Manning School of Business

Ph.D. in Business Administration

Artist’s rendering of the under-construction Pulichino Tong Business Building, future home of the Manning School of Business
A Note From Yi Yang, Ph.D. Program Director

Hello,

Thank you for your interest in pursuing a Ph.D. in Business Administration in the Manning School of Business at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. We’re building a world-class, innovative program from the ground up, and we’d love you to be a part of it. While the program is new, our research tradition is well established:

- U.S. News & World Report ranks UMass Lowell among the top 200 research universities nationally.
- Times of London ranks the UMass system 56th out of the top 200 universities in the world and 19th for academic and research reputation.
- In 2011, the Neeley School of Business at Texas Christian University completed a study of the most productive research faculty in entrepreneurship. The Manning School of Business was ranked in the top 30 worldwide, along with Arizona State, Penn State and the London School of Economics.
- The Manning School of Business was also identified by the Princeton Review as one of the Best 294 Business Schools.

As one of the leading research-oriented business schools in the New England area, we’re looking for top doctoral students with an intellectual curiosity about the nature and manner in which business organizations work. The main goal of the program is to develop our students to be competent in conducting independent research and teaching in multiple business disciplines including Accounting, Entrepreneurship, Finance, International Business, Leadership/Organization Studies, and Management Information Systems. To accomplish this goal, we provide rigorous and in-depth courses in research theory and methodology, research opportunities with highly productive faculty members, and excellent library/database resources.

As a Ph.D. student, regardless of which program you decide to join in, you will quickly learn that it is the people—faculty, staff and administrators—that shape your progression as a doctoral student. Earning a doctorate is an exciting journey, but it also comes with a fair amount of stress and anxiety. The Manning School of Business is comprised of people who are heavily invested in and care about your development.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 978-934-2813 or yi_yang@uml.edu.

Sincerely,

Yi Yang, Ph.D.
Ph.D. Program Director
WHAT MAKES THE MANNING SCHOOL OF BUSINESS’ PH.D. DIFFERENT?

As you begin to assess, compare and evaluate different Ph.D. programs, consider what separates the Manning School of Business from other Ph.D. institutions.

- **Established research excellence.** We have world-class faculty who are conducting cutting-edge research. Our faculty have recently won multimillion-dollar grants, been awarded best-paper honors by the most renowned academic publishers and been cited by other institutions for excellence. In 2011, the Neely School of Business at TCU completed a study of the most productive research faculty in entrepreneurship; the Manning School of Business was ranked in the top 30 worldwide.

- **Emphasis on balance.** Most Ph.D. programs are heavily focused on research; it’s not surprising to see a graduating doctoral student to have never taught on her or his own. We believe that research is important, but that teaching is equally so. Research should reinforce a scholar’s teaching, and teaching should provide an opportunity to have a conversation with practitioners about current issues.

- **Diversity of thought in the classroom.** In the early part of the program, Ph.D. students are encouraged to take classes with other Ph.D. students from a diverse spectrum, including global studies, criminal justice and education. We believe that such an approach creates a cauldron for learning, as individuals’ perspectives and biases are challenged by their peers.

- **Flexible program offering.** The Manning School of Business is different in its approach to earning a Ph.D. We offer both full- and part-time degree options, making us one of only a few institutions with such flexibility. The expectation is that full-time students will finish in four years, while part-time students will finish in up to seven years. Regardless of the path, the hope is that Ph.D. students will secure a position in a peer or aspirant institution.

- **Established partnerships with industry.** Lowell sits at the intersection of Route 3, Route 128 and Route 495—in the heart of Massachusetts’ innovation cluster. Lowell gave birth to the American Industrial Revolution and continues to play a central role in innovative industries, such as information technology, biotechnology, plastics and medical devices. Doctoral students can expect to leverage our industry relationships in their research, teaching and consulting.

- **Innovation in action.** UMass Lowell is the home of several innovative and entrepreneurial centers. For example, M2D2, the state’s medical device incubator, resides at UMass Lowell. This joint partnership with the UMass Medical School is indicative of the emphasis on innovation at UMass Lowell. This emphasis makes for an invaluable breeding ground for research opportunities.

- **Dedicated resources.** At a time when many colleges and universities are struggling with shifts in enrollment, UMass Lowell is growing. In academia, enrollments are linked to resources. Accordingly, UMass Lowell has made a strong commitment to our Ph.D. programs and we have the necessary resources such as databases and travel support to ensure your success.

“The Manning School of Business Ph.D. program has literally changed my life in academia. There are both practical coursework and collegial research collaboration. And the accessibility of cutting-edge resources makes this a unique program for advance business research. This is truly one of the best experiences I have ever had.”

