upGrad policies will fall under this category. Example - Failed, Payment Dropout, Academic Disqualification.

**Note for Students in the Study Abroad:** Students on the *Study Abroad* track who have completed the online portion of their program will be contacted by upGrad one (1) year after course completion if there has been no further progress in their visa application. They will be given the option to either confer their certificate or if no response is received, the student will be administratively withdrawn.

Applicable to all students who are administratively withdrawn, they may re-apply through the standard GGU admissions portal and must follow the regular admissions process to continue their studies. A \$250 tuition deposit will be required upon readmission, as part of the GGU admissions process outlined in the [GGU Catalog](#). This deposit will remain valid for one year (or three trimesters). Students who are reapplying and subsequently readmitted may be eligible for the same Study Abroad tuition rate, subject to current program policies at the time of readmission.

Both the cases (Withdrawn and Academic Withdrawal), the below grade upload policy will be followed for the course that the student is enrolled in at the time of withdrawal from the program:

- **No Coursework Submitted:**
  - The student will receive a **W (Withdrawal)** on their transcript for the course.
- **Partial/Full Submission of the Coursework:**
  - If the student has **submitted some or all coursework**, they will receive the **earned grade** based on the completed assessments.

## ACADEMIC STATUSES

Status	Description
Good	Good Academic Standing
Probation	Academic Probation
Disqualified (DQ)	Academically Disqualified
Reinstated on Probation (RI)	Student's appeal to return has been approved

## STOP-OUT POLICY

A stop-out occurs when a student is moved from their originally enrolled cohort to a new one. The student's originally registered term will be reassigned to a new term for any remaining uncompleted courses.

- Students may request a stop-out to any scheduled cohort starting within 16 months of the original start date of their initial cohort.
- A stop-out can ONLY be requested before all coursework submissions have been completed in the student's current cohort. If all submissions are complete, a stop-out is **NOT permitted** for that particular course.
- If a student has attempted 3 courses and earned:
  - A **Fail (F)** in Course 1
  - **Passes** in Courses 2 and 3: They must **restart from Course 1** in the new cohort after stop-out.

However, they are **not required to reattempt** the 2 courses already passed and may **sit out** those classes in the new cohort.

### When Can a Student Request a Stop-Out?

A stop-out may be requested by a student who temporarily stops attending classes, but intends to return. The stop-out request is subject to approval on a case-by-case basis and it will only be granted in limited circumstances such as 1) medical issues, 2) personal or family emergencies, and 3) other extenuating circumstances such as inability to pay tuition/fees, natural disaster, state conflicts, change of job, or change of location.

### How to Apply for a Stop-out

A student must send an email to Student Support at [studentsupport@upgrad.com](mailto:studentsupport@upgrad.com) with a request to stop-out. Any other forms of requesting stop-out will NOT be considered.

### Stop-Out Fees

To initiate a stop-out, students must pay the applicable stop-out fee, including any relevant taxes outlined in the chart below. This fee is subject to change and may vary depending on the program. Students must pay a difference in program fees between their original cohort and the cohort they wish to transfer to.

Program	Fee (of the total fee paid for the online part)
MBA	10%
MBA SA	5%
MSBA	5%
MSPM	5%
DBA ET	5%
DBA	5%
DBA DL	5%
LLM	Program Discontinued
SJD	Program Discontinued

### Deadline & Procedure for Completing Stop-out Payments

Student Support will contact the student to understand the batch where the student wants to transfer to. The student will be given the program fee differential amount and the fee (chart above). Upon confirmation a payment link will be generated for the student to complete their payment. The stop-out request will be approved once the stop-out fee is fully paid by the student.

The student will have **7 days** (including holidays & weekends) from the date of receiving the stop-out fee payment link, to make full payment (stop-out fee, the differential program fee, applicable taxes). **If a student misses the deadline or fails to make the payment, the payment link and the stop-out request will expire.** Students will continue in the existing cohort without any changes. Upon receiving the full stop-out fee, the student will be given a “W” (Withdrawal) grade in the current cohort. Students are expected to provide a return date to be registered in the new cohort.

### How To Apply for A Stop-out Fee Waiver

Students may request a Stop-out waiver only under limited extenuating circumstances that may have prevented them from successfully completing the coursework. This will be on a case-by-case basis. Good examples are:

- Medical emergency
- Humanitarian grounds
- Financial crisis
- Any other reason that prevents the student from continuing the academic journey in the original cohort

To apply, students must complete a form with all documents and supporting evidence for their claim. The Stop-out Committee will review all submitted documents to make the final decision whether to approve or reject the request.

### **Appeal Process if Fee Waiver Request Was Declined**

If a student's request is denied following the validation process, the student may appeal by submitting a written request accompanied by relevant supporting documents based on their specific case to the [studentsupport@upgrad.com](mailto:studentsupport@upgrad.com) or to their Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator will share the information on behalf of the student and if needed will escalate to the highest levels of authority, ensuring all members of the Stop-out Committee are included in the discussion, along with a detailed case brief and supporting documents. The Stop-out Committee will then re-review the request and conduct a second round of verification to reassess the decision. **The Stop-out Committee is the final authority to overturn the initial decision and approve the request or confirm the earlier decision. Their decision is final and binding and there will be no further consideration.**

### **Post Stop-Out Academic Progress Adjustments**

Upon successful completion of the Stop-out process, the student will resume their study from where they left off. Students' progress and grades will be adjusted to the newly approved cohort in the LMS.

- For courses in which the student is restarting their journey in the new cohort, the LMS will not display previous progress or scores.
- All previously earned grades recorded for each course will remain visible on the student's GGU portal and the student's official transcript. **All previously earned grades and academic progress prior to the stop-out will remain in the student's permanent academic record.**

### **ACADEMIC REVIEW**

Students must maintain a minimum overall **Cumulative GPA (CGPA)** of 3.0. In addition, graduate students must earn a grade of **"C- (1.7 GPA)" or better**, and doctoral students must earn a grade of **"B- (2.7 GPA)" or better**, in each course for it to count toward program requirements and graduation eligibility. At the end of each course, the **re-attempt window for the previous course** may overlap with the start of the next one or two courses. In such cases, students will be permitted to continue progressing in their current courses and receive feedback while their academic performance is under review. If a student does **NOT meet the minimum CGPA requirement of 3.0**, they may be placed on **Academic Probation** or **Disqualification**, depending on the specifics of their academic standing.

Doctoral students are required to complete each dissertation phase course (DBA 890, DBA 891, DBA 892, SJD 942, SJD 943, SJD 944, SJD 945) within the semester of initial enrollment. Students who do not complete the required work by the end of the term will be enrolled in a Dissertation Continuation course (0–1 credit) in subsequent semesters until all requirements are satisfied. Final credit and a grade for the dissertation phase course will be awarded only upon successful completion of the milestone as determined by the dissertation committee. All grades (CR/NC) for the Dissertation Continuation Course will be recorded on the student's official transcript as part of student's permanent academic record and are not subject to change under any circumstances.

Status	Description
<b>Academic Progress Review</b>	<p>A progress review is after every 3rd or 4th course for each graduate program, including MBA after the re-attempt window. For doctoral students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>DBA:</b> Students will be evaluated twice after re-attempt window: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) After the third course and before the Qualifying Exam</li> <li>2) At the end of the concentration courses</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>SJD:</b> Students will be evaluated at the end of the Midterm &amp; Final Assessments after the re-attempt window.</li> </ul> <p>Students with a CGPA of 3.0 or higher are making "good" academic progress. SJD students earning "Credit" are making "good" academic progress. Final academic review for doctoral students will be at the end of the program.</p>
<b>Academic Probation</b>	<p>If a graduate/doctoral student's CGPA falls between 1.0 and 3.0 at the time of the review, they will be placed on probation. During this time, the student may continue their courses but must raise their CGPA to at least 3.0 by the next review cycle.</p>
<b>Academic Disqualification</b>	<p>Students whose CGPA falls below 1.0 during any academic standing review cycle will be academically disqualified without a probation period. They will be withdrawn from the university. Students on probation who fail to raise their CGPA to 3.0 or higher by the next review cycle will be academically disqualified and withdrawn from the university.</p> <p><b>DBA:</b> Students will be academically disqualified and withdrawn from the university under the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to maintain a CGPA of 3.0 for all courses prior to the Qualifying Exam</li> <li>• Failure to achieve a minimum CGPA of 3.0 by the end of the coursework phase</li> <li>• Failing Qualifying Exam after a re-attempt window</li> <li>• Failure to successfully pass the topic proposal &amp; research defense milestone in two attempts</li> <li>• Failure to successfully pass the final dissertation milestone by the deadline unless extension request is approved.</li> </ul> <p><b>SJD:</b> Students will be academically disqualified and withdrawn from the university under the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to earn "Credit" for the Midterm &amp; Final Assessments after the re-attempt window.</li> <li>• Failure to successfully pass the final dissertation milestone by the deadline, unless extension request is approved.</li> </ul>

## ACADEMIC DISQUALIFICATION POLICY

**Students who are academically disqualified will be withdrawn from their programs and will be prohibited from enrolling in any courses to continue in the program.** Disqualified students are also not permitted to enroll as auditors, certificate-seeking students, or through open enrollment. As a result, a student's access to all GGU portals and resources will be revoked immediately. **The student who is disqualified remains responsible for any remaining tuition balance. Please note that any tuition already paid is non-refundable.**

Students who are administratively withdrawn/academically disqualified may apply for readmission to the university through the standard admissions process no earlier than one (1) year after the date of disqualification. As part of the application, they must submit a Statement of Purpose explaining how they now meet all current admission criteria and degree requirements at the time of readmission.

## GRADUATION, COMMENCEMENT, TRANSCRIPT, DIPLOMA

To graduate, students must meet all program requirements.

**Note: Degree conferral, certificate completion timelines, and the distribution of diplomas and final transcripts are subject to change. For the most current information, please refer to the *Graduation and Commencement* section of the GGU [Academic Catalog](#).**

**Convocation**, as used in many countries outside the United States, is often synonymous with **commencement** in the U.S., particularly in the context of academic ceremonies.

**The terms “graduation” and “commencement”** refer to two different activities. **“Graduation”** occurs at the conclusion of each academic period. **Commencement** is an annual ceremony celebrating the accomplishments of students who have or will graduate during an academic year.

### **Degree Conferral**

Within 45 - 60 days of the last submission deadline of the program, students' grades and transcripts will be finalized. The Student will receive an email to their personal and student accounts detailing Diploma/Certificate information within one week of degree conferral. If the **diploma name** listed on that email is incorrect, the student will have 30 days to submit a corrected name. If the student fails to confirm the updated name within 30 days of receiving the email, the name registered with upGrad/ GGU will be finalized for printing on the diploma/ degree or certificate. In the case the student requests a change in the diploma/ degree or certificate after the 30 days, there will be an additional fee to order another copy. Please note that this name correction only applies to the diploma/certificate document. If the Student would like to have their name updated in the GGU system for any official documents, they will need to contact [records@ggu.edu](mailto:records@ggu.edu) and provide any required documents.

### **TRANSCRIPTS & DIPLOMAS**

Students' degrees/diplomas or certificates will be conferred when they have completed all the program's academic requirements. **GGU Transcript Options:** Students can view their transcript online (which will show their degree/ diploma or certificate information) by logging into [myGGU](https://my.ggu.edu), selecting the **Self-Service** resource, and then selecting **Unofficial Transcript**, which is located under the **Academics** menu. An official copy of the student's transcript will be placed in the mail within 7 business days of conferral and sent to upGrad's offices, by request from the student. Otherwise, the document will be sent in unison with the hard copy of the diploma/certificate. If the student is in urgent need of a conferred transcript, they will need to order an electronic and/or hard copy of their transcript via the [National Student Clearinghouse](https://www.nscs.org/). The electronic version usually arrives within three business days.

### **Soft Copy (Electronic) Diploma or Certificate**

An email with a soft copy diploma or certificate in PDF format will be sent to the Student's GGU email address (i.e., [@my.ggu.edu](mailto:@my.ggu.edu)) within three to four weeks of the hard copy batch order. The second page of that email will provide the student with validation instructions.

### **Hard Copy Diploma or Certificate**

Orders will be placed in batches every 45 days to our 3rd party vendor for anyone that has been conferred since the last batch. Once the order is received in our office in San Francisco, we will forward them on to upGrad's offices. upGrad will mail the student diplomas or certificates to students from their offices. Given the time it takes for postal delivery, Students should not expect to receive a hard copy diploma or certificate for up to 90 days after degree conferral.

Students may order an additional or replacement copy of their diploma/ degree or certificate via [CeCredential](https://www.credentialtrust.org/) Trust for additional printing and shipping charges. For additional questions regarding degree and/or certificate conferral, please contact [graduation@ggu.edu](mailto:graduation@ggu.edu) for more Information.

## STUDENT SUPPORT

Students must contact official Student Support **only** via email or the designated chat platforms. Failure to follow this process may result in delays or a lack of response.

<b>Email</b> <a href="mailto:studentsupport@upgrad.com">studentsupport@upgrad.com</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>ALL</u> issues, questions, concerns</li><li>• Get a Response within 24-48 working hours</li></ul>
<b>Chat</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Telegram</li><li>• Microsoft Teams</li><li>• Chatbot:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Click on icon on LMS &gt; select options depending on issues</li><li>◦ Send an email to Student Support</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>“Report an Error”</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All <u>Content-related</u> issues</li><li>• Students must “click” on the “Report an Error” icon on the bottom left corner of the session page to report issues.</li></ul>
<b>Automated Communications Email</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="mailto:noreply@support.upgrad.com">noreply@support.upgrad.com</a></li><li>• <a href="mailto:sscommunication@upgrad.com">sscommunication@upgrad.com</a></li></ul>	Issues/questions/concerns about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Live sessions</li><li>• Submission deadlines</li><li>• Program updates</li><li>• Webinar information</li><li>• All schedules</li></ul> <b>Note:</b> Students must move these email IDs from Spam folder. Otherwise it may result in missing important information/updates.

If still not satisfied with resolutions provided by the Student Support, students can escalate by emailing:

- 1st Level Escalation, email [escalation.l2@upgrad.com](mailto:escalation.l2@upgrad.com).
- 2nd Level Escalation, email [escalation.l3@upgrad.com](mailto:escalation.l3@upgrad.com).

### Program Coordinators

Program Coordinators will help students to personalize their learning experience by offering active mentorship on a regular basis that is tailored according to each student’s need. Program Coordinators will create an announcement channel either on Microsoft Teams or Telegram, based on the student's program. This is to inform students about all program details and deadlines (e.g., course content, live session, exams, events).

### Teaching Assistance

Teaching Assistants (TAs) support instructors and enhance students’ engagement to strengthen their overall academic learning experience. The core functions remain centered around facilitation, support, and administration.

## POLICY ON ALL COMMUNICATIONS

Students must comply with all of the following communication policies:

- The Student Support email ([studentsupport@upgrad.com](mailto:studentsupport@upgrad.com)) is the **ONLY** official channel for students to raise issues. Queries sent through any other communication channels or different emails will not be addressed or resolved.
- Students must turn ON “notifications” on their relevant communication channel to receive uninterrupted updates.
- Students belonging to any communication channel cannot solicit any personal information about any members.

- Students will receive reasonable assistance to take action against any other student who misuses or violates communications policies.

## UPGRAD LEARNING PLATFORM & ONBOARDING

New students will receive a “Welcome Email” from Student Support within the first week of starting their program. If the email is not received, students must contact Student Support at Student Support at [studentsupport@upgrad.com](mailto:studentsupport@upgrad.com) with a clear explanation of the issue(s).

Students can access the learning platform at upGrad.com using upGrad registered ID and password. Students can also access content on the mobile app ([iOS App Store](#) & [Google Play Store](#)). Students must download the mobile app to receive instant notifications about the latest updates. Students are advised to move all emails from upGrad to their primary inbox to avoid missing important information.

## LIVE SESSIONS

Live Sessions are led by faculty and SMEs to enrich the student learning experience by offering direct interaction opportunities. These sessions are typically held on weekends, with recordings made available immediately after each class concludes. Additional details may be available based on the student's program. Please refer to your program's page for additional information.

**Note:** Students enrolled in the DBA in Emerging Technologies with a concentration in Generative AI have the option to attend live sessions either in the morning or evening. Students are required to choose their preferred session time at the start of the program.

## CLASS PARTICIPATION: DISCUSSION FORUM PROCESS

The discussion forum creates a strong learning community. Students must only post academic questions. Faculty and TAs will only respond to questions related to the program content and assessments. The faculty and TAs will not respond to general posts that are meant to facilitate discussion among peers. **Inappropriate posts will be deleted and the student who posted will be penalized.**

## CAREER SERVICES FOR STUDENTS & ALUMNI

### 1) Services Available to Students:

Students will have access to career services throughout their program and for up to six months after completion. These services include:

- Personalized career coaching
- Career preparation modules
- AI-powered resume and LinkedIn tools
- Curated job opportunities
- Networking events
- Interview support

## 2) Services Available to Alumni (Opportunities in the U.S.)

For alumni who are interested in exploring career opportunities in the United States, GGU Career Services are available free of charge. Please note:

- Recent graduates (0–2 years after graduation) will receive priority when scheduling appointments, depending on coach availability.
- To access these services, you must first email your request to the Student Support at [studentsupport@upgrad.com](mailto:studentsupport@upgrad.com).

