WE ARE PIONEERING RESEARCH.

PhD PROGRAM

MICHIGAN ROSS
WE ARE MICHIGAN ROSS.

PhD PROGRAM
At Michigan Ross collaboration isn’t just a buzzword — it’s in our DNA, says Francine Lafontaine. That goes for faculty interaction with students as well as the ability to tackle big ideas across academic boundaries. “A main differentiator for our PhD Program is the amount of interaction students have with faculty in their areas of study, and also with other PhD students and faculty in other areas within the school and across campus,” says Lafontaine, who oversees the doctoral studies program. “The University of Michigan is a great research university with numerous highly ranked schools and departments, and that affords our PhD students a wide set of opportunities. Our faculty work closely with PhD students to ensure their progress, but also encourage them to make full use of these boundary spanning opportunities.” That kind of culture creates a buzz that sets Michigan Ross apart. “The talent and energy of our students, combined with our culture of addressing real-world problems with the best approaches possible — including those from a variety of perspectives — make the Ross Doctoral Studies Program a truly unique experience.”
Welcome to the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan, a top-ranked business school operating within one of the world’s largest and very best research universities. As such, Michigan Ross offers its PhD students access to deep expertise across subject areas and unparalleled opportunities for multidisciplinary study and research.

As a PhD student at Michigan Ross, you will work side by side with faculty who are shaping their fields and the global business community with groundbreaking research. You will join a research enterprise where faculty address important questions using different approaches as needed, including economic and behavioral models as well as methodologies blending the two or incorporating innovations from other fields. This freedom to choose different paradigms and methodologies enables faculty and PhD candidates to take full advantage of the rich breadth and depth of intellectual inquiry found throughout the university.

The Doctoral Studies Program at Michigan Ross in particular prides itself on its diversity of scholars. Because we are a general management institution, our seven areas of study are equally strong. As a result, we have doctoral students from across the United States and around the world on a great variety of topics. The international composition of students and range of scholarship in our midst mimic the global business community of the 21st century and foster creative problem solving.

Our institutes and centers — dedicated to entrepreneurial studies, emerging and transitional economies, global sustainability, technology and operations, global finance, positive organizational scholarship, tax policy, and accounting methods — provide further support and infrastructure.

Just as the multidisciplinary nature of Ross and of the University of Michigan are defining features of the institution, so too is the degree to which faculty and doctoral students work together and truly collaborate. Our faculty regard PhD students as “faculty in training” and, thus, colleagues. This leads to a supportive but also challenging and rewarding environment, both professionally and personally.

I invite you to apply to our Doctoral Studies Program and hope to welcome you as a colleague in the near future.

Best Wishes,

Francine Lafontaine
Senior Associate Dean for Faculty and Research
William Davidson Professor of Business Economics and Public Policy
Professor of Economics
Pursue Your Intellectual Passion

The Reasons to Choose Michigan Ross Are Abundant.

We are a renowned business school within an internationally recognized university that is among the world leaders in funded research. This rich environment creates opportunities for self-directed, collaborative work and the funding to support it. Ross faculty are among the most influential in the world. Their research impacts the way business is taught and practiced on a global scale. Much of this research is conducted in collaboration with PhD students.

The realms of theory and practice come together seamlessly in our Doctoral Studies Program. For researchers seeking to bring new discoveries to the world, the University’s collaborative spirit is vital.

For scholars looking to put their ideas into practice, the program is connected to an enormous network of business partners. Whatever the topic of your intellectual passion, it will flourish with the endless resources and opportunities at Ross and the University of Michigan.