—Atthaphon Mumi, Entrepreneurship
WE ARE LOOKING FOR TOMORROW’S THOUGHT LEADERS

We believe that in building our Ph.D. program from the ground up, we are building something special. Thus, we are looking for Ph.D. applicants with the following qualities:

• **Intellectual curiosity.** We are looking for individuals with an intellectual curiosity about the nature and manner in which organizations work. This can take several forms depending on the discipline. It might be an inquiry into the manner in which organizations finance new projects or the impact of adopting a new accounting regulation or whether gender affects leadership style and effectiveness, or the factors that influence the success of technology commercialization.

• **Experienced perspective.** We are looking for experienced working professionals that wish to make a shift to education. Professional experience can be incredibly helpful in setting a research agenda. It also makes the instructor more credible in the classroom, when they can rely on personal experience.

• **Strong work ethic.** Regardless of the institution, earning a Ph.D. is a significant commitment. In a given week, full-time students can expect to dedicate between 50 and 60 hours to classwork, research and class preparation. In effect, pursuing a Ph.D. is a full-time job and should be considered as such.

• **Tenacious commitment.** Research is a complex endeavor that often entails a fair amount of failure. Successful researchers understand that if at first you don’t succeed, then try, try again. Research is also subject to a fair amount of criticism by the academic community; the ability to accept criticism and soldier on is important.

• **Dedication to team.** Earning a Ph.D. is not a solo endeavor. Ph.D. students are part of a larger team comprised of faculty, staff and classmates— who together make up your “Ph.D. Team.” Successful Ph.D. students understand how to leverage the expertise of the “Ph.D. Team” and are also willing to help their fellow students.

• **Willingness to challenge status quo.** Good scholars take a fresh look at existing dynamics within organizations. The Manning School of Business is looking for Ph.D. prospects who are always willing to engage in a debate—more often than not, novel and innovative research is the product of a respectful debate.

• **Solid writing skills.** Successful scholars have an uncanny ability to put their voice to paper. Since publishing is the name of the game in academia, strong writing skills are a must.

“I really appreciate the fact that we are given many presenting and teaching opportunities, which is very important before teaching real classes. The discussion among the Ph.D. students has been very useful as well, and the seminars we attended together definitely improved our communication.”

—Jiali (Jenna) Tang, Accounting
PROGRAM OVERVIEW

As you consider applying to the Manning School Ph.D. program, please review the following critical information:

Program Timing
The Ph.D. program can be completed on a full- or part-time basis. The expectation is that full-time students will finish the program within four years, while part-time students will require no more than seven years. The program will be delivered year-round in three sessions. Fall and spring sessions will begin with the traditional semesters and the summer session will begin one to two weeks after the conclusion of the spring session.

Student Support
Full-time students will receive a tuition waiver, as well as full financial support for four years. In return, full-time Ph.D. students will work as research assistants and teaching assistants. Part-time students do not receive tuition waivers or assistantships, but may be eligible for research and teaching assistantships on a case-by-case basis.

Admission Requirements
Admission into the program is highly competitive. Each year, rolling enrollment will open on Nov. 15. The following criteria must be met prior to consideration. Waivers are granted only by the written approval of Ph.D. program director.

• Graduate of an accredited U.S. college or university or an approved foreign equivalent institution.
• Earned grade point averages of 3.0 or better in all prior undergraduate and graduate studies.
• Minimum of four years full-time relevant work experience.
• Satisfactory GMAT taken within the last ten years.
• Three letters of recommendation.
• International students are expected to at least meet the minimum UMass Lowell TOEFL requirements.

The faculty admissions committee will review all of the above admissions materials in a portfolio approach. In addition, students will be expected to have successfully demonstrated graduate-level knowledge in seven functional areas: accounting, finance, marketing, organizational behavior, MIS, operations management and strategic management. Additionally, they will demonstrate undergraduate competency in calculus, statistics and micro/macro economics.

“It is amazing how much I have learned in just nine months! The quality of instruction by the faculty has been exceptional and it is clear that every faculty member is invested in making students successful. My adviser has provided tremendous support to me as I’ve begun to develop plans for my personal research agenda. And, to have had the opportunity, in my first year, to collaborate with her on a research project and to have support to attend the Eastern Academy of Management conference as a paper co-presenter was so rewarding.”

—Lauren Turner, Leadership/Organization Studies
PH.D. CONCENTRATIONS

The program has six distinct specializations: accounting, entrepreneurship, finance, international business, leadership/organization studies and management information systems.