Services include:

- Online career resources (resume & cover letter samples, interview preparation guides)
- Job board with U.S. opportunities: These are current jobs and internships in the U.S. If you are interested, you must apply directly. *It is your responsibility to carefully check all job requirements, including visa eligibility and sponsorship.*
- One-on-one coaching sessions: Career coaches can help with career planning, job search strategies, and feedback on resumes and cover letters.

**Important Note: GGU Career Services does not place graduates in jobs or internships, guarantee employment, or provide immigration or visa advice.**

## PROGRAM EXTENSION POLICY FOR DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

Students enrolled in doctoral programs who are unable to complete their dissertation and program requirements by the end of the 3rd year may apply for an extension to finish their dissertation. These are case-by-case reviews, and mere submission does not mean approval. The following are terms and requirements:

- Only doctoral students who successfully complete coursework and Qualifying Exam (DBA) or First Oral Examination (SJD) are eligible to apply.
- If a student is unable to complete their program by the end of the 3rd year may request an extension by completing a form.
  - **DBA:** The Dissertation Committee will review, assess the extension request and will make a decision either to accept or deny the request.
  - **SJD:** The Dissertation Supervisors will review and assess the extension request and will make a decision either to accept or deny the request
- Students must apply for extension two (2) months before the program end date.
- Each extension is valid for a three-month period.
- The first extension will be free of charge. Students must pay a fee for each additional extension as outlined in the Chart below.
- Beyond the first extension, a student can request 3 additional extensions (each 3 months long for a total of 9 months).
- Students can apply for a 3-month extension at a time or seek multiple extensions in one request (Maximum 4 terms, including the first extension). The total extension should not exceed 1 year (12 months).
- No further extension will be accepted beyond four (4) extensions.
- If a student fails to complete their dissertation by the end of the 4th extension period, they will be academically disqualified.



Program	First Extension	Each Additional Extension
DBA	Free	\$600
DBA in Digital Leadership	Free	\$800
DBA in Emerging Technologies (Concentration in Generative AI)	Free	\$800
SJD	Free	\$600

### Student Support During Extension:

- Continued access to GGU Library
- Any remaining mentorship calls with Dissertation Chair/Dissertation Supervisors will carry over to the “First Extension” period. This carry-over policy will apply to all extension periods upon approval.  
  
Example: If the program offers 10 calls with the Dissertation Chair/Dissertation Supervisors and the student consumed 8 of these calls before obtaining the extension, they will have only 2 remaining calls during the extension period.
- If a student does not have any remaining calls, they can either continue without any calls or they can request additional paid extensions (Chart above) to start working with Dissertation Chair/Dissertation Supervisors.
- During each paid extension, students will receive 3 new calls with their Dissertation Chair/Dissertation Supervisors.

## TUITION PAYMENT

upGrad is authorized by GGU to collect tuition payments and all other affiliating fees from students. Students are required to work directly with upGrad for all tuition and finance-related matters.

### Tuition Payment Requirement

- Students must pay the full tuition before the cohort start date to confirm their enrollment and secure their seat.
- Students choosing a term-wise payment plan must follow the scheduled payment deadlines, regardless of any interruptions such as stop-outs, deferrals, or withdrawals, whether voluntary or administrative.

### Approval Requirements

Requests for **stop-outs or program changes** are subject to review and must be approved (see earlier sections).

### Tuition Adjustments:

- Stop-out:** A stop-out student who will rejoin a future cohort must pay in full any difference in tuition fees between the original and the new cohort before rejoining.
- Program Change:** If a student requests a program change after enrollment:
  - The tuition paid by the student for the original program will be transferred over to the new program’s tuition. The amount that covers the time the student spent in the original program will

be deducted.

- A student must pay the differential amount if the tuition of the original program is less than the new program's tuition.
- If a student's original program's tuition is more than the new program's, the difference will be given as a Credit Note. No refund will be granted for the differential amount only Credit Note will be issued.
- A Credit Note is a digital voucher issued when a student is eligible for any additional tuition paid. The amount can be used to pay for any future transactions. It is non-refundable and non-transferable but can be applied fully or partially.

## REFUND POLICY

- Students can request a refund for the amount paid towards the Program at any time, before the Cohort Commencement Date. All information available at [www.upgrad.com](http://www.upgrad.com).
- Students must submit the refund form via the "My Application" section under their profile. The refund will be processed within 30 working days of the commencement of the program after being approved by the upGrad Admissions Team. A processing fee will be levied while processing the refund. If a Student has paid less than the processing fee while registering for the program, the Student shall not be eligible for any refund in such case.
- Students shall not be eligible for any refund under any circumstances if refund request is raised post Cohort Commencement Date and Student will continue to pay the monthly EMI for loan (if applicable) and such loan cannot be canceled. This is also applicable for those Students who could not complete their payment and could not be enrolled in the cohort opted for. However, the Student can raise a request for Pre-Program deferral as per the policy defined below for the same.
- In case of a refund as per point 1 of this policy, the Student will be solely responsible for any cancellation of loan, including but not limited to applicable loan cancellation charges levied on the total canceled loan amount. These charges will be decided by the third-party financial institution that has given the loan to the Student, and upGrad will have no role to play in deciding the quantum of these charges.
- Students must pay the full fee within 7 days of payment of Caution Money or Cohort Commencement Date, whichever is earlier, otherwise the admission letter will be rescinded.

Case	Fee deducted/ charged
Before Program Commencement	Processing fee
Post Program Commencement	No refund possible

## STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

### 1. Applicability

This Student Code of Conduct (“**Code**”) shall be applicable to all the students who are enrolled in courses or programs offered by GGU Worldwide upGrad programs. All such students shall be obligated to abide by the standards of this Code.

This Code covers conduct that:

- a. occurs on or adjacent to any campus or facility of the University (including the platform used for delivery of online components of the programs or courses) or occurring in the course of any University-affiliated or supervised program or event, whether online or in-person, without regard to its location.
- b. occurs in non-University activities, such as internships or other educational programs, for which students receive credit or recognition from the University.
- c. occurs in other circumstances where the student’s conduct is directly related to his/her status as a student at the University.

### 2. Prohibited Conduct

Any conduct by a student or a group of students in violation of this Code is strictly prohibited. In the event that it is determined that sufficient evidence exists that the Code has been violated, judicial process, as outlined in the Code, shall be initiated.

Conduct that is deemed to be prohibited under this Code can be found herein below:

1. *Unlawful conduct:* Any unlawful conduct by students is strictly prohibited, including but not limited to:
  - a. Criminal behavior
  - b. Unlawful discrimination
  - c. Sexual or other unlawful harassment, and
  - d. Unlawful conduct relating to the use or possession of alcohol and/or other controlled substances (The University reserves the right to seize such controlled substances that are found to be in the possession of students while engaging in University-affiliated or supervised events.)
2. *Conduct contrary to University policy:* Any conduct by students in violation of the University’s established policies, including but not limited to this handbook, is strictly prohibited.
3. *Conduct harmful to University community:* Any conduct by students that intentionally or unintentionally causes psychological or physical harm to the University community or any member thereof and/or threatens or endangers the health or safety of any member of the University community, including but not limited to abuse, threats, intimidation, coercion and bullying, whether verbal or non-verbal, is strictly prohibited.
4. *Conduct harmful to property:* Any conduct by students that intentionally or unintentionally damages, harms or interferes with the use of movable or immovable property, whether belonging to the University or any member of the University community, is strictly prohibited.
5. *Dishonest conduct:* Any conduct by students that involves dishonest behavior is strictly prohibited, including but not limited to:
  - a. furnishing false, incomplete or misleading information to the University (including via its officials or representatives), whether in electronic, verbal or written form.
  - b. misrepresenting or helping another to misrepresent academic performance including but not limited to grades, awards, performance, etc., whether to the University, potential employers, other educational institutions and governmental organisations.
  - c. initiating or causing to be initiated any false report, warning or threat in relation to the University; and
  - d. unauthorised use, forgery or alteration of any University document or instrument of identification.

6. *Conduct involving weapons:* The use, display or possession of any weapons, firearms, ammunition, explosives, dangerous chemicals or any other hazardous objects is strictly prohibited and shall be seized if found to be in possession of students. This prohibition is not applicable to the carrying of pepper spray in accordance with California law.
7. *Unauthorized Presence, Trespassing, or Disorderly conduct:* Any disorderly conduct by students, including but not limited to unauthorized presence in or use of University premises, facilities or properties (including refusing to immediately obey a staff or faculty member's request to leave such premises or refrain from using such property. Engaging in disorderly conduct public intoxication or lewd, indecent or obscene behavior is strictly prohibited.
8. *Conduct interfering with academic or non-academic activities:* Any conduct by students that intentionally or unintentionally interferes with academic activities, including but not limited to studying, teaching, research, advising, etc. or non-academic activities including but not limited to administrative operations, security, safety, fire, police, or health emergency activities, etc, is strictly prohibited. Certain illustrations of such activities are provided below:
  - a. Conduct in academic or non-academic activities, whether in-person or online, that disrupts and/or creates a hostile environment
  - b. Failure to comply with the reasonable directions of University officials, law enforcement units and emergency personnel, acting in furtherance of their duties or refusal to identify oneself when requested by such persons or threatening, abusing or harassing them, whether physically or verbally.
  - c. Conduct that that disrupts or causes disruption to computer services; damages, alters, or destroys data or records; or adversely affects computer software, programs, systems, or networks.
  - d. Misuse of University electronic resources, including but not limited to:
    - i. Use of any data, computer system or network to devise or execute any scheme to defraud, deceive, extort, or wrongfully obtain money, property or data;
    - ii. Unauthorized entry into a file to use, read, or change the contents, or for any other purpose;
    - iii. Unauthorized transfer of a file;
    - iv. Use of another individual's identification and password;
    - v. Interfering with the work of another student, faculty member, or other member of the University community;
    - vi. Viewing or sending obscene or abusive messages or images;
    - vii. Interfering with normal operation of the University computing systems;
    - viii. providing access to university services, databases, courses and any other university resource to a third party without prior authorization by a university official.
9. *Conduct constituting harassment:*
  - a. Harassment on the basis of any protected characteristic is strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment is verbal, written or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion towards an individual, particularly due to their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law, or that of his or her relatives, friends or associates..
  - b. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or educational environment or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or otherwise adversely affect an individual's employment or educational opportunities.
  - c. Certain illustrations of such conduct are provided below:
    - i. Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs, etc.
    - ii. Visual conduct, such as derogatory posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, or gestures.

- iii. Misuse of property, such as using University computers, e-mail, or web services as a mode of communicating prohibited verbal or visual messages.
  - iv. Unprofessional conduct, such as creating an academic or employment environment that could reasonably be perceived as intimidating, hostile, or abusive.
- 10. *Conduct constituting sexual harassment:*
  - a. Any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether intentional or unintentional, resulting in the creation of an environment for another member of the University community, that could reasonably be perceived as intimidating, hostile or abusive, constitutes sexual harassment and is strictly prohibited.
  - b. Sexual harassment may take many forms, including but not limited to verbal conduct, physical conduct, visual conduct, abuse of authority and unprofessional conduct, and such conduct may be subtle and indirect or blatant and overt.
- 11. *Sexual misconduct:* Sexual misconduct by students is prohibited, including but not limited to the following:
  - a. Sexual assault: Any sexual contact or the attempt thereof with another individual:
    - i. By force or threat of force; and/or
    - ii. Without effective consent; and/or
    - iii. Where the individual is incapacitated.
  - b. Non-consensual sexual contact: Any intentional sexual contact (or attempt thereof), regardless of the nature, by any person upon any other person, that is without consent and/or is by force.
  - c. Non-consensual sexual intercourse: Any form of sexual intercourse (or attempt thereof), with any object or body part, by any person upon any other person, that is without consent and/or is by force.
  - d. Sexual exploitation: Any action resulting in taking sexual advantage of another individual, via non-consensual or abusive means, for one's own benefit or the benefit of another person. Certain illustrations of such conduct are provided below:
    - i. Causing or attempting to cause another person to become intoxicated or otherwise incapacitated with the intent of engaging in a sexual behavior.
    - ii. Recording, photographing, or transmitting images or videos of sexual activity. and/or intimate body parts of another person without their consent.
    - iii. Voyeurism, including non-consensually observing other person(s) engaging in sexual or intimate activities and permitting others to observe another person engaging in sexual or intimate activities.
    - iv. Exposing one's genitals in non-consensual circumstances or inducing someone to expose their genitals.
    - v. Knowingly transmitting a sexually transmitted disease or virus to another person without his or her knowledge.
    - vi. Stalking or bullying of a sexual nature.
- 12. *Stalking:* A course of physical or verbal contact directed at another individual that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others or suffer substantial emotional distress constitutes stalking and is strictly prohibited.
- 13. *Retaliation:* Any adverse action taken against another person due to the said person reporting or threatening to report a violation of this Code or for participating in good faith in investigations, proceedings, hearings or remediation relating to University policies, including this Code, shall constitute retaliation and is strictly prohibited.

### 3. **Judicial Procedures**

If there is sufficient reason to believe that any student to whom this Code applies has acted in contravention of this Code, the judicial procedures as outlined herein shall be initiated against such student.

The judicial procedures shall be the sole process for determining whether there exists a preponderance of evidence that a student engaged in conduct prohibited by this Code. The determination of facts and consequent imposition of sanctions in accordance with the judicial procedures outlined herein shall be final and binding.

The judicial procedures shall be conducted as outlined hereinbelow.

1. *Incident Reporting*

- a. Any member of the university community is authorized to report a potential contravention of this Code to the Grievance Committee at [grievance.redressal@upgrad.com](mailto:grievance.redressal@upgrad.com).
- b. Reports should be submitted with as much specific detail as possible, including:
  - i. The identity of the student(s) involved.
  - ii. A detailed description of the alleged misconduct.
  - iii. The date, time, and location of the incident.
  - iv. The names of any witnesses.

2. *Initial Assessment and Notification*

- a. Upon receipt of a report, a member from the Grievance Committee will conduct an initial review to determine if the matter falls within the scope of the Code.
- b. If it does, the student who is the subject of the report (the respondent) will receive a formal written notification. This notification will contain:
  - i. A summary of the alleged violation.
  - ii. The specific university policies believed to have been violated.
  - iii. An explanation of the respondent's rights and responsibilities throughout the process.

3. *Investigation and Evidence Gathering*

- a. A designated investigator from the Grievance Committee will be assigned to collect all pertinent information and evidence.
- b. This phase may involve:
  - i. Interviewing the reporting party (complainant), the respondent, and any identified witnesses.
  - ii. Securing relevant documentary evidence, such as emails, text messages, or photographic materials.
  - iii. Reviewing any available video surveillance footage or other physical evidence.
- c. All students are expected to cooperate fully with the investigation and are encouraged to provide their own account and any supporting evidence.

4. *Adjudication and Sanctioning*

- a. Following the investigation, a determination will be made in writing based on a preponderance of the evidence. If a student is found to have engaged in any conduct prohibited under this Code, an appropriate sanction will be imposed.
- b. Sanctions are determined based on the nature and severity of the violation and may include, but are not limited to:
  - i. A formal written warning.
  - ii. Required educational programs or assignments.
  - iii. Restitution or required community service.
  - iv. Loss of privileges (e.g., student housing, participation in certain activities).
  - v. Suspension or permanent expulsion from the university.

5. *Appeal Mechanism*

- a. A student who receives a negative decision and/or sanction from the Grievance Committee under this Code may appeal the decision to the Appeals Committee. The appeal must be submitted within 5 business days of the decision being communicated to the student, by emailing [grievance.redressal@upgrad.com](mailto:grievance.redressal@upgrad.com).

- b. If the Appeals Committee believes there are *prima facie* reasons for an appeal, it will review of the Grievance Committee's decision. The student will then be given a final opportunity to present facts and evidence to support their appeal. The ruling of the appeal shall be final and binding.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Golden Gate University is committed to preparing students to lead and serve and to creating an academic community that values both individual and collaborative efforts that promote learning. The University aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Specifically, Golden Gate University seeks to accomplish the following:

- Ensure that students, faculty, and administrators understand that the responsibility for upholding academic honesty lies with them.
- Prevent any students from gaining an unfair advantage over other students through academic misconduct.
- Ensure that students understand that academic dishonesty is a violation of the trust of the entire academic community.
- Clarify what constitutes academic misconduct among students at Golden Gate University.

The following policy applies to all students taking courses in the GGU Worldwide upGrad programs.

### Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is the failure to maintain academic integrity. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to:

1. **Plagiarism:** In any written work, including but not limited to submitted papers, discussion postings in online work, presentations, and examination answers:
  - Copying all or part of another person's written work without proper citation or attribution.
  - Representing specific phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or the specific substance of another person's work as one's own without giving appropriate credit.
  - Paraphrasing another person's original ideas, theories, explanations, examples, models, principles, research issues and strategies, cases, conclusions, etc., without proper attribution.
  - Representing another person's computer programs, web content, or designs, graphic or artistic works, mathematical or scientific solutions, charts, tables, figures, or illustrations in any medium as one's own.
2. **Fabrication:** The falsification of data, information, or citations in any formal academic exercise.
3. **Deception:** Providing false information to an instructor concerning a formal academic exercise-e.g., giving a false excuse for missing a deadline or falsely claiming to have submitted work.
4. **The Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI):** GGU recognizes the positive impact of using generative technology in industry and the classroom. Using generative technology, such as AI, can enhance student learning in the classroom but should not replace critical thinking. Each instructor has the authority to determine the allowable limits of using Generative AI or any digital tools in their courses. In the absence of a professor's policy, the following policy applies.
  - Unless otherwise specified by the instructor in the course syllabus or in writing, the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) or any digital tools to complete any course assignments or projects may lead to violating the academic integrity policy. Students are required to cite all tools used to complete the student's work product.

GGU AI policy is available on the GGU website that is updated on a regular basis to uphold highest academic integrity. Any violation of these policies, including unauthorized use of AI tools, will result in disciplinary action.

The university enforces a zero-tolerance policy for such violations to maintain the highest degree of academic integrity. Additional AI policies may apply according to the student's program of study that can be found under each specific program information. Students must speak with their instructors if they are unclear whether generative AI sources are permitted.

**5. Third-Party Academic Services/Providers:** The University does not authorize or endorse any third-party academic service/providers for thesis/dissertation writing or any other academic submissions that students may use. Students must complete all course assignments/thesis/dissertation without receiving any help/guidance/services from third-party academic services/providers. Engaging external services is an academic misconduct and may result in immediate disciplinary action by the university including expulsion and cancellation of enrollment. For any queries or support, learners may contact the student support team.

**6. Cheating:**

- Copying, in part or in whole, from another student's work, including exams, tests, quizzes, assignments, projects, online postings, work drafts or other evaluation instruments unless part of a group project in which collaboration is permitted and permission is given by the originator of the work.
- Using or consulting sources, materials, devices, or other assistance not authorized by the instructor during a quiz, test, or examination.
- Obtaining or attempting to obtain, or giving or attempting to give, unauthorized aid of any type on a quiz, test, examination, or assignment.
- Unauthorized collaboration. Students may not combine efforts on any academic work, done inside or outside the classroom unless specifically permitted by the instructor. Although instructors should clearly define the limits of collaboration allowed, the absence of any instructions indicates that collaboration is not permitted. When uncertain, the student should seek clarification from the instructor. In cases of unauthorized collaboration, any student giving aid is as responsible as the recipient, unless the former is unaware that she/he has provided aid. A student who seeks unauthorized aid is responsible for participating in unauthorized collaboration whether the aid was given or received.
- Obtaining or attempting to obtain unauthorized prior knowledge of a quiz, test, or examination.
- Submitting work previously presented in another course or in another section of the same course, unless specifically authorized by the course instructor.
- Doing work for another student or having one's work done by another person, or representing oneself as another person, or failing to identify oneself in a forthright and honest manner in the context of an academic obligation.
- Altering grades or interfering with grading policies or procedures.
- Submitting or attempting to submit contrived or altered data, quotations or documentation when the intent is to mislead, or deliberately attributing material to a source other than where the student obtained it.
- Any other act committed by a student in the course of academic work that defrauds or misrepresents, including aiding or abetting in any of the actions defined above.

**7. Bribery:** Offering money or other goods and services in exchange for academic favor.

**8. Sabotage:** Creating an improper academic disadvantage for another student or an improper academic advantage for oneself. This includes but is not limited to:

- Acting to prevent others from completing their work. This includes cutting pages out of library books or willfully disrupting the experiments of others.
- Removing, defacing, hiding or deliberately withholding library books or other materials, especially those with short-term loan periods or on reserve for courses.
- Theft or damage of intellectual property.



- Sabotaging or stealing another person's assignments, books, papers, notes, or projects.
- Improperly accessing or interfering with, electronically or via other means, the property of another person or the University.

This list is not exhaustive, and the University reserves the right to determine in a given instance what action constitutes a violation of academic integrity.

### **Investigation Procedure for Allegations of Academic Misconduct**

Any student, faculty member, or University employee who observes, discovers or has a good faith belief about the occurrence of academic misconduct must notify the faculty member responsible for the course in which the alleged misconduct occurred, or the program director or administrator who will in turn notify the responsible faculty member.

When a faculty member responsible for a course has reason to believe that there has been an incident of academic misconduct, the faculty member shall follow the procedure outlined hereinbelow:

- The faculty member should first gather all available evidence related to the alleged misconduct. This may include the student's work, a copy of the exam or assignment, and any direct observations.
- Next, they must meet with the student privately to discuss the allegation. During this meeting, the faculty member should present the evidence and allow the student an opportunity to present their case. The faculty member shall ensure that this meeting is handled with utmost discretion and confidentiality.
- Following the meeting, the faculty member must document the incident thoroughly. This documentation should include a detailed description of the alleged misconduct, a summary of the conversation with the student, and all supporting evidence. A formal report must then be submitted to the Academic Integrity Committee thereafter, including the faculty member's preliminary opinion on whether there is reason to believe that academic misconduct has occurred.
- Upon receiving the report, the Academic Integrity Committee will review the case. If deemed necessary, they may hold a formal hearing where both the faculty member and the student can present their cases. If the student is found responsible, the committee will determine the appropriate sanctions as provided hereinbelow. The decision shall then be communicated to the student, and they are typically given a period to appeal the decision.
- A student who receives a negative decision and/or sanction from the Academic Integrity Committee may appeal the decision to the Appeals Committee. The appeal must be submitted within 5 business days of the decision being communicated to the student, by emailing [grievance.redressal@upgrad.com](mailto:grievance.redressal@upgrad.com).
- If the Appeals Committee believes there are *prima facie* reasons for an appeal, it will review the Academic Integrity Committee's decision. The student will then be given a final opportunity to present facts and evidence to support their appeal. The ruling of the appeal committee shall be final and binding.

### **Sanctions**

Sanctions are the consequences imposed on the student for acts of academic misconduct. There are two kinds of sanctions: academic sanctions and administrative sanctions. Either one or both types may be imposed for any act of academic misconduct.

#### **1. Academic Sanctions:**

The faculty member teaching the course in which the academic misconduct occurred has the discretion to impose an academic sanction s/he deems appropriate, including but not limited to:

- Expel the student from the university.
- Require the student to enroll in an academic integrity program at the student's cost.

- Suspend the student from the course and prohibit the student from retaking it for one academic term or more.
- Suspend the student from enrolling in any course at the university for a period of time.
- Permanently expel the student from the program in which he or she is enrolled and deem the student ineligible for subsequent re-admission to that program.
- In addition to imposing academic sanctions, the University may impose administrative sanctions.

## **2. Administrative Sanctions:**

- Any student found to have violated the Academic Integrity Policy will be placed on academic integrity probation for a period of three trimesters in which the student is enrolled in Golden Gate University coursework. Should a student be found to have violated this policy while on academic integrity probation, the student will be automatically suspended for two trimesters (including the current trimester should the student be found to have violated this policy prior to the end of a term).
- Violation of the policy will also preclude the student from being awarded any honors recognition for which he/she might otherwise qualify, such as graduation honors.
- An additional administrative sanction may be imposed. For the purpose of determining the appropriate administrative sanction, the determinative body may seek to determine the extent to which past academic misconduct occurred. Sanction, including but not limited to the following:
  - Awarding no credit for the academic exercise for which there was academic misconduct. If the faculty member chooses to award no credit, s/he may choose to allow the student to complete an alternative assignment or examination and average the two grades together. However, the faculty member is under no obligation to do so.
  - Assigning a grade of “F” or other reduced grade for the exam or assignment, with no possibility of ameliorating the grade by means of additional work.
  - Assigning a grade of “F” or other reduced grade for the course.
  - Adding a student back into a course (free of tuition charge) that they dropped prior to the “W” grade required date, to assign a grade of “F”.
  - Expelling the student from the university.

**NEXT: SPECIFIC PROGRAM DETAILS:**

- DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (DBA)
- DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION IN EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES WITH CONCENTRATION IN GENERATIVE AI
- DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION IN DIGITAL LEADERSHIP
- DOCTOR OF JURIDICAL SCIENCE (SJD)
- MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA)

## **DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) is a 100% online program that combines self-paced (asynchronous) learning with interactive live sessions (synchronous). Designed for experienced managers, executives, consultants, and academic aspirants. The program enables students to conduct applied research that addresses real-world business challenges while building advanced leadership and analytical skills. Students must have a Master's Degree (or equivalent) or a Bachelor's Degree with 5+ years of professional work experience. Students must have earned 3.0 GPA in their last acquired degree. The program is structured around the Scholar-Practitioner Model and consists of three key phases with a total of 9 (nine) courses:

- 1) Foundation Phase
- 2) Concentration Phase
- 3) Dissertation Phase

During the Foundation Phase, students must complete 3 courses in research methods and academic writing, complete required assignments and projects, and successfully pass the Qualifying Exam. In the Concentration Phase, students will have 2 options to select their concentration:

- 1) Students can choose one concentration from the following 4 concentration areas and must complete 3 concentration courses according to the selected concentration:
  - Finance, or
  - Marketing, or
  - Leadership and Strategy, or
  - Business Analytics
- 2) Students can choose a General Concentration that includes a combination of 3 concentration courses based on their area of interest.

During the Dissertation Phase, students must submit an 8-10 page Research Topic Proposal to the Dissertation Committee and defend the Dissertation Research Proposal before the Dissertation Committee. Only after successful defense and approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) students can proceed to conduct their independent research and start writing their dissertation. The final dissertation must demonstrate originality, academic rigor, and practical relevance.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME

Students graduating from the GGU DBA program will acquire the following:

- **Advanced research capability:** Graduates will demonstrate the ability to design, conduct, and evaluate rigorous, evidence-based research that addresses real-world business problems with scholarly depth and practical impact.
- **Strategic and analytical thinking:** Graduates will show advanced cognitive and critical thinking skills, enabling them to analyze complex business challenges, evaluate evidence, and develop strategic solutions.
- **Applied leadership and professional insight:** Graduates will demonstrate the ability to integrate theory with practice, applying research insights to lead, innovate, and influence decision-making in professional, academic, or consulting roles.
- **Ethical and responsible scholarship:** Graduates will exhibit high standards of academic integrity and ethical responsibility in all aspects of their research, writing, and professional conduct, with sensitivity to cultural and global contexts.
- **Effective scholarly communication:** Graduates will demonstrate the ability to communicate complex ideas clearly and persuasively in academic and professional settings through well-structured writing, presentations, and discourse.
- **Lifelong learning and continuous improvement:** Graduates will embrace ongoing learning by staying current with evolving business trends, theories, and research practices, continuously refining their knowledge and expertise.
- **Collaboration and peer engagement:** Graduates will actively engage in peer learning, scholarly discourse, and collaborative research, contributing to a strong and supportive academic community.

- **Career and academic advancement:** Graduates will be equipped with the research, communication, and leadership skills necessary to succeed as senior professionals, consultants, or faculty members, and to contribute meaningfully to the business world.

## PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The program includes 3 phases and 9 courses. Each course and phase have a fixed number of credits as illustrated below:

Phase	Courses	Duration	Credits
<b>Foundation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doctoral Writing and Research Methods</li> <li>• Quantitative Research and Analysis</li> <li>• Qualitative Research and Analysis</li> </ul>	6-7 Months	12
<b>Qualifying Exam - 2 Months</b>			
<b>Concentration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Leadership and Strategy</li> <li>• Business Analytics</li> <li>• General</li> </ul>	6-7 Months	12
<b>Dissertation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic Proposal</li> <li>• Defense of the Research Proposal</li> <li>• Dissertation Submission and Sign-Off</li> </ul>	20 Months	32
	<b>Total</b>	<b>36 months</b>	<b>56</b>

Students can choose from the following concentrations based on their area of interest:

Order	Finance	Marketing	Leadership and Strategy	Business Analytics
<b>Course 1</b>	820 - Corporate Finance	870 - Marketing Management	880 - Leadership Theory, Research and Application	850 - Managing Data as an Asset
<b>Course 2</b>	821 - Financial Theory and Applications	871 - Consumer Behavior	881 - Leading Complex Change	851 - Operational Performance Management
<b>Course 3</b>	822 - International Finance	872 - Digital Marketing and New Media	882 - Strategic Leadership	852 - Application of AI in Solving Business Problems

Students can also opt for a General Concentration by choosing a combination of any 3 courses from the concentration listed above. The course order in which the concentration courses are offered is listed below:

Course Choice	Valid Selection?	Course Choice (Right Side)	Valid Selection?
DBA 820 Corporate Finance	Yes	DBA 870 - Marketing Management	Yes
DBA 881 Leading Complex Change	Yes	DBA 880 - Leadership Theory, Research and Application	No
DBA 852 Application of AI in Solving Business Problems	Yes	DBA 881 - Leading Complex Change	No

Students may choose a combination of 3 courses from different concentrations if the order of the chosen courses follows the order offered by the university. For instance, a student may choose the first course from one concentration, the second course from another concentration, and the third course from a different concentration. However, students will not be able to choose the first course from two concentrations simultaneously. For example, in the above example, the course choices on the right side are not valid, as the second course in the course choice (DBA 880) is the first course offered in the Leadership and Strategy concentration. The third course in the same set of course choices (DBA 881) is also not valid as it is the second course in the Leadership and Strategy concentration.

Each course is divided into several modules. Each module is divided into sessions, and each session is divided into segments or pages. A page is usually a combination of videos, text, images and question(s).

**Note:** Students must review:

- 1) [Dissertation Process Policy](#) document that walks students through key milestones in the Dissertation Phase, expectations, and deadlines.
- 2) [GGU DBA - DOCUMENT LIST](#) that includes guidelines, checklists and approval forms for the program.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

### **DBA 800 - Doctoral Writing and Research methods (4 Credits)**

This foundational course equips doctoral students with the critical skills needed to excel in academic research and scholarly writing. Students will learn how to identify research problems, conduct comprehensive literature reviews, formulate research questions and hypotheses, and choose appropriate research methods. Emphasis is placed on structuring academic arguments, synthesizing sources, and presenting research in a clear and coherent manner. By the end of the course, students will have drafted the first three chapters of their dissertation, laying a strong foundation for their doctoral research journey.

### **DBA 801 - Quantitative Research and Analysis (4 Credits)**

This course provides an in-depth understanding of quantitative research design and statistical analysis techniques used in business research. Students will explore data collection methods, measurement, sampling strategies, and the construction of statistical and multivariate models. The course emphasizes the practical application of quantitative tools for analyzing and interpreting data, enabling students to draw meaningful insights and support evidence-based decision-making. Students will develop the skills necessary to write a well-structured and rigorous quantitative research paper relevant to their dissertation.

### **DBA 802 - Qualitative Research and Analysis (4 Credits)**

This course offers a comprehensive introduction to qualitative research and its application in business and organizational settings. Students will examine qualitative research designs and data collection methods such as interviews, focus groups, case studies, ethnography, and phenomenology. The course also covers key elements of data analysis, including coding, data display, and verifying conclusions. Emphasis is placed on when and how to apply qualitative methods effectively. By the end of the course, students will be able to design and conduct qualitative studies and write detailed, insightful reports supported by emerging tools and technologies.

### **DBA 820 - Corporate Finance (4 Credits)**

This course provides an in-depth understanding of corporate financial decision-making, focusing on both short-term operations and long-term strategic planning. Students will explore key financial principles such as the time value of money, capital structure theories, and valuation techniques for bonds, stocks, and corporate projects. The course also covers corporate governance, dividend distribution theories, and fundamentals of mergers and acquisitions. Through real-world applications and case-based learning, students will enhance their ability to evaluate financial statements, estimate risk and return, and make data-driven decisions to maximize firm value.

**DBA 821 - Financial Theory and Applications (4 Credits)**

This course delves into contemporary financial theories and their practical applications in corporate finance and risk management. Students will critically examine foundational concepts such as the Efficient Market Hypothesis, Behavioral Finance, and Portfolio Theory, along with advanced topics like the Capital Asset Pricing Model (CAPM), event studies in financial research, and the use of derivatives in managing financial risk. The course emphasizes analytical tools and current research to equip students with the skills necessary to assess and manage investment performance and corporate financial risks effectively.

**DBA 822 - International finance (4 Credits)**

This course explores financial management in the global business environment, focusing on how multinational firms operate across borders. Topics include the structure of the international monetary system, foreign exchange markets, and balance of payments analysis. Students will examine theories and empirical research on exchange rate forecasting, international investment strategies, and risk management techniques using foreign exchange derivatives. The course also addresses the functioning of international bond and equity markets, providing students with a solid foundation in managing financial operations in a global context.

**DBA 870- Marketing Management (4 Credits)**

This course offers a comprehensive exploration of the theories, principles, and practices that define modern marketing management. Students will engage with foundational literature and recent academic research, learning how to integrate marketing scholarship with real-world decision-making. Key topics include consumer and organizational buyer behavior, marketing strategy formulation, brand and product management, pricing, distribution, and customer relationship management. Through case studies and analytical modeling, students will develop the skills to critically evaluate marketing literature, identify areas for further research, and propose a research study relevant to marketing practice.