Our PhD graduates are placed at top universities around the world. A degree from U-M is recognized globally and guarantees that your credentials certify your scholarly abilities as a teacher, researcher, and colleague. Upon graduation, you will join a community of more than 50,000 Michigan Ross alumni from all 50 states and almost 90 countries, and a network of over 580,000 U-M alumni worldwide.
As a recent recipient of the Ross Researcher of the Year award, Jerry Davis excels at asking the questions and pursuing the answers at the heart of important business problems. His current research focuses on effects that dependence on financial markets has had on corporations, banking, governments, and households within the United States. The research became the basis of his book “Managed by the Markets: How Finance Reshaped America” (2009). Davis also studies social movements, corporate governance, and social networks. But as a two-time recipient of the PhD teaching excellence award, Davis also excels at making good research a collaborative learning process. “The Ross doctoral program involves students as junior colleagues in all stages of research, from conceptualization and design through the review process. This leaves them much better prepared than graduates of other programs to undertake successful careers as faculty at top schools.” Davis says it’s the caliber of students in the program that allows this approach. “Ross PhD students are smart, engaged, hard-working, and entrepreneurial. They are good at bringing together the diverse resources available at a great university to pursue their own distinct research agendas.”
ABOUT THE ROSS PhD

The goal of our program is to prepare the faculty of the future for the world’s top business schools. Our graduates use their research, discoveries, and insights — expressed through writing, speaking, and teaching — to shape the world of business. To accomplish this, we utilize coursework and directed research.

In keeping with the school’s overall core values and strategy, the doctoral program has its foundation in:

› generating broad-based intellectual capital with impact
› providing innovative educational experiences
› offering co-creation opportunities with students as active participants
› connecting theory and practice with action-based learning
“Ross students are self-starters with a passion for scholarly learning and getting knee-deep in cutting-edge research,” says Fred Feinberg. The same can be said of the faculty. “We work shoulder to shoulder with students on research from the start. It’s an intense, but unusually collegial, environment. Students pursue their ideas in collaboration with leading researchers at Ross and across the entire University.” Feinberg lists the department’s strengths as consumer evaluation and choice; attitude formation; information processing; behavioral decision theory; consumer satisfaction; and the modeling of pricing, advertising, and promotion through the use of lab, scanner, Web-based, and other data sources. Methodologically, Feinberg cites special strengths in experimental design, Bayesian econometrics, consumer neuroscience, dynamic and causal models, and experimental economics. His own research focuses on using statistical models to better understand human behavior, particularly sequences of choices in uncertain environments. Feinberg uses many tools to get a handle on what drives behavior. “One of our strengths is our emphasis on collaborative, cross-disciplinary research,” he says. “We are fortunate to work with world-class scholars across the University, training our doctoral students to the highest levels of scholarship in core disciplines.”
A MENTORSHIP PHILOSOPHY

We nurture students who best fit our program’s philosophy and supply them with the resources to succeed. The program’s small size allows students exceptional access to faculty. Students work with faculty formally and informally as research assistants, beginning in the first semester. From there on, students have many opportunities to work closely with faculty as co-authors on papers that target top academic journals.

The program typically admits 15-20 students from a pool of 400-500 applicants each year. In the past five years, more than half of the students have been international, while about one-third have been women. Of domestic students, ten percent have come from underrepresented minority groups.
INTELLECTUAL CHALLENGE, COLLEGIAL SPIRIT

Students accepted into our doctoral program will find themselves in an intense academic environment that demands full-time commitment over a five-year period. Unlike an MBA program, which offers principles, tools, and techniques of immediate utility in the business world, the Ross doctoral program requires students to step back from the day-to-day business world to examine why that world works as it does—and to pose long-term questions that bridge the theoretical and practical.

A distinguishing feature of Michigan Ross is the collegial spirit and noncompetitive nature of the community. Students collaborate on projects and assist each other; joint research with faculty is expected. Our informal atmosphere and open-door policy encourage students to engage in conversation with faculty or continue seminar discussions with distinguished visitors beyond the allotted class time and space.

A TOP BUSINESS SCHOOL

Michigan Ross is a leader in programmatic innovation and action-based learning in business education. Ross stands out among the world’s best business schools for the depth and breadth of its programs. In addition, the school is recognized by the Aspen Institute as one of the leading business schools in the world for integrating ethical, social, and environmental issues into its curriculum.