Accounting Concentration
The accounting concentration will concentrate on relevant bodies of knowledge, such as financial accounting, managerial accounting, auditing and taxation. The curriculum is designed to develop a high level of student technical and research competence in a specifically defined program area of business. Strong attention will be paid to linking accounting research with accounting practice, specifically guidance relative to best and evolving practices in the accounting field.

Entrepreneurship Concentration
The entrepreneurship concentration will develop scholars who are thought leaders in advancing theory and practice within the discipline of entrepreneurship. Ph.D. students will gain a thorough understanding of the existing research on both the micro and macro levels. In particular, the core emphasis is placed on technological commercialization, new venture strategy, corporate entrepreneurship, and growth at the firm level.

Finance Concentration
The finance concentration will develop scholars with a deep understanding of financial markets, investment theories, financial innovations and strategies and the current challenges facing financial specialists. This program will be grounded with course content, research methodologies and projects developed collaboratively by faculty and financial industry partners to meet the research challenges facing the financial community.

International Business Concentration
The international business concentration will prepare scholars who have interests in the theory, research and practice of management with a cross-border or cross-cultural dimension. Given the trend of globalization and the importance of emerging economies, international business has become one of the fastest-growing areas of interest by both academic researchers and practitioners.

Leadership and Organization Studies Concentration
The leadership and organization studies concentration crafts scholars in organizational phenomena. In addition to rigorous training in research methodology and statistics, the concentration entails courses in the science of organizational behavior, organization theory, and leadership. Students build on this core grounding with tailored coursework that fits their research interests and chosen level of analysis. Accomplished faculty members mentor student research throughout the program and foster their engagement in the profession.

Management Information Systems Concentration
The MIS concentration will focus on innovative and competitive IT/IS management theories, strategies and practices and their impact on organizations and society. Consistent with the other specializations, the MIS specialization will concentrate on current IT/IS challenges facing the industry today. IT/IS industry input and collaboration will be continually sought to develop appropriate projects and maintain currency in this program.

“The Ph.D. program provides a great academic environment: Professors have tight connections with us and always provide useful suggestions. The rigorous training motivates me to think in-depth about the financial markets. UMass Lowell is preparing me to contribute to the program and the research community, not only during my doctoral study but also in my future professional endeavors.”

—Lingna (Selina) Sun, Finance
PROGRAM CURRICULUM AND FLOW

Students must complete 58 credits: 40 course credits and 18 dissertation credits. Progress through the program can be broken down into five stages:

- Completion of first-year summer paper.
- Completion of coursework.
- Completion of comprehensive exams.
- Completion of dissertation proposal.
- Completion of dissertation defense.

Again, pace is determined by whether the student is a full- or part-time student.

First-year Summer Paper
Students are required to complete an original research paper in the summer of the first year. The first-year summer paper provides an excellent introduction to research, and adequate quality of the summer paper is required for advancement in the program.

Coursework
Upon admittance into the program, students will first focus on core courses and two advanced-level research method courses. The objective of these courses is to provide Ph.D. students with the requisite tools to conduct rigorous research. The core courses are indicated in the table below. Thirteen credits are completed across the core—four core courses (each 3 credits), as well as the Managerial Research Seminar (1 credit).

After completing the majority of core courses and advanced-level research method courses, students will then transition into concentration courses. There are seven three-credit courses within each concentration including required courses and electives.

Comprehensive Exams
After all courses are completed, Ph.D. students take comprehensive exams. Comprehensive exams are critical to the student’s progression. Comprehensive exams are compiled by a faculty team. The exams are meant to test the student’s knowledge of the larger business scholarship, as well as the student’s chosen concentration area. The format of the exam is determined by the faculty within the concentration area, as well as the Ph.D. program director. Exams are graded by a team of faculty; adequate performance is required for advancement in the program.

Dissertation Proposal
The dissertation proposal is started after successful completion of the comprehensive exams. It has four distinct activities:

- Selection of a faculty adviser.
- Identification of a research question.
- Building a dissertation committee.
- Preparation of a dissertation proposal.

Students will orally defend the proposal to his/her dissertation committee, as well as the larger university academic community. The dissertation may take the form of a single monograph, i.e. the traditional dissertation, or three separate papers. This is at the discretion of the chair and committee.

Dissertation Defense
After the proposal receives committee approval, the Ph.D. candidate will execute the research in line with the approved plan detailed in the proposal. Throughout the process, the Ph.D. candidate will work closely with his/her adviser, as well as keep his/her dissertation committee apprised of the progress or setbacks. Upon completion of the research project, the Ph.D. candidate will put forth a final written report, i.e. dissertation, and defend his/her work to the dissertation committee, as well as the larger academic community. Once the dissertation receives unanimous committee approval, the Ph.D. candidate receives his/her doctorate degree.