**DBA 871 - Consumer behavior (4 Credits)**

This doctoral seminar provides an in-depth look at the psychological and behavioral processes that influence consumer decision-making. Students will examine classic and contemporary research on perception, learning, attitudes, motivation, and the social and cultural influences on consumption. Emphasis is placed on both cognitive and behavioral theories, offering insights for managerial application and academic inquiry. By the end of the course, students will be able to evaluate key theories in consumer behavior, understand their practical implications, and identify research gaps for future scholarly exploration.

**DBA 872 - Digital Marketing and New Media (4 Credits)**

This course investigates the transformative impact of digital platforms on marketing strategy and consumer engagement. Students will explore the digital marketing ecosystem through both academic and practitioner lenses, focusing on online advertising, social media, mobile technologies, data-driven relationship management, and digital branding. The course highlights the importance of delivering a compelling digital customer experience and formulating integrated digital strategies. Students will analyze current trends, evaluate the digital micro and macro environment, and develop insights for research and practical innovation in the field.

**DBA 880 – Leadership Research, Theory and Application (4 Credits)**

This course offers a deep dive into the evolution of leadership theories, with a focus on business and organizational leadership. Students will critically examine classical and modern leadership frameworks, including transformational, authentic, servant, and team leadership, as well as emerging topics such as emotional intelligence, neuroscience, and complexity in leadership. Through readings, discussions, and a research proposal project, students will compare diverse leadership approaches and explore their real-world applications. Students will also have the opportunity to specialize in areas such as women in leadership, global leadership, coaching, or strategic management, equipping them with both scholarly knowledge and practical tools for business leadership.

**DBA 881 – Leading Complex Change (4 Credits)**



In today's fast-changing and uncertain world, leading change requires more than just a plan—it requires adaptive thinking, strategic foresight, and emotional intelligence. This course introduces students to contemporary theories and practices of change leadership in complex environments. Using concepts from systems thinking and complexity science, students will analyze organizational dynamics and learn how to lead strategic change in a VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous) world. The course includes hands-on applications through the analysis of real-time business challenges and the development of a personal framework for leading complex change with impact.

#### **DBA 882 – Strategic Leadership (4 Credits)**

This course equips students with the mindset and skills needed to lead strategically in dynamic business environments. Students will explore classic and contemporary strategic leadership theories, engage in strategic thinking and decision-making, and study how to align vision, culture, systems, and execution to drive organizational success. Topics include good vs. bad strategy, strategy execution, performance measurement, and the role of collaboration in leadership. Students will apply theoretical concepts to real-world business challenges and develop an in-depth analysis of a complex leadership issue, preparing them to lead with clarity and influence at the highest levels.

#### **DBA 850 – Managing Data as an Asset (4 Credits)**

This course explores how organizations can transform data into a strategic asset by implementing effective Master Data Management (MDM) practices. Students will examine the challenges caused by inconsistent and fragmented data and learn how to establish a unified, accurate, and governed data environment. Topics include MDM architecture, data modeling, data synchronization, entity resolution, data governance, and risk and security considerations. By analyzing real-world industry applications, students will gain the skills to design and deliver MDM frameworks that support better decision-making and operational efficiency across diverse sectors.

#### **DBA 851 – Operations Performance Management (4 Credits)**

This course focuses on improving organizational performance through data-driven decision-making and operational excellence. Students will analyze existing performance management frameworks such as the Balanced Scorecard, Performance Prism, and McKinsey's 7-S, while also developing new models tailored to dynamic business environments. Emphasis is placed on aligning operations with strategic goals, creating value, and driving continuous improvement. The final project involves designing a customized performance management framework, enabling students to translate theory into actionable insights that enhance enterprise performance.

#### **DBA 852 – Application of AI in Solving Business Problems (4 Credits)**

This course provides students with the tools and knowledge to leverage Artificial Intelligence (AI) in addressing complex business challenges. Topics include AI applications in risk mitigation, fraud detection, business resilience, and Internet of Things (IoT) integration. Through case studies and real-world examples, students will explore how AI can be overlaid onto existing business processes to optimize operations, gain predictive insights, and improve efficiency. The course equips students with the skills to evaluate and implement AI-driven solutions, enabling them to lead digital transformation efforts within their organizations.

### **LIVE SESSIONS**

The program includes approximately 60 live sessions to enhance student learning experience and provide consistent academic support. These sessions help students be engaged, aligned with course expectations, and on track with key program milestones. While attendance is not mandatory, it is strongly recommended, as live sessions offer valuable real-time insights, opportunities for class participation, and direct academic guidance and feedback from faculty.

Live Sessions:

- Led by faculty
- Scheduled on weekends
- Each session is 1.5 hours

Live sessions are categorized into two types:

- 1) **Learning Sessions:** Focus on core academic concepts aligned with the curriculum. They include components such as research paper reviews, demonstrations of tools and techniques, and deep dives into key methodologies.
- 2) **Open Hours:** Offer a flexible forum for students to engage directly with faculty. These sessions are designed to clarify doubts related to research topics, core concepts, assignments, projects, or the overall research process.

## PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Assessments are divided into formative and summative categories such as assignments, case studies, and exams to reflect real-world industrial applications. Students will be tested on how well they understand the concepts through both individual and group work. During the course, students are expected to conduct their research independently.

## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

The program includes the following assessments across the courses. Their distribution and weightage are as illustrated below:

### 1. Foundation Phase (12 Credits)

The Foundation Phase will include three, 4-credit courses.

Foundation Phase Course No.	Course Name	Credits	Assignment Weightage	Project Weightage
DBA 800	Doctoral Writing and Research Methods	4	40%	60%
DBA 801	Quantitative Research and Analysis	4	30%	70%
DBA 802	Qualitative Research and Analysis	4	20%	80%

**Note:** The weights could be subject to change and will be communicated to students in advance.

### 2. Qualifying Exam

#### Administration of the Qualifying Exam:

The Qualifying Exam will be a 6-hour, closed-book, closed-notes proctored exam. It includes:

- Part 1: Research Design (3 hours)
- Part 2: Research Methods (3 hours)

**Note:** Details of the exam slot and timings will be communicated to students before the qualifying exam date.

### 3. Concentration Phase (12 Credits)

Each concentration includes three, 4-credit courses. The weightage for the assignment, project and quiz in concentration courses are illustrated below:

Concentration Phase	Course No.	Course Name	Credits	Assignment Weightage	Project Weightage	Quiz Weightage
<b>Finance</b>	DBA 820	Corporate Finance	4	40%	60%	-
	DBA 821	Financial Theory and Applications	4	40%	60%	-
	DBA 822	International Finance	4	40%	60%	-
<b>Marketing</b>	DBA 870	Marketing Management	4	40%	60%	-
	DBA 871	Consumer Behavior	4	50%	50%	-
	DBA 872	Digital Marketing and New Media	4	60%	40%	-
<b>Leadership and Strategy</b>	DBA 880	Leadership Theory, Research and Application	4	40%	60%	-
	DBA 881	Leading Complex Change	4	50%	50%	-
	DBA 882	Strategic Leadership	4	40%	60%	-
	DBA 850	Managing Data as an Asset	4	40%	60%	-
<b>Business Analytics</b>	DBA 851	Operational Performance Management	4	60%	40%	-
	DBA 852	Application of AI in Solving Business Problems	4	35%	45%	20%

#### 4. Dissertation Phase (32 Credits)

##### Topic Proposal - 8 Credits - 6 Months - [Topic Proposal Checklist](#)

- Students will submit their 8-10-page Topic Proposal for review and approval by the Dissertation Committee Chair and Co-Chair.
- This document must contain a brief review of the proposed dissertation topic with the following required sections:
  - Topic and the context in which it will be examined.
  - What is the significance of the topic (e.g., expected contribution to knowledge)
  - A brief review of relevant literature that highlights the continuity between the dissertation topic proposal and prior research in the field of focus
  - A brief description or an idea of the expected research design
  - An initial listing of references, which includes 3-4 literature review themes
- Dissertation Committee Chair and Co-Chair must successfully complete the online IRB training before they approve any topic proposals.

##### Process

- The Dissertation Committee, consisting of the chair and co-chair is formed
- The Dissertation Committee guides the student in the completion of the topic proposal.
- The dissertation chair will be the primary point of contact for the student. It is not expected that the student will be meeting with the chair and the co-chair simultaneously.

- Students submit the topic proposal document to their Dissertation Committee for approval.
- The student must work with the Dissertation Committee to revise the topic proposal.

### **Defense of the Dissertation Research Proposal - 8 Credits - 8 Months - [Research Proposal Defense Checklist](#)**

- The student must defend their dissertation research proposal in front of the Dissertation Committee, the DDDR, other invited faculty, students, and guests.
- The research proposal document will contain a comprehensive description and review of the first 3 (three) chapters of the dissertation:
  - Chapter I: Introduction
  - Chapter II: Literature Review
  - Chapter III: Research Methods
- The full research proposal is expected to include a statement of the research question(s) and their significance, how the research will make an original contribution to knowledge, a robust literature review, the research design and methodology, an assessment of expected limitations, and some ideas for future research.
- The quantitative research proposals must identify testable hypotheses and specify how they will be tested, including solid drafts of expected surveys.
- The qualitative research proposals must include research assumptions, interview guides, and/or focus group discussion questions.
- It should be well-written according to the latest edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines.

**Note:** Students must successfully pass the online IRB training ([Link](#)) between the Topic Proposal and after approval of the Proposal Defense. Students must submit the IRB application after obtaining their research proposal approved by the DDDR, otherwise they cannot move to the next stage (collecting data).

### **Process**

- When the dissertation research proposal document is complete and approved by the student's Dissertation Committee, the student submits it to the DDDR for review and approval using the checklist. Once the DDDR confirms the receipt of the defense proposal document and Power Point Presentation (PPT), the student's Committee Chair will schedule a two-hour dissertation research proposal defense presentation.
- The Dissertation Committee Chair, Co-Chair, and the DDDR will attend the presentation.
- The student will present and defend the research proposal on a live video call. This presentation will be recorded.
- During the defense presentation, the student describes the area of study, provides a brief review of the literature, the research objectives, the contribution to the body of knowledge, the research methodology, and scholarly references.
- At the end of the presentation, attendees may ask questions from the presenter.
- The DDDR will lead a closed deliberation session that includes the Dissertation Committee and attending faculty.
- The outcome of deliberation may be:
  - a. To approve the proposal as presented
  - b. To approve and request that changes be completed to the dissertation research proposal under the guidance of the Dissertation Committee, and submit the revised document to the Dissertation Committee and the DDDR for final approval.
  - c. To reject the proposal and require that the student revise, resubmit, and repeat the process outlined above only once.
- Feedback about changes that need to be made by the student will be shared right after the closed deliberation.
- The time given to incorporate the feedback will be decided by the student's Dissertation Committee.

- The student must address and implement all of the DDDR's comments and resubmit the research proposal document and PPT on the portal. The submission will require final approval by the DDDR before the student proceeds to the next step.
- Rejection of two proposal defenses will result in the student being dropped from the DBA program.

#### **Submission of IRB Application (Interim Submission, Non-Graded) - [IRB Application](#)**

Students must successfully complete the IRB training ([Link](#)). Students must submit the IRB application with all the following required items:

- IRB application
- Approved defense dissertation
- Consent documents
- Survey/focus group/interview questions as applicable in their final format
- Five (5) IRB training certificates

#### **Process**

- Students must submit the application by uploading them to the portal.
- The Dissertation Chair must sign the IRB application in two places. The dissertation chair is also known as the Principal Investigator.
- The students must fill out the consent forms and submit them along with the IRB application. There are four types of consent forms:
  - Survey
  - Interview
  - Focus group
  - Institutional
- The student will either be asked to resubmit with changes or pass IRB inspection as is.
- Students who are performing a pilot study or are planning to revise their survey instrument based on interview and/or focus group findings must resubmit the revised application with the revised survey.
- It may take the student 2-3 attempts to obtain IRB approval. This is normal.

#### **Dissertation Submission - 16 Credits - 8 Months - [Dissertation Submission Sign-Off Checklist](#)**

- Students are expected to submit the dissertation in its entirety.
- While each dissertation is unique, the typical structure of a dissertation in the field of business administration includes:
  - Title and Committee Approval Page (optional; copyright date with student's name)
  - Dedication (optional)
  - Acknowledgments (optional)
  - Table of Contents
  - List of Tables (if applicable)
  - List of Figures (if applicable)
  - Abstract (no more than 250 words, no more than five keywords)
  - Chapter I: Introduction
  - Chapter II: Literature Review
  - Chapter III: Methodology (Research Design & Methods)
  - Chapter IV: Presentation of Results (or) Presentation of Findings
  - Chapter V: Discussion of Implications (managerial and academic)
  - Limitations, Future Research, and Conclusions

- Copy of Proof for Completing IRB Training
- Additional details such as survey instruments or semi-structured interview questionnaire, or secondary data sources, along with detailed analyses which are not present in the main body

#### Process

- The Dissertation Committee will review the dissertation and provide students with feedback and suggestions to enhance the quality of the dissertation.
- Upon approval of the full proposal, the Dissertation Committee continues to guide the student through the completion of the research and the documentation in the form of a final written dissertation that meets the standards of academic quality and an original contribution to knowledge.

#### How to Receive a Dissertation Sign-Off

Students must only submit the final version of the dissertation after making all necessary changes suggested by the Dissertation Committee.

#### Process

- When the dissertation is complete and the DDDR signs off on the dissertation, the Dissertation Committee Chair reports approval of the dissertation to the DBA Program Director and provides a final, approved digital copy of the dissertation, along with a signature sheet indicating the support of both committee members.
- The DBA Program Director will work with the DDDR to review and authorize the dissertation's acceptance and the approval of the award of the doctoral degree by the University.
- The student should apply for graduation in the term in which final dissertation approval is expected, but only upon formal approval by the DBA Program Director will the student graduate.
- The DBA program provides students with administrative support on the process needed to publish their dissertations.
- A digital copy may be published in ProQuest and stored in the GGU Library.

### DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Each student is supported by a three-member Dissertation Committee, which plays a crucial role in guiding, advising, and evaluating the student's research throughout the dissertation phase. The committee ensures academic rigor and practical relevance in the student's work. The Dissertation Committee includes 3 members:

- **Committee Chair (Chair):** The Chair serves as the primary mentor and is a subject matter expert in the student's chosen research area. The Chair meets with the student for 30 scheduled sessions (organized via the platform) to provide consistent guidance. The student also communicates regularly with the Chair through email and shares drafts of the dissertation and proposals for detailed feedback.
- **Committee Co-Chair (Co-Chair):** The Co-Chair offers additional academic support to the student. This member may be a content expert in the student's research domain or a specialist in the research methodology being used. The Co-Chair complements the Chair's guidance by offering further insights and perspectives.
- **Designated DBA Dissertation Reader (DDDR):** The DDDR acts as the official evaluator of the student's dissertation work. This member has the authority to approve or reject the dissertation research proposal defense and the final dissertation. The DDDR leads the Proposal Defense Presentation and communicates the final decision on whether the student has successfully passed or failed. All comments, concerns, and additional requirements provided by the DDDR must be addressed by the student. The student will not be able to graduate without the DDDR's final approval.

### USING GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (GAI)

GGU WW supports the responsible and ethical use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) technologies for enhancing teaching, learning, and research. Use of GAI could undermine academic integrity and damage the

reputation of GGU and its students. GAI can also bring benefits to education in a number of positive ways. This policy provides guidelines which address academic integrity and dishonesty while allowing the use of GAI tools for positive use in the DBA program. It is aligned to several [Executive DBA Council](#) member schools.

**Purpose:** This GGU WW DBA policy aims to promote academic integrity and ethical usage of GAI tools among doctoral students when completing coursework and dissertation research.

It is aligned with University policy as stated in the GGU Catalog on Academic Misconduct, 4.

[Unauthorized Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence \(AI\):](#)

**Goal:** The goal of this GGU Worldwide DBA policy is not to prohibit GAI in academic outputs, but to ensure its responsible usage in keeping with doctoral-level academic standards and ethics.

Appropriate human effort, oversight and transparency regarding AI assistance are essential.