In addition to world-class academic departments in core business disciplines, Michigan Ross houses research institutes and centers that provide extraordinary thought leadership and learning opportunities. These include:

- Center for International Business Education and Research
- Erb Institute for Global Sustainable Enterprise
- Office of Tax Policy Research
- Paton Center for Research in Accounting
- Tauber Institute for Global Operations

EXPANSIVE UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

The University of Michigan is the top public research university in the U.S., according to the National Science Foundation. It is highly regarded in many fields, including the social sciences, economics, psychology, sociology, and statistics. It also is home to the nation’s preeminent academic social science laboratory, the Institute for Social Research; a superb College of Engineering; and highly ranked schools of law and medicine. Michigan Ross’ doctoral program leverages the University’s resources by allowing students to pursue coursework in other disciplines. This proves advantageous when they must possess the same skills and vocabulary as experts in these fields.

The University had nearly $1.5 billion in research expenditures in 2017, with over half conducted under contract with the federal government.
ANN ARBOR

Ann Arbor consistently ranks as one of the best places to live in America. It’s rich in entertainment and culture, home to an amazing food scene, and offers countless opportunities for outdoor and indoor adventures.

A2
BEST PLACES TO LIVE
– Money

#1 BEST COLLEGE TOWN IN AMERICA
– WalletHub.com

AMERICA’S TOP 25 HIGH-TECH HOTSPOTS
– The Atlantic

AMERICA’S BEST MAIN STREETS
– Fodors
COSMOPOLITAN LIVING WITHOUT THE HASSLE  As home to one of the greatest universities in the world, Ann Arbor is a city that is both intellectually robust and economically resilient. The University of Michigan attracts global leaders in all fields, including medicine, life sciences, law, engineering, public policy, and education.

Rich with history and tradition, U-M and Ann Arbor offer a classic college town experience. There are restaurants for every budget and taste; music for fans of concertos and rock bands; and pleasures for lovers of both sports and the arts. It doesn’t take long to realize that Ann Arbor naturally melds high culture and popular culture.

Within Ann Arbor, public transportation is accessible and often free for students. Students also enjoy venturing out to Detroit: Just 40 miles away, the Motor City offers an array of activities and events. An unforgettable cultural and historical experience, Detroit’s amenities are nationally recognized—it’s been named one of Zagat’s 26 Hottest Food Cities and USA Today readers named Detroit the nation’s Best Sports City.

THE ARTS  Ann Arbor enjoys an international reputation for its vibrant music and performing arts scene. In addition to bringing Yo-Yo Ma and the Berlin Philharmonic to town, the University Musical Society also hosts the only U.S. residency of England’s Royal Shakespeare Company. The recently renovated University of Michigan Museum of Art features dramatic new galleries that highlight pieces drawn from the museum’s more than 18,000 works.

FOOD  You can find whatever you want to eat (or cook) in Ann Arbor. Quality ethnic restaurants and specialty grocery stores abound, and there’s no shortage of high-end restaurants. A word to the wise: If you leave Ann Arbor without going to Zingerman’s Delicatessen, you’ll never have the pleasure of discovering just how exciting a sandwich can be.

RECREATION  Those who love the great outdoors can run or bike along more than 60 miles of scenic trails, kayak down the Huron River, explore the Nichols Arboretum, or take advantage of Ann Arbor’s many golf courses. With more than 10,000 inland lakes and 3,000 miles of Great Lakes shoreline, Michigan’s beaches, sand dunes, lighthouses, and marinas are just some of the welcoming attractions found within a day’s drive of the city. Local attractions such as the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum, the petting zoo at Domino’s Farms, and fall hayrides and cider mill tours will delight the whole family.

“Ann Arbor’s highly educated population has created a burgeoning economy where a street-corner conversation can develop into a company and create jobs.”
- WALL STREET JOURNAL
Collaborative Space  Action-based learning is a creative, interactive experience that integrates individual preparation, team-based projects, and classroom discussion while effectively utilizing advanced information technology. Fruitful, informal encounters that occur outside the classroom are essential to the culture of Michigan Ross. Accordingly, the campus features many open, light-filled spaces that facilitate gatherings of all kinds. Surrounded by Robertson Auditorium, Seigle Cafe, and informal meeting spaces, the bright and spacious Davidson Winter Garden is the figurative and literal center of our collaborative learning community.