“During the program, we are encouraged to develop publications with both peers and professors. And because our program is not over-crowded, we receive one-on-one attention from faculty. Plus, because professors here have grants from various foundations, such as National Institutes of Health, we get the chance to actively participate in those projects with both theoretical research and practical applications.”

—Hasan Kartal, MIS
Michael P. Ciuchta, Ph.D., Entrepreneurship & Strategy
Prof. Ciuchta’s research examines the interactions between entrepreneurs and capital providers. Two areas of recent interest include alternative sources of capital, such as crowd funding, and the impact of an entrepreneur’s level of “coachability” on investment decisions. His research is finding that coachability positively influences investor’s evaluations of the venture, beyond other important factors such as the entrepreneur’s passion and preparedness and the quality of the idea being pitched. These findings have important implications for entrepreneurs pitching their ventures to an investment community.

Ying Huang, Ph.D., Marketing
Prof. Huang’s research examines buyer-supplier relationships in distribution channels and supply chains. One of her current projects involves a cross-cultural comparison of the role of personal ties between buyers from retailers and salespeople from manufacturers using data collected in China, Japan and United States. Understanding how personal ties function in managing buyer-supplier relationships provides important theoretical and managerial implications for both scholars and business practitioners. Dr. Huang’s other research interests include foreign market entry, retailing strategy and corporate social responsibility.

Beth Humberd, Ph.D., Organizational Behavior
Prof. Humberd studies topics related to gender and diversity, leadership development, identity management and interpersonal relationships at work. Her research seeks to understand how individuals experience and develop their non-work selves in the context of work and organizations, as well as how workplace interactions and informal norms shape individual identity development.

Khondkar E. Karim, DBA, CPA
In response to the high cost of regulatory compliance, Prof. Karim focuses his research on the quality of reporting, principally by using earnings management and accrual quality measures. His studies have detected a significant deterioration in reporting quality. This evidence is of interest to market participants and can inform the current debate on providing exemption to even larger firms. Additionally, managers can probably imagine a scenario in the future in which reporting gains outweigh the compliance costs, making compliance beneficial overall.

Tunde Kovacs, PhD, Finance
Prof. Kovacs investigates how information is incorporated into prices. Her latest research examines analysts’ attitude towards stocks that have lottery-like returns—skewed towards a small chance of an extremely high return, in exchange for a larger chance of limited losses. Her work finds that analyst recommendations are more favorable for stocks that exhibit more lottery-like return features, suggesting that investment professionals are subject to psychological biases similar to those previously reported for individual investors, hence lowering the investment value of their recommendations for investors.

Taewoo Kim, Ph.D., Accounting
Prof. Kim is currently examining the effect of past performance patterns on accounting conservatism. His research shows that firms that have performed consistently well over the previous five consecutive years are less conservative in financial reporting than firms that have performed poorly or inconsistently. In addition, this tendency is less pronounced or unobserved for firms with a high proportion of outside directors or high institutional ownership. These findings have significant implications not only for accounting conservatism, but also for corporate governance.

Scott Latham, Ph.D., Strategic Management
As a senior manager during the dot-com crash in the early 2000s, Prof. Latham became fascinated with the factors that separated the companies that made it, from the companies that didn’t. In line with this, his research focuses on the manner in which companies respond to external shifts in the environment.

Annie Li, Ph.D., Accounting
Prof. Li’s research focuses on corporate governance, institutions and accounting information in the global capital market. Recently, she has studied the role played by product market competition in shaping accounting conservatism in an international setting. She found that product market competition is positively associated with accounting conservatism in countries with strong legal institutions, but not in countries with weak legal institutions. Moreover, the positive association is significantly more pronounced in countries with high quality financial reporting environments, suggesting that product market competition and strong legal institutions jointly drive accounting conservatism.

Xiaobai Li, Ph.D., Management Information Systems
Prof. Li’s research focuses on analytic approaches and technologies that allow the organizations to benefit from data mining while preserving individual privacy. Data mining technologies enable organizations to extract intelligence from the massive data they collect to better serve their customers and thus gain competitive advantages, but there are increasing concerns about privacy invasion. His research seeks to benefit both the organizations and individuals.