**Policy:**

1. Unless allowed by the instructor or dissertation committee as specified in the course syllabus or in writing, the use of GAI tools/apps to produce content or student work products, including doctoral dissertations is academic misconduct and is expressly prohibited.
2. Students may not present text generated by GAI systems as their own original work. All use of GAI must be properly disclosed and cited. Follow the formatting policies of the style guide for citing GAI. For instance, for the [American Psychological Association \(APA\)](#): (See Appendix for APA Guidance on ChatGPT Other AI Generative Tools.)
3. GAI may be acceptable as a tool to assist with brainstorming ideas. But it should not compose significant portions of one's final submission without explicit instructor or dissertation committee approval.
4. Students must abide by the university's Academic Integrity Policy when using GAI, avoiding plagiarism, fabrication of data, deception, cheating, bribery, and sabotage.
5. GAI should not be used for unethical purposes including discrimination, disinformation, copyright infringement, explicit/offensive content generation, etc.
6. Students should be mindful of biases and limitations of GAI systems when utilizing them. Outputs require human review.
7. Students are expected to comply with any additional course-specific guidelines established by instructors regarding the use of GAI. Violations are subject to disciplinary action per university policy.
8. Turnitin AI and other AI writing detection tools can be used by instructors and dissertation committee members but should not be the sole basis for disciplinary actions against a student. Turnitin AI's "AI writing detection model may not always be accurate (it may misidentify human-written, AI-generated, and AI-generated and AI-paraphrased text). It takes further scrutiny and human judgment in conjunction with an organization's application of its specific academic policies to determine whether any academic misconduct has occurred." When using Turnitin as a detection tool, the acceptable Turnitin similarity score is 20% and below while the acceptable Turnitin AI writing score is 20% and below. These scores are for the totality of the academic output, for instance, the full final dissertation draft and not per chapter.
9. Students can use but must not rely solely on GAI tools to complete their doctoral literature reviews. GAI tools can assist in searching for relevant scholarly and practitioner publications and summarizing content, but students are expected to read and comprehend sources independently, verify citations, and synthesize and analyze how each publication contributes to literature review themes and sub-themes, reinforced as follows.
10. All instructors and dissertation committee chairs/members are expected to include a GAI policy in their course syllabi/module outlines and post it on their LMS website. This policy will be periodically reviewed and updated to align with evolving technology and ethical norms. We aim to promote responsible use of GAI in pursuit of enriching doctoral education.

**DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION IN EMERGING  
TECHNOLOGIES WITH CONCENTRATION IN GENERATIVE AI**



## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION & REQUIREMENTS & ADMISSIONS CRITERIA**

The Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) in Emerging Technologies with Concentration in Generative AI is designed to meet the needs of professional managers, business leaders and consultants, leaders of public or nonprofit institutions, and those planning to teach at the college or university. The program's objective is for graduates to contribute to the advancement of their professions and to the expansion of knowledge relating to the current theories, practices, and issues in business; training in research methods; and study of the relationships between business and public management on the one hand and social and global issues on the other. Students are required to conduct research on a topic of current importance for their dissertation.

The philosophy of the DBA Program is consistent with the traditions and values of GGU, which places a strong emphasis on the practitioner-scholar academic model. The DBA Program requires a high level of achievement from its students in terms of knowledge of and facility with the academic theories and principles of business. Still, it also expects relevance in terms of application to the real world of the private and public sectors.

The program welcomes professionals from diverse academic backgrounds who possess a solid understanding of modern business practices. Candidates should demonstrate strong English communication skills and the ability to write at a scholarly level. They are also expected to be aware of the broader economic, social, and political context in which businesses operate. To be eligible for the program, applicants must hold a Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, or a two-year Post Graduate Diploma (equivalent to a Master's), along with a minimum of 5 years of professional work experience.

The program requires completion of 8 units of dissertation foundation courses, 20 units of required courses, and 28 units of dissertation work, for a total of 56 units.

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of the DBA program, students will demonstrate mastery of the following:

- 1) A thorough knowledge of the scientific and scholarly research methods and their application in the business setting in a senior management position, as a consultant, as a professor at the university level.
- 2) Advanced critical thinking, conceptual and analytical skills.
- 3) A strong understanding of both the seminal theories and the latest practices in business management including an advanced and intensive knowledge of theory and practice in one field of business.
- 4) Intensive knowledge of theory and practice in a chosen field of business or public management.
- 5) Advanced ability to use research tools to perform original applied research that advances business knowledge.
- 6) An appreciation of cultural, ethical, and global issues and their impact on business theory, privacy and practices.
- 7) Advanced skills necessary for effective decision-making in complex environments through integrating theoretic insights with practical knowledge.
- 8) Ability to apply these tools in an ethical and responsible manner as it impacts society and humanity.

## **PROGRAM STRUCTURE ET**

The DBA ET program is a three-year (36-month) research and writing focused program for those who wish to pursue sustained independent study, research, and writing. Candidates are expected to produce well-edited, original, and publishable dissertations (Book/Business plan/Dissertation) that will contribute to scholarship. The program includes 3 phases:

- 1) Concentration Phase (First Year)
- 2) Foundation Phase (First Year)
- 3) Dissertation Phase (Second & Third Year)

Concentration Phase Courses	
Course No	Course Name
DBA 860	Foundations of Machine Learning and AI
DBA 861	Deep Learning & Its Variants
DBA 862	Gen. AI- Pre-Trained Models
DBA 863	AI Project Design & Execution
DBA 864	Responsible AI
Foundation Phase Courses	
DBA 808	Emerging Digital Technologies
DBA 805	Doctoral Research Methods and Analysis

Details regarding the course launch schedule and academic calendar will be shared with students at the start of the program. The course sequence outlined above is indicative and maybe adjusted to better align with the overall learning objectives of the program. All courses are delivered in a synchronous format through virtual live sessions, conducted by faculty. For technical courses, lab instructors are also assigned to facilitate hands-on sessions.

Live Sessions are held on the weekends with an option to attend either in the morning or at the evening. Students must decide at the beginning of the program about the time of attending live sessions. Session recordings are available immediately after each class for students.

A discussion board is provided to support ongoing learning and doubt-solving. Students are encouraged to use this platform to post questions, seek clarifications, and engage in meaningful academic discussions with faculty outside of live classes.

### **COURSE PROGRESSION**

Program details are outlined in the table below. Each phase includes structured learning activities, assessments, and milestone-based progression to ensure both academic rigor and real-world relevance.

Overview of Concentration, Foundation & Dissertation Phases				
Course No.	Course Name	Duration	Units	Additional Requirements
Concentration and Foundation Phase				
Concentration and Foundation Courses		63 Weeks	28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in all live sessions or watch the recorded lectures.</li> <li>Complete and pass all assessments/course assignments</li> <li>Decide dissertation mode (book, business plan, or dissertation).</li> <li>Decide a broad area of interest and finalize the dissertation topic.</li> </ul>
DBA 808	Emerging Digital Technologies	9 Weeks	4	
DBA 860	Foundations of Machine Learning and AI	9 Weeks	4	
DBA 861	Deep Learning & its Variants	9 Weeks	4	
DBA 862	Gen. AI- Pre-Trained Models	9 Weeks	4	
DBA 863	AI Project Design & Execution	9 Weeks	4	
DBA 864	Responsible AI	9 Weeks	4	
DBA 805	Doctoral Research Methods and Analysis	9 Weeks	4	
Dissertation Phase				
Dissertation Milestones		93 Weeks (approx.)	28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete Topic presentation</li> <li>Periodic 1:1 mentoring by supervisors</li> <li>Submit Topic Proposal/Qualifying Exam</li> <li>Complete IRB Training &amp; Approval</li> <li>Attend live sessions/ **Workshops for Different dissertation writing mode</li> <li>Regular milestone submissions</li> </ul>
	Topic Presentation		-	
DBA 890	Topic Proposal (Qualifying Exam)		8	
DBA 891	Defense of Research Proposal		8	
	IRB Training & Approval		-	
DBA 892	Dissertation Submission and Defence		12	
Total Credits		156	56	

**\*\* Interactive Dissertation Workshops:** To support students in their dissertation journey for the Book and Business Plan modes, regular hands-on workshops are conducted by academic experts and industry mentors. These workshops provide step-by-step guidance in achieving key milestones, along with:

- Expert support on structure, research design, and execution

- Constructive feedback from faculty and peers
- Clearly defined milestones to help students stay on track

Students must review the [DBA ET Dissertation Process and Policy](#) document to stay on track and align with key milestones in the Dissertation Phase, including the key tasks, expectations, and timelines for each stage. The mandatory documents are attached to the list of Appendices.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

### **DBA 860 - Foundations of Machine Learning and AI (4 Credits)**

Provides a comprehensive introduction to core concepts in artificial intelligence and machine learning, with a focus on strategic business applications. It addresses foundational algorithms, modeling techniques, and data-driven decision frameworks, while examining how these technologies can be leveraged to enhance operational efficiency, drive innovation, and address complex organizational challenges. Emphasis is placed on the role of machine learning in evidence-based management and predictive analytics.

### **DBA 861 - Deep Learning and its Variants (4 Credits)**

Students engage with the theoretical and applied aspects of deep learning, including the structure and function of neural networks. The course explores various architectures such as convolutional and recurrent models, examining their relevance to business domains such as customer behavior prediction, automation, image and language processing, and product development. Attention is given to evaluating the performance and limitations of deep learning systems within enterprise environments.

### **DBA 862 - Gen AI - Pre-Trained Models (4 Credits)**

Offers a detailed exploration of generative artificial intelligence and its strategic potential across industry sectors. It covers the underlying principles of generative modeling, including transformer architectures, training requirements, and implementation strategies. Participants assess the implications of these technologies for innovation, content generation, process redesign, and organizational intelligence. Case studies and applied exercises support the development of analytical capabilities required for evaluating generative solutions.

### **DBA 863 - AI Project Design and Execution (4 Credits)**

Addresses the methodological and managerial aspects of initiating and implementing artificial intelligence projects. It includes frameworks for defining project scope, evaluating feasibility, aligning stakeholders, and assessing long-term impact on business functions and society. Students examine sector-specific use cases, resource constraints, and performance metrics, with particular attention to responsible deployment and organizational readiness for AI integration.

### **DBA 864 - Responsible AI (4 Credits)**

Examines the ethical, legal, and societal dimensions of AI development and deployment. It introduces conceptual and regulatory frameworks concerning fairness, accountability, transparency, and inclusivity. Through case analysis and policy review, the course encourages critical reflection on the risks and responsibilities associated with AI systems. Participants develop competencies to evaluate governance mechanisms and ensure compliance with international norms and evolving standards.

### **DBA 808 - Emerging Digital Technologies (4 Credits)**

Investigates key technologies that are reshaping the global business landscape, including blockchain, the Internet of Things (IoT), edge computing, and quantum systems. Participants evaluate the strategic potential of these technologies, considering both the opportunities and barriers to adoption. It fosters an interdisciplinary understanding of how these innovations influence business models, competitive dynamics, and organizational transformation.

### **DBA 805 - Doctoral Research Methods and Analysis (4 Credits)**

The research component provides doctoral candidates with the methodological tools required for conducting rigorous academic inquiry. It covers both qualitative and quantitative research methods, focusing on research

design, data collection, statistical analysis, and ethical research practices. Students are trained to formulate research questions, engage critically with literature, interpret complex datasets, and communicate findings to academic and professional audiences. The objective is to ensure research outputs are not only methodologically sound but also relevant to contemporary business and technological challenges.

## ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

### Foundation and concentration phase (4 credits per course, total 28 credits)

The assessment structure for all the foundation and concentration phase courses will be discussed at the beginning of each course. The weightage will be defined by faculty and will be communicated in advance.

### DBA ET - Dissertation Phase (28 Credits)

Dissertation Milestones	Credits	Timelines
1: Topic Presentation	-	End of Year 1 (Immersion 1)
2: Topic Proposal	8	End of all courses (Written proposal Qualifying Exam)
3: Defense of the Proposal*	8	End of Year 2
4a: Dissertation Submission	-	3 months before the end of Year 3
4b: Final Defense*	12	End of Year 3

\* Note: These Events will be held around the immersions

### DBA ET - Qualifying Exam (Topic Proposal)

The Qualifying Exam is a program requirement for students to demonstrate an ability to apply their research findings towards new problems or situations. Students need to submit the topic proposal based on the chosen dissertation submission mode to the Dissertation Committee.

If a student decides to change the topic/dissertation mode, another examining committee will be formed, and the above process will be repeated.

**Note:** If a student has already passed the Qualifying Exam from GGU Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) degree program, the student is required to submit a Topic Proposal through official channels.

The credits during the Dissertation Phase are awarded as either Credit (CR) or Non-Credit (NC).

- The Chair of the Dissertation Committee will assign the grade.
- The topic proposal will be signed by the committee members.
- If the student fails to clear a milestone, the student is expected to resubmit only the said milestone within the timeline suggested by the Dissertation Committee.
- Students who earn an “NC” for any of the milestones mentioned above must resubmit the said milestone within the timelines suggested by the Dissertation Committee

### DBA ET - DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Each student is supported by a three-member Dissertation Committee, which plays a crucial role in guiding, advising, and evaluating the student’s research throughout the dissertation phase. The committee ensures academic rigor and practical relevance in the student’s work. The Dissertation Committee is comprised of 3 members:

- **Committee Chair (Chair):** The Chair serves as the primary mentor and is a subject matter expert in the student's chosen research area. The Chair meets with the student for 30 scheduled sessions (organized via the platform) to provide consistent guidance. The student also communicates regularly with the Chair through email and shares drafts of the dissertation and proposals for detailed feedback.
- **Committee Co-Chair (Co-Chair):** The Co-Chair offers additional academic support to the student. This member may be a content expert in the student's research domain or a specialist in the research methodology being used. The Co-Chair complements the Chair's guidance by offering further insights and perspectives.
- **Designated DBA Dissertation Reader (DDDR):** The DDDR acts as the official evaluator of the student's dissertation work. This member has the authority to approve or reject the dissertation research proposal defense and the final dissertation. The DDDR leads the Proposal Defense Presentation and communicates the final decision on whether the student has successfully passed or failed. All comments, concerns, and additional requirements provided by the DDDR must be addressed by the student. Students will not be able to graduate without the DDDR's final approval.

### **Topic Presentation (Immersion 1) - Non-Graded**

Students are expected to identify relevant, high-impact research opportunities aligned with Generative AI or emerging technologies. They will present early-stage ideas during the immersion program to receive expert and peer feedback. During this phase, students must also decide on their preferred dissertation submission mode (Dissertation, Book, or Business Plan).

### **Topic Proposal - 8 Credits - Qualifying Exam**

The Topic Proposal document must include a description of the proposed dissertation topic, with sections according to the student's chosen dissertation submission mode (Dissertation/ Book/ Business Plan). Students must submit a clearly articulated research topic and chapters according to each Dissertation, or a Book, or a Business Plan guideline and milestone documents. It should be well-written according to the latest edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) style guidelines, and present a justification for its scholarly value.

(Refer [DBA ET Dissertation Process and Policy](#))

### **Process**

- The Dissertation Committee, consisting of the chair and co-chair, is established
- The Dissertation Committee guides the student in the completion of the topic proposal
- The dissertation chair will be the primary point of contact for the student. It is not expected that the student will be meeting with the chair and the co-chair simultaneously
- Students submit the topic proposal document to their Dissertation Committee for approval
- If not approved, the student must revise the topic proposal and submit it on the portal to committee members for approval.

### **Defense of the Research Proposal - 8 Credits**

Students must defend their dissertation research proposal in front of the Dissertation Committee, the DDDR, other invited faculty, students, and guests. The research proposal document will contain a comprehensive description and review of the chapter should be as per the Dissertation Guidelines for the chosen dissertation submission mode (Dissertation/ Book/ Business Plan) and milestone documents. It should be well-written according to the latest edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines and present a compelling justification for its value as a worthy research focus.

(Refer to Guidelines and Milestone Documents)

**Note:** The student must successfully pass online Institutional Review Board (IRB) training ([Link](#)) during the period between the Topic Proposal and the start of the dissertation completion stage. Students completing a business plan

must submit the IRB application after their topic proposal is approved. Students completing a dissertation or book must submit the IRB application after their defense proposal is approved by the DDDR. Students cannot move to the next phase (collecting data) without successfully completing the IRB training and obtaining the approval from the IRB.

### Process

- When the dissertation research proposal document is complete, the student has to obtain approval from the student's Dissertation Committee (Chair), using the checklist (See Appendix C: Proposal Defense Presentation Checklist).
- Once the chair approves and confirms the receipt of the research defense proposal document and PPT, the student's Committee Chair will coordinate with upGrad to schedule a two-hour dissertation research proposal defense presentation.
- upGrad will ensure the following individuals are available to attend the presentation:
  - The Dissertation Committee- Chair
  - The Dissertation Committee- Co-Chair
- The student will present and defend the research proposal on a live video call. This presentation will be recorded.
- During the defense presentation, the student describes the area of study, provides a brief review of the literature, the research objectives, the contribution that the dissertation is expected to make to the field, the research methodology, and sources of information that may be available from the student's research.
- At the conclusion of the presentation, attendees may ask questions of the presenting student.
- The Dissertation Committee and attending faculty presides over a closed deliberation session.
- The outcome of deliberation may be:
  - (1) to approve the proposal as presented.
  - (2) to approve and request changes to be completed to the research proposal under the guidance of the Dissertation Committee, and submit the revised document to the Dissertation Committee for final approval
  - (3) to reject the proposal as presented and require that the student revise, resubmit, and repeat the process outlined above only once.
- The feedback about the changes that need to be made will be shared right after the closed deliberation of the proposal defense panel.
- The time given to incorporate the feedback will be decided by the students' Dissertation Committee.
- The student must incorporate all the feedback raised by the Dissertation committee and resubmit the research proposal document and PPT on email/ upGrad portal. The submission will require final approval by the Co-Chair before the student proceeds to the next step.

Rejection of two proposal defense presentations will result in the student being dropped from the DBA program

### Submission of IRB Application-(Non Graded)

The student has to first complete the IRB training ([Link](#)).