Classrooms  The Ross campus has a variety of classroom sizes, configurations, and technology to support a variety of learning activities and pedagogic styles. Additionally, each of our classrooms has adjacent group study rooms to support the conversations and explorations essential to successful team-based learning.

Technology  Seamlessly integrated technology enables students and faculty to interact with one another on campus and with project sponsors and teams all over the globe. State-of-the-art wireless, data-ready seats, and fully loaded group study rooms are just some of the features.

Sustainability  Michigan Ross faculty are among the world leaders in academic programming and research devoted to sustainable enterprise. Fittingly, the Ross campus has been recognized for its numerous architecturally innovative and environmentally responsible features. The main Ross building earned a Silver designation in 2010, according to the U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system. Recently constructed buildings Kresge and Blau halls also earned LEED Gold certification in 2017.

Beyond Business  Ross students, faculty, and staff are able to incorporate a healthy lifestyle with a top-notch education. The Och Fitness Center features free weights as well as strength and aerobic machines. In addition, Seigle Cafe and our Executive Dining Room offer fresh, whole foods, many of which are raised and harvested locally. And since 1995, the school has acquired an impressive art collection consisting of more than 200 contemporary works.

michiganross.umich.edu/campus
AREAS OF STUDY

16 Accounting
18 Business & Economics
20 Finance
22 Management & Organizations
24 Marketing
26 Strategy
28 Technology & Operations
Ross is the birthplace of modern accounting research. The program builds on this tradition by developing the next generation of academic leaders who will produce work of lasting importance at the nation’s top research-oriented universities. Placements in the last five years include the University of Chicago, Cornell, Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Stanford University.

A major strength of our program is its productive and highly regarded research faculty, who focus on issues of importance to the accounting and business communities. Our recent research topics include the impact of accounting information on capital markets and on the behavior of decision-makers within firms.

The Ross PhD program in accounting also is well-known for its emphasis on close faculty-student interaction. We only admit two or three students into the program each year. This fosters joint research and ensures a highly collegial environment.

Michigan does an excellent job of preparing research-oriented faculty. The first major factor is the faculty’s commitment to the PhD Program, whether taking the time and thought to help students build research skills and ideas, or by ensuring that the program gets resources such as offices near the faculty. The second factor is the quality of the students, who were helpful as we progressed through coursework and refined our research ideas. The use of research assistantships for funding also was valuable in developing my skills as a researcher.”

JUDSON CASKEY, ’06 // ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ACCOUNTING, UCLA ANDERSON SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM OF STUDY
Students devote the first two to three years to coursework, research projects, preparation for the preliminary exam, and development of a dissertation proposal.

COURSES
Entering students are expected to have completed courses in introductory finance, advanced-level financial accounting, and intermediate managerial accounting in addition to the school’s required background and analytical tools courses.

All doctoral students majoring in accounting also are required to complete the following minimum course requirements:
- econometrics/statistics (3 courses)
- economics (2 courses)
- finance (2 courses)
- PhD seminars in accounting
- electives (normally fulfilled in economics, finance, statistics, or operations management)

RESEARCH
The program requires two projects: a research proposal (at a minimum) completed in the first year and a small-scale study completed in the second year.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION AND CANDIDACY
After completing coursework and the first research project, students may take the preliminary written exam. They advance to candidacy by passing the exam and completing the second research project. The remainder of the program is devoted to the dissertation.

GREGORY MILLER // Ernst and Young Professor of Accounting, Chair of Accounting
“Collaboration” is a buzzword on many campuses. But as an alumnus and faculty member, Greg Miller knows it’s a way of life at Ross. “What makes Michigan special is how the faculty and students interact,” he says. “PhD students are truly involved in the life of the department, providing great experiences and bringing energy to the faculty. That relationship is the heart of our PhD experience, and I believe it is unique among accounting programs.” Miller calls his student experience “more than just a set of classes; it was an apprenticeship into being a scholar.”
Now, he is responsible for cultivating that experience for others. “What makes Ross students stand out is their passion for answering real questions in a way that adds value for researchers, students, and practitioners,” he says. “The diversity of our people allows us to have rich discussions and investigations into many areas — providing true engagement without dogma.”
Miller spent 10 years on the faculty at Harvard before returning to Ann Arbor in 2008. His research focuses on financial communication — understanding how managers use financial information and the markets to communicate to outside stakeholders and opinion formers.
The PhD in Business and Economics is a joint degree offered by the Ross School of Business and the Department of Economics at the University of Michigan.