Kimberly Merriman, Ph.D., Organizational Behavior
Extrinsic motivators such as pay, incentives, goals and performance feedback often influence behavior in subtle and unintended ways. Prof. Merriman’s research focuses on the effectiveness and social impact of extrinsic motivators in relation to a wide range of outcomes such as employee performance, employee well-being, organizational sustainability and the gender earnings gap.
Luvai F. Motiwalla, Ph.D., Management Information Systems
Prof. Motiwalla’s research focuses on IT implementation and its impact on people and process in firms. For instance, he studies mobile IT adoption and use in banking industry, cloud ERP impact on firm performance, information privacy valuation and patient privacy protection with the electronic medical records systems. Using funds from a National Institutes of Health grant, he is working on developing new protection technology as well as processes to help health-care providers do a better job in protecting patient data, while sharing health data for medical or health-policy research.

Hieu Phan, PhD, Finance
Prof. Phan studies corporate finance, particularly mergers and acquisitions, corporate governance, managerial incentives, corporate investment and liquidity policies under financial constraint and distress, capital structure and debt structure, cost of capital, and earnings management. In one study, he found that promotion incentives are positively related to cash holdings, value of cash and stock repurchases, but negatively related to dividends. This evidence shows that promotion incentives encourage managers to pursue riskier investment and financing policies, which has important implications for firms in designing executive compensation and setting cash holdings and payout policies, and for regulators in formulating public policies related to executive compensations.

SangHyun Suh, Ph.D., Accounting
Prof. Suh has studied board structure and audit committee monitoring, as well as board committee overlap and monitoring effectiveness, using CEO compensation. His work has shown a negative relationship between audit fees and committee overlap, but a positive association between audit fees and board classification. These suggest weak monitoring efforts by the audit committee and classified board. He has also found that board committee overlap associated with linking directors who serve simultaneously on the audit and compensation committees is an important conduit for knowledge transfer between boards’ monitoring and incentive alignment functions. These directors are associated with lower executive compensation and influence pay mix.

M. Berk Talay, Ph.D., Marketing
Dr. Talay studies strategic marketing problems related with product competition among firms along with the global co-evolution of products, companies, and industries. He has been involved in a set of large-scale projects, which examine the drivers of new product success in different environments. His research involves the analyses of how and why innovations affect competitiveness over time, drivers of success and failure in inter-firm collaborations for new product development, and global evolution of brands. In the course of his research, Dr. Talay has worked on automotive, pharmaceutical, entertainment, and retailing industries and his work has appeared in several top tier academic journals.

Stefanie Tate, Ph.D., Accounting
Prof. Tate researches how heightened risks to manipulate financial statements affect audit fees. She has found that while increased risks are associated with increased fees, not all audit firms price the risk the same way. The largest audit firms (the Big 4) do not increase fees to the same extent that small audit firms do. Audit fees charged by the Big 4 are driven much more strongly by the size of the organization being audited than by any other organization-specific factor. Audit managers and partners at the Big 4 may find the results interesting as they consider their current fee setting policies.

Yi Yang, Ph.D., Entrepreneurship & Strategy
Prof. Yang studies technology-oriented corporate entrepreneurship activities such as corporate venturing, R&D alliances and new technology/product development. One of her recent studies examined the relationships between entrepreneurial companies and large firms in technology ecosystems. Such relationships have been called ‘swimming with sharks.’ Her findings reveal the impacts of technology relatedness and multi-homing strategies, and give entrepreneurial companies suggestions on how to effectively manage the relationship with the ‘sharks.’
ABOUT UMASS LOWELL

For more than a century, UMass Lowell has been preparing students to work in the real-world, solve real problems and help real people. The university began as the Lowell Normal School, a teaching college founded in 1894, and the Lowell Textile School, founded in 1895 to train technicians and managers for the textile industry. Over the next 75 years, both institutions extended their offerings to meet the growing needs of the region. Lowell State and Lowell Tech, as they were then known, merged in 1975 to form the University of Lowell. The campus became part of the University of Massachusetts system in 1991.

• With a student body of more than 17,000 students, our enrollment is up 45 percent since 2007, and the new student body has become 76 percent more diverse in that time.

• We have partnerships with 111 universities in 40 countries.

• U.S. News & World Report named UMass Lowell a top-tier university four years in a row, moving us up 12 spots among all U.S. colleges and universities in its 2013-14 rankings to No. 158. The university was also listed among the top 200 research universities nationally and among the top 85 public campuses.

• Times of London ranks the UMass system at 56th of the top 200 universities in the world and 19th for academic and research reputation.

• Forbes ranks UMass Lowell as one of the top 650 undergraduate institutions in the country and No. 10 on its 2013 national Best Value Colleges ranking.

• UMass Lowell was designated by the Carnegie Foundation as a community-engaged university and is a member of the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. For two years, we have been named to President Obama’s Honor Roll “with distinction,” a notable achievement. Students, faculty and staff contribute more than 120,000 hours of community service annually.