The student is required to submit an IRB application that includes:

- The IRB application
- The approved defense dissertation
- Consent documents
- Survey/focus group/interview questions in their final format
- Five (5) IRB training certificates.

### Process

- The student will submit the application documents by uploading them to the portal.

- The dissertation chair must sign the IRB application in two places. The dissertation chair is also known as the Principal Investigator.
- There are four types of consent forms: survey, interview, focus group, and institutional. The student needs to fill out the relevant forms and submit them along with the IRB application.
- The student will either be asked to resubmit with changes or pass IRB inspection as is.
- Students who are performing a pilot study or are planning to revise their survey instrument based on interview and/or focus group findings must resubmit the revised application with the revised survey.
- It may take the student 2-3 attempts to obtain IRB approval. This is normal.

## **Dissertation Submission and defense - 12 Credits**

### **Dissertation submission (dissertation)**

- The student is expected to submit the dissertation in its entirety.
- While each dissertation is unique, the typical structure of a dissertation in the field of business administration should include the following:
  - Title and Committee Approval Page (optional; copyright date with student's name)
  - Dedication (optional)
  - Acknowledgments (optional)
  - Table of Contents
  - List of Tables (if applicable)
  - List of Figures (if applicable)
  - Abstract (no more than 250 words, no more than five keywords)
  - Chapter I: Introduction
  - Chapter II: Literature Review
  - Chapter III: Methodology (Research Design & Methods)
  - Chapter IV: Presentation of Results (or) Presentation of Findings
  - Chapter V: Discussion of Implications (managerial and academic)
  - Limitations, Future Research, and Conclusions
  - Copy of Proof for Completing IRB Training
  - Additional details such as survey instruments or semi-structured interview questionnaire, or secondary data sources, along with detailed analyses which are not present in the main body

### **Dissertation submission (book)**

- The student is expected to submit the book in its entirety.
- While each book is unique, the typical structure of a dissertation in the field of business administration should include the following:
  - Title and Committee Approval Page
  - Copyright page (optional, copyright date with student's name except for those publishing book)
  - Dedication (optional)
  - Acknowledgments (optional)
  - Table of Contents
  - List of Tables (if applicable)
  - List of Figures (if applicable)
  - Chapters as per the chosen mode (Refer [DBA ET Dissertation Process and Policy](#))
    - Chapter 1: Introduction – Understanding the Landscape and Market
    - Chapter 2: Literature Review – Foundations of Leadership, Data, and Bias
    - Chapter 3: Methodology – Vision Translation to Technology Requirements



- Chapter 4: Technology Adoption Implications and Governance
- Chapter 5: Conclusion and Future Directions
- Copy of Proof for Completing IRB Training
- Additional details such as survey instruments and/or semi-structured interview questionnaire, or/and detailed analyses, which are not present in the main body

#### **Dissertation submission (business plan)**

- The student is expected to submit the business plan in its entirety.
- While each book is unique, the typical structure of a dissertation in the field of business administration should include the following:
  - Title and Committee Approval Page
  - Title and Committee Approval Page
  - Copyright page (optional, copyright date with student's name except for those publishing book)
  - Dedication (optional)
  - Acknowledgments (optional)
  - Table of Contents
  - List of Tables (if applicable)
  - List of Figures (if applicable)
  - Chapters as per the chosen mode (Refer [DBA ET Dissertation Process and Policy](#))
    - Chapter 1: Executive Summary
    - Chapter 2: Company Description
    - Chapter 3: Market Analysis/Research
    - Chapter 4: Organization and Management
    - Chapter 5: Product(s) and Service
    - Chapter 6: Marketing & Sales Strategies
    - Chapter 7: Financial Plan
    - Chapter 8: (Optional) Funding Requirement
    - Chapter 9: Risk Analysis
    - Chapter 10: IPR Strategy and Application
  - Copy of Proof for Completing IRB Training
  - Additional details such as survey instruments and/or semi-structured interview questionnaire, or/and detailed analyses, which are not present in the main body

#### **Process**

- The Dissertation Committee will review the dissertation and provide students with feedback
- Upon approval of the full proposal, the Dissertation Committee continues to guide the student through the completion of the research and the documentation in the form of a final written dissertation that meets the standards of academic quality and an original contribution to knowledge.

#### **Dissertation Defense**

Students are expected to submit the final draft of the dissertation after making the necessary changes, as suggested by the Dissertation Committee.

#### **USING GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (GAI) – DBA ET**

GGU Worldwide (GGU WW) supports the responsible and ethical use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) technologies for enhancing teaching, learning and research. Use of GAI could undermine academic integrity and

damage the reputation of GGU and our students. GAI can also bring benefits to education in a number of positive ways. This policy provides guidelines which address academic integrity and dishonesty while allowing the use of GAI tools for positive use in the DBA program. It is aligned to several [Executive DBA Council](#) member schools.

**Purpose:** This GGU Worldwide (WW) DBA GAI policy aims to promote academic integrity and ethical usage of GAI tools among doctoral students when completing coursework and dissertation research.

It is aligned with University policy as stated in the GGU Catalog on Academic Misconduct, 4.

Unauthorized Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI):

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Appropriate human effort, oversight and transparency regarding AI assistance are essential.

**Policy:**

1. Unless allowed by the instructor or dissertation committee as specified in the course syllabus or in writing, the use of GAI tools/apps to produce content or student work products, including doctoral dissertations is academic misconduct and is expressly prohibited.
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3. GAI may be acceptable as a tool to assist with brainstorming ideas. But it should not compose significant portions of one's final submission without explicit instructor or dissertation committee approval.
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5. GAI should not be used for unethical purposes including discrimination, disinformation, copyright infringement, explicit/offensive content generation, etc.
6. Students should be mindful of biases and limitations of GAI systems when utilizing them. Outputs require human review.
7. Students are expected to comply with any additional course-specific guidelines established by instructors regarding the use of GAI. Violations are subject to disciplinary action per university policy.
8. Turnitin AI and other AI writing detection tools can be used by instructors and dissertation committee members but should not be the sole basis for disciplinary actions against a student. Turnitin AI's "AI writing detection model may not always be accurate (it may misidentify human-written, AI-generated, and AI-generated and AI-paraphrased text). It takes further scrutiny and human judgment in conjunction with an organization's application of its specific academic policies to determine whether any academic misconduct has occurred." When using Turnitin as a detection tool, the acceptable Turnitin similarity score is 20% and below while the acceptable Turnitin AI writing score is 20% and below. These scores are for the totality of the academic output, for instance, the full final dissertation draft and not per chapter.
9. Students can use but must not rely solely on GAI tools to complete their doctoral literature reviews. GAI tools can assist in searching for relevant scholarly and practitioner publications and summarizing content, but students are expected to read and comprehend sources independently, verify citations, and synthesize and analyze how each publication contributes to literature review themes and sub-themes, reinforced as follows.
10. All instructors and dissertation committee chairs/members are expected to include a GAI policy in their course syllabi/module outlines and post it on their LMS website. This policy will be periodically reviewed and updated to align with evolving technology and ethical norms. We aim to promote responsible use of GAI in pursuit of enriching doctoral education.

### **DBA ET - IMMERSION PROGRAM**

The program includes 3 in-person, week-long Global Immersion sessions designed to foster deep academic, peer, and industry engagement with students. Students will have an opportunity to network and engage directly with faculty, fellow doctoral candidates, and industry experts through interactive workshops and discussions. Students will also gain insights from senior executives and C-suite leaders who have successfully led AI-driven transformations, bridging academic learning with real-world business impact.

- 1st Immersion: At the end of Year 1 in Mumbai or Bangalore.
- 2nd Immersion is scheduled for the end of Year 2 in Singapore.
- 3rd Immersion: This is the final Immersion that will be held at the end of year 3 in San Francisco.

**Note:** Immersion locations and schedules are subject to change based on institutional planning, travel regulations, and other unforeseen circumstances. Final details will be communicated in advance to all participants.

**DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION IN DIGITAL  
LEADERSHIP**

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION & REQUIREMENTS & ADMISSIONS CRITERIA – DBA DL

The Doctor of Business Administration in Digital Leadership (DBA DL) degree at Golden Gate University is taught in a 100% online format with live-session (synchronous) components to ensure student success. The lectures are conducted every weekend in the first year of the program. This program is designed for senior leaders, business professionals, entrepreneurs, and academicians. The program requires completion of 20 units of concentration courses, 8 units of foundation courses, and 28 units of dissertation work, for a total of 56 units. Students must attend live sessions as required, write a dissertation according to the program guidelines, and defend it orally before the Dissertation Committee. It is ideal for experienced professionals seeking to advance their careers in the digital age. This program combines business strategy with digital innovation, focusing on leadership skills to address challenges in today's technology driven environments. Admission into the program is for those with a bachelor's degree with 5+ years of professional work experience or a Master's degree or equivalent. Students are expected to complete their degree within 3 years of commencing the program.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students graduating from the DBA in Digital Leadership program will acquire the following:

- **Improved intellectual skills:** Graduates will demonstrate the ability to understand business management concepts, rules, and procedures.
- **Cognitive ability:** Graduates will demonstrate they possess critical thinking skills and can think strategically, organize, and behave professionally.
- **Pedagogy skills:** Graduates will demonstrate the ability to acquire and advance their pedagogical skills to be able to teach and impart knowledge to other students.
- **Scholarly writing:** Graduates will showcase the research and writing skills necessary for writing publishable scholarly works.
- **Professional and career attitude:** Graduates will demonstrate the necessary skills for a successful career in whatever career path they choose. They will demonstrate the interpersonal skills and networking abilities required to pursue enhanced career options.
- **Build a digital thought leadership portfolio:** Graduates will demonstrate the ability to build their portfolio as experts in their field.

## PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The DBA DL program is a three-year (36-month) research and writing focus program for those who wish to pursue sustained independent study, research, and writing. Candidates are expected to produce well-edited, original, and publishable dissertations (book/business plan/dissertation) that will constitute a substantial contribution to business scholarship. The program includes 3 phases:

- 1) Concentration Phase (First Year)
- 2) Foundation Phase (First Year)
- 3) Dissertation Phase (Second & Third Year)

Concentration Phase Courses	
Course No.	Course Name
DBA 830	CXO Brand: Elevate Your Influence
DBA 831	Leadership 4.0: Mastering Agility and Resilience
DBA 832	B.A.S.I.C.s of Tomorrow: Mastering New Age Technologies
DBA 833	Innovate & Thrive: Shaping the Future of Business
DBA 834	Decision Clarity: Data-Driven and Bias-Proof Decision-Making
Foundation Phase Courses	
DBA 835	Digital Strategy Architect: Crafting Future-Ready Businesses
DBA 805	Doctoral Research Methods and Analysis

Details regarding the course launch schedule and academic calendar are shared with students at the start of the program. The course sequence outlined above is indicative and may be adjusted to better align with the overall learning objectives of the program. All courses are delivered in a synchronous format through virtual live sessions, conducted by faculty.

Live sessions are held on the weekends with an option to attend either in the morning or at the evening. Students must decide at the beginning of the program about the time of attending live sessions. Session recordings are available immediately after each class for students.

To support ongoing learning and doubt-solving, a discussion board is provided. Students are encouraged to use this platform to post questions, seek clarifications, and engage in meaningful academic discussions with the faculty outside of live classes.

## COURSE PROGRESSION

The detailed sequence of courses across the Concentration, Foundation, and the Dissertation Phase is outlined in the table below. The program is designed to guide students through a comprehensive learning journey covering digital thought leadership portfolio, leadership theories applicable in the digital era, basics of emerging technologies and how to leverage them for digital transformation, and applied research. Each phase includes structured learning activities, assessments, and milestone-based progression to ensure both academic rigor and real-world relevance.

Overview of Concentration, Foundation & Dissertation Phase				
Concentration and Foundation Phase				
Course No.	Course Name	Duration	Units	Additional Requirements
DBA 830	CXO Brand: Elevate Your Influence	9 Weeks	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Participate in all live sessions or watch the recorded lectures.</li><li>- Complete and pass all assessments-course assignments</li><li>- Decide on dissertation mode (book, business plan, or dissertation).</li><li>- Decide on the broad area of interest and finalize dissertation topic.</li></ul>
DBA 831	Leadership 4.0: Mastering Agility and Resilience	9 Weeks	4	
DBA 832	B.A.S.I.Cs of Tomorrow: Mastering New Age Technologies	9 Weeks	4	
DBA 833	Innovate & Thrive: Shaping the Future of Business	9 Weeks	4	
DBA 834	Decision Clarity: Data-Driven and Bias-Proof Decision-Making	9 Weeks	4	
DBA 835	Digital Strategy Architect: Crafting Future-Ready Businesses	9 Weeks	4	
DBA 805	Doctoral Research Methods and Analysis	9 Weeks	4	
Dissertation Phase				
Dissertation Phase		93 Weeks (approx.)	28	- Complete Topic presentation
DBA 890	Topic Proposal	23-26 weeks	8	- Periodic one to one mentoring by supervisors
DBA 891	Defense of Research Proposal	23-26 weeks	8	- Submit Topic Proposal-Qualifying Exam
	IRB training and Approval			- Complete IRB Training and Approval
DBA 892	Dissertation Completion and Approval by Committee	48-52 weeks	12	- Attend live sessions/ **Workshops for different dissertation mode
				- Regular milestone submissions
Total Credits		156 Weeks (approx.)	56	

**\*\* Interactive Dissertation Workshops:** To support students in their dissertation journey for the Book and Business Plan modes, regular hands-on workshops are conducted by academic experts and industry mentors. These workshops provide step-by-step guidance in achieving key milestones, along with:

- Expert support on structure, research design, and execution
- Constructive feedback from faculty and peers
- Clearly defined milestones to help students stay on track

## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

### **DBA 830 - CXO Brand: Elevate Your Influence (4 Credits)**

The course will cover critical theories and principles in the area of personal branding from a branding and marketing perspective for doctoral candidates. The course will also help evaluate the role of digital thought leadership and other avenues of a digital presence in extending leadership influence in various industries.

### **DBA 831 - Leadership 4.0: Mastering Agility and Resilience (4 Credits)**

The Industry 4.0 leadership component provides doctoral candidates with the strategic and operational competencies required for leading digital transformation initiatives as practitioners. As scholars, for each topic, participants will identify and evaluate the extant literature to develop comprehensive frameworks of skills and competencies required to be Industry 4.0 leaders in their respective industries.

### **DBA 832 - B.A.S.I.Cs of Tomorrow: Mastering New Age Technologies (4 Credits)**

In this course, participants will learn about new age technologies and evaluate these technologies critically for their relevance in organizational contexts. Students will also be expected to review the applications of these technologies in their respective industries, and identify a business research problem in their organization that can be solved using the technologies covered in this course.

### **DBA 833 - Innovate & Thrive: Shaping the Future of Business (4 Credits)**

The digital innovation component provides doctoral candidates with the strategic tools, frameworks and cultural understanding required for fostering innovation in the digital age as practitioners. As scholars, for each topic, participants will critically evaluate existing theories and practices in innovation, question their applicability in their respective contexts, and recommend improvements to any one aspect of innovation from the perspective of their industry or organization.

### **DBA 834 - Decision Clarity: Data-Driven and Bias-Proof Decision-Making (4 Credits)**

The data-driven decision making component equips doctoral candidates with the analytical frameworks and critical evaluation skills necessary for navigating evidence-based leadership while recognizing inherent biases in data interpretation. The course emphasizes both practical decision-making competencies and scholarly examination of data narratives, focusing on bias detection, storytelling methodologies, and multi-perspective analysis. Participants will develop proficiency in making robust data-backed decisions as practitioners while simultaneously engaging as scholars to assess theoretical foundations of narrative construction and bias mitigation within their specific business contexts.

### **DBA 835 - Digital Strategy Architect: Crafting Future-Ready Businesses (4 Credits)**

This course enables doctoral candidates to synthesize scholarly literature with practical implementation strategies, focusing on industry-specific transformation frameworks and roadmap development. Participants will critically examine established digital transformation methodologies while constructing evidence-based roadmaps tailored to their organizational needs, bridging theoretical foundations with actionable transformation strategies for their specific business environments.

### **DBA 805 - Doctoral Research Methods and Analysis (4 Credits)**

This doctoral level course is fundamental to the students' understanding of the various aspects of conducting excellent scholarly research. Students are expected to write a mock research proposal to give them a first-hand experience of being a scholar-practitioner through the DBA.

### **ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE**

The assessment structure will be discussed at the beginning of each course by the instructor. The weightage will be defined by faculty and will be communicated in advance.

### **DBA DL - Dissertation Phase (28 Credits)**

Dissertation Milestones	Credits	Timelines
1: Topic Presentation	-	End of Year 1' (Immersion 1)
2: Topic Proposal	8	End of all courses (Written proposal Qualifying Exam)
3: Defense of the Proposal*	8	End of Year 2
4a: Dissertation Submission	-	3 months before the end of Year 3
4b: Dissertation Completion and Approval by Committee*	12	End of Year 3

\* These Events will be held around the immersions

### **DBA DL - Qualifying Exam (Topic Proposal)**

In the Qualifying Exam the student must submit the topic proposal based on the chosen dissertation submission mode to the Dissertation Committee.