The goal of the joint program is to provide scholars with the best training in the theoretical and methodological approaches used in economics, combined with the specific training in business applications offered at Ross. The program is designed to serve students who have interests in broad microeconomic research areas relevant to business, including Industrial Organization, and business-related topics in Labor, Environmental, Health, International, and Development Economics.

By combining the rigors and accreditation associated with a PhD in Economics with access to faculty, resources, and funding at the level provided by Michigan Ross, the program attracts outstanding students who will benefit from working with faculty from both units.

Graduates of this new program are expected to be particularly attractive hires for academic positions in economics groups in business schools, as well as economics departments, policy schools, and schools of public health.

I chose the joint doctorate program in Business and Economics at U-M because I felt it brought together the best elements of both areas. Over the next few years, I will take on rigorous technical and theoretical training in economics, opportunities to learn from and interact with world-class faculty and students across two areas, and the resources to do research in applied microeconomics and business topics. More broadly, I was drawn to the highly supportive environment Michigan offers to its graduate students. Students have ample access to faculty, to the resources they need to complete their PhD programs successfully, and to an excellent placement office to help them compete in the job market.”

EVELYN SMITH // PhD STUDENT
JAGADEESH SIVADASAN // Associate Professor of Business Economics and Public Policy

Jagadeesh Sivadasan says the jointly offered PhD in Business and Economics between Ross and U-M’s Economics Department provides a unique environment for students interested in business-related economic research. “The small program size and depth of support provided by Ross — combined with the coursework, faculty breadth, and placement support of the Economics Department — gives students a supportive setting for study and research,” he says. Students in the program can follow a wide range of interests in economic fields where research has implications for business and related government policy. “Faculty in the Business and Economics group have varied interests encompassing industrial organization, health, international, environmental, and development economics,” he says. Sivadasan’s own research centers on how firm performance is impacted by a variety of government policies such as labor, foreign entry and trade regulation, as well as by firms’ strategic choices. “In today’s economy, firms are the key engines of innovation, propelling economic growth and improvements in social welfare across both developing and rich countries. I am fascinated by what makes firms in some countries more productive than others.”
Ross PhD students in finance have access to a large faculty whose research interests span the field’s three main areas — corporate finance, asset pricing, and financial intermediation. Our faculty conduct research on a broad range of topics such as the design of corporate financial policies, financial intermediation systems, measurement of default risk, the organization of mutual funds, market microstructure, risk-return dynamics in the asset markets, and the role systematic irrationality plays in financial market behavior.

To complement its own courses, the finance program takes advantage of the University of Michigan’s strengths in economics, engineering, and mathematics. Within Ross, two weekly finance seminars offer students exposure to the ideas of scholars from all over the world, and an informal setting in which to present their own research.

The Ross PhD program in finance emphasizes close interaction with faculty, both through research and teaching.

I cannot imagine a place where students can have better access to faculty or more opportunities to talk about research than at Ross. My experience was fantastic and the program was challenging from the first courses I took to my final dissertation defense. These challenges prepared me well for the job market. The prior placements of the program spoke for themselves, but as an incoming PhD student, it’s difficult to have a sense of your potential. The fact that Ross had routinely placed students at top research schools sent a clear message that if I worked hard enough and wrote good enough papers, all schools would take me seriously on the job market.”

TAYLOR BEGLEY, ’14 // ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF FINANCE, WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY OLIN BUSINESS SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF STUDY

Students devote the first two to three years to coursework, research projects, preparation for the preliminary exam, and development of a dissertation proposal.