If the student decides to change the topic/dissertation mode, another examining committee will be formed, and the above process will be repeated.

**Note:** If a student has already passed the Qualifying Exam from the GGU Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) degree program, the student is required to submit a Topic Proposal through official channels.

The credits during the Dissertation Phase are awarded as either Credit (CR) or Non-Credit (NC).

- The Chair of the Dissertation Committee will assign the grade.
- The Topic Proposal must be approved by the committee members. Students can only proceed to the next phase after approval.
- If the student fails to clear a milestone, the student is expected to resubmit only the said milestone within the timeline suggested by the dissertation committee.
- Students who earn an "NC" for any of the milestones will have to resubmit the said milestone within the timelines suggested by the Dissertation Committee.
- Students will have only 2 attempts to submit their topic proposals.



## DBA DL - DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Each student is supported by a three-member Dissertation Committee, which plays a crucial role in guiding, advising, and evaluating the student's research throughout the dissertation phase. The committee ensures academic rigor and practical relevance in the student's work. The Dissertation Committee is comprised of 3 members:

- **Committee Chair (Chair):** The Chair serves as the primary mentor and is a subject matter expert in the student's chosen research area. The Chair meets with the student for 30 scheduled sessions (organized via the platform) to provide consistent guidance. The student also communicates regularly with the Chair through email and shares drafts of the dissertation and proposals for detailed feedback.
- **Committee Co-Chair (Co-Chair):** The Co-Chair offers additional academic support to the student. This member may be a content expert in the student's research domain or a specialist in the research methodology being used. The Co-Chair complements the Chair's guidance by offering further insights and perspectives.
- **Designated DBA Dissertation Reader (DDDR):** The DDDR acts as the official evaluator of the student's dissertation work. This member has the authority to approve or reject the dissertation research proposal defense and the final dissertation. The DDDR leads the Proposal Defense Presentation and communicates the final decision on whether the student has successfully passed or failed. All comments, concerns, and additional requirements provided by the DDDR must be addressed by the student. The student will not be able to graduate without the DDDR's final approval.

## DISSERTATION MILESTONES

### Topic Presentation (Immersion 1)-Non-Graded

Students are expected to identify relevant, high-impact research opportunities aligned with digital leadership concepts. They will present initial ideas during the immersion program to receive expert and peer feedback, helping them validate their research direction. During this phase, students must also decide on their preferred dissertation mode, which can be dissertation, or a book, or a business plan.

### Topic Proposal - 8 Credits - Qualifying Exam

The Topic Proposal is a 8-10 page document that includes a description of the proposed dissertation topic, with sections according to the student's chosen mode of submission (Dissertation/ Book/ Business Plan). Students must submit a clearly articulated research topic and chapters according to each Dissertation, or a Book, or a Business Plan guideline and milestone documents. It should be well-written according to the latest edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) style guidelines and present a justification for its scholarly value.

(Refer [DBA DL Dissertation Process and Policy](#))

### Process

- The Dissertation Committee, consisting of the chair and co-chair, is established
- The Dissertation Committee guides the student in the completion of the topic proposal.
- The dissertation chair will be the primary point of contact for the student. It is not expected that the student will be meeting with the chair and the co-chair simultaneously.
- Students submit the topic proposal document to their Dissertation Committee for approval
- If not approved, the student must revise the topic proposal and resubmit it to the committee members on the portal.

### Defense of the Research Proposal - 8 Credits

Students must defend their Dissertation Research Proposal in front of the Dissertation Committee, the DDDR, other invited faculty, students, and guests. The Dissertation Research Proposal document must:

Include a comprehensive description of a student's research proposal; minimum of 40 pages and maximum of 60 pages. Any pages beyond the maximum limit will not be considered.

- Be according to each Dissertation, or a Book, or a Business Plan guideline and milestone documents.
- According to the latest edition of the APA
- Must be well-written to add scholarly value to the field of study  
(Refer Guidelines and milestone Documents)

### Process

- When the dissertation research proposal document is complete, the student has to obtain approval from the student's Dissertation Committee (Chair), using the checklist.
- Once the chair approves and confirms the receipt of the research defense proposal document and PPT, the student's Committee Chair will coordinate with upGrad to schedule a two-hour dissertation research proposal defense presentation.
- upGrad will ensure the following individuals are available to attend the presentation:
  - a. The Dissertation Committee- Chair
  - b. The Dissertation Committee- Co-Chair
- The student will present and defend the research proposal on a live video call. This presentation will be recorded.
- During the defense presentation, the student describes the area of study, provides a brief review of the literature, the research objectives, the contribution that the dissertation is expected to make to the field, the research methodology, and sources of information that may be available from the student's research.
- At the conclusion of the presentation, attendees may ask questions of the presenting student.
- The Dissertation Committee and attending faculty presides over a closed deliberation session.
- The outcome of deliberation may be:
  - (1) to approve the proposal as presented.
  - (2) to approve and request changes to be completed to the research proposal under the guidance of the Dissertation Committee, and submit the revised document to the Dissertation Committee for final approval
  - (3) to reject the proposal as presented and require that the student revise, resubmit, and repeat the process outlined above only once.
- The feedback about the changes that need to be made will be shared right after the closed deliberation of the proposal defense panel.
- The time given to incorporate the feedback will be decided by the students' Dissertation Committee.
- The student must incorporate all the feedback raised by the Dissertation committee and resubmit the research proposal document and PPT on email/ upGrad portal. The submission will require final approval by the Co-Chair before the student proceeds to the next step.  
Rejection of two proposal defense presentations will result in the student being dropped from the DBA program

**Note:** The student must successfully pass online Institutional Review Board (IRB) training ([Link](#)) during the period between the Topic Proposal and the start of the dissertation completion stage. Students completing a business plan must submit the IRB application after their topic proposal is approved. Students completing a dissertation or book must submit the IRB application after their defense proposal is approved by the DDDR. Students cannot move to the next phase (collecting data) without successfully completing the IRB training and obtaining the approval from the IRB.

### **Submission of IRB Application- (Non-Graded)**

The student must pass the IRB training ([Link](#)).

The student is required to submit an IRB application that includes:

- The IRB application
- The approved defense dissertation
- Consent documents
- Survey/focus group/interview questions in their final format
- Five (5) IRB training certificates.

### **Process**

- The student must submit the application on the portal.
- The dissertation chair must sign the IRB application in two places. The dissertation chair is also known as the Principal Investigator.
- There are four types of consent forms: survey, interview, focus group, and institutional. The student must fill out the relevant forms and submit them along with the IRB application.
- The student will either be asked to resubmit with changes or pass IRB inspection as is.
- Students who are performing a pilot study or are planning to revise their survey instrument based on interview and/or focus group findings must resubmit the revised application with the revised survey.
- It may take the student 2-3 attempts to obtain IRB approval. This is normal.

### **Dissertation Completion and Approval by Committee - 12 Credits**

#### **Dissertation Submission and defense - 12 Credits**

#### **Dissertation submission (dissertation)**

- The student is expected to submit the dissertation in its entirety.
- While each dissertation is unique, the typical structure of a dissertation in the field of business administration should include the following:
  - Title and Committee Approval Page (optional; copyright date with student's name)
  - Dedication (optional)
  - Acknowledgments (optional)
  - Table of Contents
  - List of Tables (if applicable)
  - List of Figures (if applicable)
  - Abstract (no more than 250 words, no more than five keywords)
  - Chapter I: Introduction
  - Chapter II: Literature Review
  - Chapter III: Methodology (Research Design & Methods)
  - Chapter IV: Presentation of Results (or) Presentation of Findings
  - Chapter V: Discussion of Implications (managerial and academic)
  - Limitations, Future Research, and Conclusions
  - Copy of Proof for Completing IRB Training
  - Additional details such as survey instruments or semi-structured interview questionnaire, or secondary data sources, along with detailed analyses which are not present in the main body

### **Dissertation submission (book)**

- The student is expected to submit the book in its entirety.
- While each book is unique, the typical structure of a dissertation in the field of business administration should include the following:
  - Title and Committee Approval Page
  - Title and Committee Approval Page
  - Copyright page (optional, copyright date with student's name except for those publishing book)
  - Dedication (optional)
  - Acknowledgments (optional)
  - Table of Contents
  - List of Tables (if applicable)
  - List of Figures (if applicable)
  - Chapters as per the chosen mode (Refer [DBA DL Dissertation Process and Policy](#))
    - Chapter 1: Introduction – Understanding the Landscape and Market
    - Chapter 2: Literature Review – Foundations of Leadership, Data, and Bias
    - Chapter 3: Methodology – Vision Translation to Technology Requirements
    - Chapter 4: Technology Adoption Implications and Governance
    - Chapter 5: Conclusion and Future Directions
  - Copy of Proof for Completing IRB Training
  - Additional details such as survey instruments and/or semi-structured interview questionnaire, or/and detailed analyses, which are not present in the main body

### **Dissertation submission (business plan)**

- The student is expected to submit the business plan in its entirety.
- While each book is unique, the typical structure of a dissertation in the field of business administration should include the following:
  - Title and Committee Approval Page
  - Title and Committee Approval Page
  - Copyright page (optional, copyright date with student's name except for those publishing book)
  - Dedication (optional)
  - Acknowledgments (optional)
  - Table of Contents
  - List of Tables (if applicable)
  - List of Figures (if applicable)
  - Chapters as per the chosen mode (Refer [DBA DL Dissertation Process and Policy](#))
    - Chapter 1: Executive Summary
    - Chapter 2: Company Description
    - Chapter 3: Market Analysis/Research
    - Chapter 4: Organization and Management
    - Chapter 5: Product(s) and Service
    - Chapter 6: Marketing & Sales Strategies
    - Chapter 7: Financial Plan
    - Chapter 8: (Optional) Funding Requirement
    - Chapter 9: Risk Analysis
    - Chapter 10: IPR Strategy and Application

- Copy of Proof for Completing IRB Training
- Additional details such as survey instruments and/or semi-structured interview questionnaire, or/and detailed analyses, which are not present in the main body

### Process

- The Dissertation Committee will review the dissertation and provide students with feedback and suggestions to enhance the quality of the dissertation.
- Upon approval of the full Proposal, the Dissertation Committee continues to guide the student through the completion of the research and the documentation in the form of a final written dissertation that meets the standards of academic quality and an original contribution to knowledge.

Students can refer to the [DBA DL Dissertation Process and Policy](#) document to stay on track and align with key milestones in the Dissertation Phase, including the key tasks, expectations, and timelines for each stage. The mandatory documents are attached to the list of Appendices.

### DBA DL - USING GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (GAI)

GGU Worldwide (GGU WW) supports the responsible and ethical use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) technologies for enhancing teaching, learning and research. Use of GAI could undermine academic integrity and damage the reputation of GGU and our students. GAI can also bring benefits to education in a number of positive ways. This policy provides guidelines which address academic integrity and dishonesty while allowing the use of GAI tools for positive use in the DBA program. It is aligned to several [Executive DBA Council](#) member schools.

**Purpose:** This GGU Worldwide (WW) DBA GAI policy aims to promote academic integrity and ethical usage of GAI tools among doctoral students when completing coursework and dissertation research.

It is aligned with University policy as stated in the GGU Catalog on Academic Misconduct, 4.

[Unauthorized Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence \(AI\):](#)

**Goal:** The goal of this GGU Worldwide DBA GAI policy is not to prohibit GAI in academic outputs, but to ensure its responsible usage in keeping with doctoral-level academic standards and ethics.

Appropriate human effort, oversight and transparency regarding AI assistance are essential.

### Policy:

11. Unless allowed by the instructor or dissertation committee as specified in the course syllabus or in writing, the use of GAI tools/apps to produce content or student work products, including doctoral dissertations is academic misconduct and is expressly prohibited.
12. Students may not present text generated by GAI systems as their own original work. All use of GAI must be properly disclosed and cited. Follow the formatting policies of the style guide for citing GAI. For instance, for the [American Psychological Association \(APA\)](#): (See Appendix for APA Guidance on ChatGPT Other AI Generative Tools.)
13. GAI may be acceptable as a tool to assist with brainstorming ideas. But it should not compose significant portions of one's final submission without explicit instructor or dissertation committee approval.
14. Students must abide by the university Academic Integrity Policy when using GAI, avoiding plagiarism, fabrication of data, deception, cheating, bribery, and sabotage.
15. GAI should not be used for unethical purposes including discrimination, disinformation, copyright infringement, explicit/offensive content generation, etc.
16. Students should be mindful of biases and limitations of GAI systems when utilizing them. Outputs require human review.
17. Students are expected to comply with any additional course-specific guidelines established by instructors regarding the use of GAI. Violations are subject to disciplinary action per university policy.

18. Turnitin AI and other AI writing detection tools can be used by instructors and dissertation committee members but should not be the sole basis for disciplinary actions against a student. Turnitin AI's "AI writing detection model may not always be accurate (it may misidentify human-written, AI-generated, and AI-generated and AI-paraphrased text). It takes further scrutiny and human judgment in conjunction with an organization's application of its specific academic policies to determine whether any academic misconduct has occurred." When using Turnitin as a detection tool, the acceptable Turnitin similarity score is 20% and below while the acceptable Turnitin AI writing score is 20% and below. These scores are for the totality of the academic output, for instance, the full final dissertation draft and not per chapter.
19. Students can use but must not rely solely on GAI tools to complete their doctoral literature reviews. GAI tools can assist in searching for relevant scholarly and practitioner publications and summarizing content, but students are expected to read and comprehend sources independently, verify citations, and synthesize and analyze how each publication contributes to literature review themes and sub-themes, reinforced as follows.
20. All instructors and dissertation committee chairs/members are expected to include a GAI policy in their course syllabi/module outlines and post it on their LMS website. This policy will be periodically reviewed and updated to align with evolving technology and ethical norms. We aim to promote responsible use of GAI in pursuit of enriching doctoral education.

## IMMERSION PROGRAM

The program includes 3 in-person, week-long Global Immersion sessions designed to foster deep academic, peer, and industry engagement with students. Students will have an opportunity to network and engage directly with faculty, fellow doctoral candidates, and industry experts through interactive workshops and discussions. Students will also gain insights from senior executives and C-suite leaders who have successfully led AI-driven transformations, bridging academic learning with real-world business impact.

- 1st Immersion: At the end of Year 1 in Mumbai or Bangalore.
- 2nd Immersion is scheduled for the end of Year 2 in Singapore.
- 3rd Immersion: This is the final Immersion that will be held at the end of year 3 in San Francisco.

**Note:** Immersion locations and schedules are subject to change based on institutional planning, travel regulations, and other unforeseen circumstances. Final details will be communicated in advance to all participants.

## **DOCTOR OF JURIDICAL SCIENCE**

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION & REQUIREMENTS & ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

The Doctor of Juridical Science (SJD) degree at Golden Gate University is taught in a 100% online format that combines both self-paced (asynchronous) and live-session (synchronous) components to ensure student success. This program is designed for law graduates residing outside the United States of America who are interested in pursuing extensive, independent research on a specific topic with the expectation of making a substantial contribution to legal scholarship by producing a dissertation of publishable quality. Admission into the program is for those with a bachelor's degree in law (LLB) or an equivalent degree in law. SJD students are expected to complete their degree within 3 years of commencing the program.

The SJD program requires students to complete a total of 56 units, which includes 24 units of required academic coursework and 32 units of dissertation work. They must attend live sessions as required, write a dissertation according to the SJD program guidelines, and defend it orally before the Dissertation Committee.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students graduating from the SJD program will acquire the following:

- **Improved intellectual skills:** Graduates will demonstrate the ability to understand legal concepts, rules, and procedures.
- **Cognitive ability:** Graduates will demonstrate they possess critical thinking skills and can think strategically, organize, and behave professionally.
- **Pedagogy skills:** Graduates will demonstrate the ability to acquire and advance their pedagogical skills to be able to teach and impart knowledge to other students.
- **Scholarly writing:** Graduates will showcase the research and writing skills necessary for writing publishable scholarly works.
- **Professional and career attitude:** Graduates will demonstrate the necessary skills for a successful career in whatever career path they choose. They will demonstrate the interpersonal skills and networking abilities required to pursue enhanced career options.

## PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The SJD program is a three-year (36-month) research and writing focus program for those who wish to pursue sustained independent study, research, and writing. Candidates are expected to produce well-edited, original, and publishable dissertations that will constitute a substantial and valuable contribution to legal scholarship.

The program comprises the following phases:

- 1) Foundation Phase (First Year)
- 2) Candidacy Phase (Second & Third Year)

## FOUNDATION PHASE: SEMESTER 1 COURSEWORK

During the first semester of the Foundation Phase, students must complete the “Legal Research and Writing Practicum I & II” courses to earn 24 units. They must finalize their dissertation topic by the end of the first semester of the Foundation Phase. Students will submit their finalized dissertation topics and working bibliographies in their Final Assessment tests.

The “Legal Research and Writing Practicum I & II” consists of 22 masterclasses, each offered once a week and in sequential order. The courses offer intense preparation on the fundamentals essential for researching and writing the dissertation. This includes choosing and revising dissertation topics, legal and academic research methods, tools and strategies, ethical use of research materials; working with dissertation committee members; developing legal analysis skills. Through lectures students will learn about practical examples of legal research and academic writing on specific subjects of law.



- **“Legal Research and Writing Practicum I” (15 units):** This phase offers intense preparation on the fundamentals essential for researching and writing the SJD dissertation. This includes: choosing and revising dissertation topics; legal and academic research methods, tools, and strategies; ethical use of research materials; working with dissertation committee members; and developing legal analysis skills. This will be graded on a credit/no-credit basis.
- **“Legal Research and Writing Practicum II” (9 units):** Students will learn about practical examples of legal research and academic writing on specific subjects of law, including IP law, international human rights, law and anthropology, legal history, law and philosophy, and interdisciplinary topics, through lectures. Students will also be instructed on revising and polishing their dissertations and preparing for their dissertation defense. This will be graded on a credit/no-credit basis.

## FOUNDATION PHASE: SEMESTER II

During the second semester of the Foundation Phase, students must develop and complete a **“Dissertation Research Proposal”** that must include ALL the following documents:

- 1) **Research Plan:** Minimum 5 pages, maximum 6 pages – any pages beyond 6 will NOT be considered. It must describe:
  - a. One central issue being proposed in the dissertation and its expected contribution to the field and goals for your research
  - b. Methods and procedures used for research (Research Methodology)
  - c. Research Aims and Scope, Research Problem, Research Objectives, Research Questions/Hypothesis, Limitation of Study, and Expected Outcome.
- 2) **Dissertation chapter outline (Tentative)**
- 3) **First chapter of dissertation:** Full first chapter, must include citation as required, no page limit
- 4) **Bibliography (work-in-progress):** Must include all sources for the entire dissertation – no page limit
- 5) **Title page:** It must include ALL the following information (will not count as part of 5-6 page limit for research proposal):
  - Student’s first and last names
  - Title/subtitle of dissertation
  - Full degree name
  - Cohort information
  - Full names of two dissertation supervisors
  - Date of submission

Before the end of the second semester, students must submit the Dissertation Research Proposal and, if that is approved, present it orally before their Dissertation Committee at the First Oral Examination meeting. Following the oral examination, the Dissertation Committee will decide whether or not to advance students to the next phase (Candidacy).

## FORMAT FOR DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROPOSAL

All documents submitted must adhere to dissertation formatting guidelines.

## CANDIDACY PHASE: YEARS TWO AND THREE

During the Candidacy Phase, candidates will work on their dissertation under the guidance of their Dissertation Supervisors. Candidates must remain in contact with both their Dissertation Supervisors. Upon completion of the dissertation, candidates are required to successfully defend it orally before the Dissertation Committee.

## LIST OF MASTERCLASSES (LEGAL RESEARCH AND WRITING PRACTICUM I & II)

Masterclass #	Title	Credit Units
SJD 940: Legal Research and Writing Practicum I (15 units)		
1	Overview: The Process and Purpose of Writing a Doctoral Dissertation	2 units
2	Introduction to Legal Scholarship and Methods	1 unit
3	Legal Research Methodology: Identification and Explanation of Reliable Sources	2 unit
4	Legal Research Basics: Tools and Strategies	1 unit
5	How to Work With The Dissertation Committee Members	1 unit
6	Researching International and Comparative Law	1 unit
7	Ethical Use of Research Materials	1 unit
8	Choice of Dissertation Topic	1 unit
9	An Overview: Refining Your Dissertation Topic	1 unit
10	Dissertation Development	1 unit
11	Outline and Writing Process	1 unit
12	Dissertation Format	1 unit
13	Approach to Comparative Legal Analysis	1 unit
<u>1 Midterm Assessment</u> (Graded on CR/NC basis)		
SJD 941: Legal Research and Writing Practicum II (9 units)		
14	Researching and Writing About IP Law	1 unit
15	Researching and Writing About International Human Rights	1 unit
16	Researching and Writing About Law and Anthropology	1 unit
17	Researching and Writing About Legal History	1 unit
18	Researching and Writing About Law and Philosophy	1 unit
19	Completing the SJD Program at GGU	1 unit
20	Researching and Writing on an Interdisciplinary Topic	1 unit
21	Revising and Polishing the Dissertation	1 unit
22	Dissertation Defense Preparation	1 unit
24 Units		
<u>1 Final Assessment</u> (Graded on CR/NC basis) – Final Dissertation Topic and Working Bibliography Due		
End of the 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester		

## SJD PROGRAM STRUCTURE CHART

Term	Requirements	Unit	Week	Additional Requirements
<b>Foundation Phase: Year 1</b>				
Semester I Coursework	Legal Research and Writing Practicum I & II	24	29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Watch recorded videos (minimum %75)</li> <li>- Attend live sessions (minimum 50% attendance required)</li> <li>- Start research</li> <li>- Finalize dissertation topic and working bibliography</li> <li>- Successfully pass Midterm and Final Assessments</li> </ul>
Semester II Dissertation + Oral Exam	1. Submit Dissertation Research Proposal (12 units): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Concise description of the topic of dissertation</li> <li>ii. One (1) central issue being proposed in the dissertation and its expected contribution to the field</li> <li>iii. Dissertation's first chapter</li> <li>iv. Dissertation chapter outline</li> <li>v. Working bibliography</li> </ul> 2. Present the First Oral Exam (4 units)	16	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Periodic supervision by supervisors</li> <li>- Attend live sessions (minimum 50% required attendance)</li> </ul>
<b>Year 1</b>		<b>40</b>		
<b>Candidacy Phase: Years 2 &amp; 3</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue rafting/revising/editing the dissertation</li> <li>- Remain in contact with supervisors</li> <li>- Submit the completed dissertation at the end of the 3rd year (8 units)</li> <li>- Attempt Final Oral Defense (8 units)</li> </ul>	16	78–104	
<b>Total</b>		<b>56</b>	<b>130–156</b>	

### ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Assessments are graded based on credit/no credit (CR/NC). During the first semester, students must successfully complete two assessments:

- 1) Midterm Assessment after finishing the “Approach to Comparative Legal Analysis” masterclass (#13)
- 2) Final Assessment after finishing the “Dissertation Defense Preparation” masterclass (#22)

By the end of the second semester, students are expected to submit the “Dissertation Research Proposal” and, if it is approved, defend it orally before their Dissertation Committee. By the end of the third (3) year, students are expected to submit their completed dissertation, which, if approved, they can defend orally before their Dissertation Committee. Each oral presentation by student should be a maximum of 30 minutes.

If a student fails an assessment/submission, they must rework and resubmit it according to program guidelines, policies, and deadlines.

### DISSERTATION ORDER AND FORMATTING

Dissertations are typically 200–230 pages in length (including footnotes). Students must produce well-edited, original, and publishable dissertations according to program guidelines that will constitute a substantial and valuable contribution to legal scholarship. All drafts must be submitted to both dissertation supervisors in PDF format to ensure all characters are displayed correctly.

## ORDER & CONTENT

ALL the following must be included in the dissertation, unless indicated otherwise:

- **Title page** (Sample Dissertation Title Page available at the end):
  - Student's first & last names
  - Student's ID
  - Cohort information
  - Full degree name
  - Date of submission
  - Title/subtitle of dissertation
  - Full names of all Dissertation Committee members (1 chair + 2 supervisors)
- **Abstract:** Maximum of 500 words (same style and format as the dissertation). Concise summary of the issue and key points of dissertation. It must provide a brief overview of the main arguments, findings, and conclusions without extensive detail and describe the methods and procedures used.
- **Dedication and/or acknowledgment page:** (optional. It should be no more than one paragraph and should follow the same style as the dissertation.)
- **Table of Contents & Associated Page Numbers**
- **Footnotes (not endnotes):** Only footnotes are accepted for citing authorities and sources.
- **Bibliography:** Must be included at the end of the dissertation. Every item cited in the dissertation must be included. Items should be alphabetized.
- **Footnote:** Footnote citations must be according to the **Oxford Standard for Citation of Legal Authorities (OSCOLA)**.

## Style

- **Margins:** Use one-inch margins. Non-text items such as tables, graphs, and scans must be mounted so they conform with the margin, paper, and numbering requirements. If an item is too large to fit within the margins, then the item may be adjusted/split and placed on two (or more) additional pages.
- **Dissertation Text:** Text should be double-spaced. Use the 12-point font size in Times New Roman.
- **Chapter and section headings in the dissertation text:** must be 14-point font size.
- **Footnotes:** These must be single-spaced. Use the 10-point font size in Times New Roman (which must be consistent throughout the dissertation).
- **Page numbering:** Insert page number aligned on the right, either on the top or bottom of the page.

## DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

The Dissertation Committee is comprised of 3 members approved by the SJD Program Director. Committee members play varying roles. The Committee shall be constituted as follows:

- One (1) Committee Chair
- Two (2) Committee Supervisors

The Committee Chair (Chair) and Committee Supervisors (Supervisors) review and comment on the Dissertation Research Proposal and the completed dissertation. All members attend the First Oral Exam meeting and the Final Dissertation Defense, each with one voting capacity.

Students work directly with Supervisors. Supervisors submit reports about each student's progress in the program to the Chair. Students will be introduced to their supervisors during the second semester of the Foundation Phase, if successfully complete previous requirements. Students are eligible to have one-on-one meetings with Supervisors up to 15 times throughout their study time to discuss dissertations and ask questions.

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## SAMPLE DISSERTATION TITLE PAGE

Student First & Last Name:

Student ID:

Cohort Information:

Full Degree Name:

Date of Submission:

Dissertation Title:

Title/Subtitle of Dissertation:

Full Names of all Dissertation Committee Members:

- Committee Chair:
- Dissertation Supervisor #1:
- Dissertation Supervisor #2:

## **MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION & REQUIREMENTS

The Golden Gate University Master of Business Administration (MBA) is a 42-unit, fully accredited online program designed for working professionals. Emphasizing an activity-based learning methodology, it blends rigorous academic theory with real-world application. Courses are delivered primarily asynchronously through the upGrad learning management system, with scheduled synchronous sessions to practice leadership, teamwork, and strategic decision-making.

## ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

Eligibility criteria are:

- A Bachelors /Masters Degree with 55% or more (Bachelor's degree is mandatory)
- Profiles with below 55% will go to the University for the Exceptional Approval

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The MBA program builds business decision-making and leadership skills that provide an integrated perspective of management and allows you to tailor your program with one of several concentrations to meet your interests and goals. Post successful completion of the program, graduates are expected to be able to:

- **Holistic Management:** Integrate cross-functional perspectives to address complex business challenges.
- **Leadership & Teamwork:** Exhibit self-awareness, ethical judgement and the capacity to lead diverse teams.
- **Analytical Rigor:** Apply quantitative tools to support strategic decisions.
- **Strategic Alignment:** Craft business strategies that account for competitive forces and global socio-economic trends.
- **Functional Integration:** Understand interdependencies among finance, marketing, operations, and information systems.
- **Planning & Execution:** Develop comprehensive business plans and oversee their implementation.
- **Ethical & Sustainable Practice:** Recognize environmental and social impacts, and propose responsible solutions.

## PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The program is designed for a 15 month duration to complete 42 units. Students must complete 33-unit from core curriculum and a 9-unit from concentration courses with a mix of asynchronous learning for foundational theory and synchronous sessions for applied leadership and strategy workshops. Delivered entirely online, the MBA program uses a blend of two teaching modes:

- **Asynchronous learning:** access videos, texts, quizzes and supporting documents at any time and work at your own pace. The case studies and projects however need to be submitted on time, as mentioned above.
- **Synchronous learning\*:** join scheduled live sessions led by industry experts and GGU faculty for real-time interaction and learning.

\*Please note that the schedule and frequency of the synchronous sessions is subject to change without prior notice.

The two phases of the program as mentioned below:

1. **Foundation Phase:** This phase comprises 10 core courses followed by a capstone project on Business Planning. This phase runs for a total of 12 months.
2. **Concentration Phase:** The phase comprises 3 courses for a student to finish within 3 months. The student can choose from 5 concentrations in total, which are namely:

- Finance
- Marketing
- Adaptive Leadership
- Business Analytics
- General (Choose 3 courses total from the above concentrations a predefined logic)

The various courses in both of these phases are detailed in the table below.

Course No.	Course Code	Course Name	Duration (Months)	Credits/Units
1	BUS 202	Fundamentals of Business	1	3
2	LEAD 300	Management and Leadership	1	3
3	MKT 300	Marketing Management	1	3
4	MSBA 300	Foundations of Business Analytics	1	3
5	FI 300	Corporate Finance	1	3
6	LEAD 303	Teamwork in Organizations	2	3
7	MBA 323	Information Technology	1	3
8	OP 300	Operations and Supply Chain Management	1	3
9	MBA 311	Strategic Analysis and Design	1	3
10	MGT 345	Context of Business	1	3
11	MBA 350	Business Planning (Capstone)	1	3
12	Concentrations	Concentration Course - 1	1	3
13		Concentration Course - 2	1	3
14		Concentration Course - 3	1	3
Total			15 Months	42 Credits

## FOUNDATION PHASE

The core courses are taken by all MBA students. This ensures that all MBA graduates have an understanding of the important skills for effective management and an integrative knowledge of the core area of business, regardless of their area of concentration.

This phase is divided into two parts:

- **Business Core (30 credits)**
  - These ten essential courses provide exposure to fundamental concepts in management, marketing, finance, analytics, operations, information technology, strategy, leadership, and analytics. Delivered predominantly online, the mix of recorded lectures, case analyses, and interactive assignments ensures you develop a solid command of each domain.



- **Capstone Learning (3 credits)**
  - In this course, you will explore the business lens through an entrepreneurial venture and understand the fundamentals of starting, running, and growing a business. You will be applying the learnings from all the courses that you studied in the core phase. The capstone project requires you to craft and present a comprehensive plan for a new or existing enterprise, integrating all prior learning.

## CONCENTRATION PHASE

After completing the core requirements, students must select one of five specializations to deepen their expertise in a specific area. Each concentration comprises three 3-unit courses:

- **Adaptive Leadership:** Focuses on personal leadership development, adaptive decision-making techniques, and strategic leadership frameworks.
- **Business Analytics:** Covers enterprise data management, business intelligence tools, and advanced social-media analytics for data-driven decision support.
- **Finance:** Emphasizes financial reporting, investment analysis, and business valuation methodologies.
- **Marketing:** Explores integrated marketing communications, research methods, and digital marketing strategies, including e-commerce.
- **General Management:** Offers the flexibility to choose any three courses across the four specialized tracks. The logic for choosing the course is added below:
  - If a student opts for a General Concentration, the program requires the student to choose one course from each of the three concentration areas — C1, C2, and C3. Each area offers four course options, 1 from each concentration, and the student must select one course per area. Please note that the courses cannot be selected randomly across areas:

Courses in Concentrations are in the table below.

**Note:** Courses must be selected in the specified sequence of C1 → C2 → C3. For example, if the student wishes to take LEAD 307 – Strategic Leadership, it can only be selected as part of Concentration C3. It cannot be chosen under C1 or C2. Each concentration area has a defined structure, and the student is expected to follow it without mixing or reordering courses.

Concentration	Concentration Area 1	Concentration Area 2	Concentration Area 3
<b>Finance</b>	FI 305 - Financial Reporting and Analysis	FI 340 - Investments	FI 428 - Business Valuation
<b>Marketing</b>	MKT 305 - Integrated Marketing Communication	MKT 336 - Market Research	MKT 352 - Digital Marketing and E-commerce
<b>Business Analytics</b>	MSBA 301 - Enterprise Performance Management & Metrics	MSBA 305 - Business Intelligence	MSBA 324 - Web & Social Network Analytics
<b>Adaptive Leadership</b>	LEAD 301 - Personal Leadership	LEAD 304 - Leading Complex Change	LEAD 307 - Strategic Leadership
<b>General Management</b>	Any 1 of the 4 courses above	Any 1 of the 4 courses above	Any 1 of the 4 courses above

## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

The program employs a diverse range of assessment methods to evaluate both individual understanding and collaborative skills. Students will encounter traditional quizzes, individual case analyses, group case studies, as well

as immersive Harvard Business Case Studies and simulation exercises. Each course uses two primary assessment components. While individual courses may adjust weightings slightly, the standard distribution is:

Type of Assessment	Subset	Weightage*
Quizzes	Graded MCQs (within the session/module)	30 %
Assignments, Projects & Case Studies	Individual and group assignments based on real-life scenarios	70 %

\*This is a rough approximation across all courses of the program. The actual weightages for each course will be communicated on the learning platform at the start of the course.

## IMMERSION POLICY

The program offers a 5-day immersion program on its San Francisco campus. Students will receive the immersion calendar at the start of the program. During the immersion, the students will:

- Learn from scholar professionals with work experience in the San Francisco Bay Area, including Silicon Valley
- Network with GGU faculty
- Attend on-campus classes with other GGU students
- Network with a diverse group of students from over 48 countries
- Take advantage of world-class art, culture, and food in San Francisco

As part of the immersion experience, students will participate in a guided industry visit. This is designed to provide them with firsthand exposure to real-world business environments. Through these visits, students gain valuable insights into industry practices, operations, and corporate culture, helping them bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.