COURSES

Students complete most coursework during the first two years of the program. Because classes in microeconomic theory, mathematical economics, statistics, and finance are among the first-year requirements, strong prior preparation is essential.

Courses during the second year comprise at least six electives (typically in math, economics, and econometrics) in addition to two finance courses. Students take two more seminars in finance during the third year.

For the remainder of the program, students typically take at least one course per term in an area related to their research.

RESEARCH

To become proficient in the art of research, students produce a research paper in the summer of each of the first two years under faculty guidance. They present their work in departmental seminars during the academic year. The Mitsui Life Financial Research Center awards $2,000 for best performance in the first year of the program and $3,000 for the best dissertation proposal in any given year.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION AND CANDIDACY

Exams, covering finance and related areas, typically take place at the end of the second year. Students advance to candidacy by passing the exams and completing the two research papers. The remainder of the program is devoted to the dissertation.
Understanding individual, group, and organizational dynamics is crucial to modern business. The management and organizations group brings an interdisciplinary approach to these issues through theoretical work, field and laboratory research, and archival studies. Our research spans micro-social psychological dynamics in organizations to macro-sociological/organizational theory topics.

Our doctoral students collaborate closely with our faculty and those involved in the school’s executive education program. They also have at their disposal the University’s extraordinary resources in social sciences. Several faculty hold joint appointments in social science fields at the University.

Interaction among scholars across social science disciplines is common. For example, the Interdisciplinary Committee on Organizational Studies brings together faculty and students from schools and departments across the University for weekly seminars. The Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, based at U-M, offers summer methods institutes that our students frequently attend. Faculty strength in the burgeoning field of economic sociology has prompted U-M’s Department of Sociology to organize a new area called economic sociology and organizations.

“I chose Ross because it’s the best PhD program out there. It provides very rigorous theoretical and methods training, but everyone also cares about impact. It is a very personal experience, focused on bringing the best out of each student. There is a lot of individual freedom, but at the same time, a lot of faculty support and attention. The faculty help students discover their own passions and develop them into a unique research agenda.”

KLAUS WEBER, ’03 // PROFESSOR OF MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONS, KELLOGG SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
PROGRAM OF STUDY

COURSES
The first two years of the program include a sequence of four seminars on organizational behavior and theory and four terms of research methods courses, two of which must be quantitative. Students take additional graduate courses in their areas of interest.

RESEARCH
Before the end of the second year, students complete a piece of empirical research under faculty guidance.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION AND CANDIDACY
The preliminary exam, covering organizational behavior, organizational theory, and research methods, takes place at the end of the second year. The remainder of the program is devoted to the dissertation.

SUE ASHFORD // Michael & Susan Jandernoa Professor of Management and Organizations, Chair of Management and Organizations

Sue Ashford works with PhD students often, involving them in ongoing research and new projects. "I’m highly driven to get things done and they’re highly driven to learn new things and develop skills, so the collaborations tend to work extremely well,” she says. Ashford’s research centers on how proactive employees can make a positive difference in their careers and their organizations. Her work bucked the assumption that employees wait around for management action. For Ashford, there’s no better place to pursue that kind of research than at Ross. “People here care about bottom-up change, care about individuals making a positive impact, care about prosocial behavior, and care about trying to address fundamental issues in our field in a way that changes the conversation.” A PhD student at Ross is fully part of the Michigan family, she says. “We support our PhD students and interact with them as colleagues rather than as underlings,” Ashford says. “We involve them in our research, celebrate their successes, and help them through trying times. Getting a PhD anywhere is a stretch experience. Here at Ross, you also receive the support you need to meet the challenges.”
As a field, marketing is concerned with developing an understanding of how consumers and producers interact in markets. As a department at Ross, marketing takes an interdisciplinary approach to developing this understanding, drawing from such disciplines as psychology, statistics, economics, and engineering to investigate important questions or applied problems.

Ross faculty and PhD students work collaboratively to publish cutting-edge research on topics such as consumer decision-making, sensory marketing, decision and cultural neuroscience, marketing resource allocation, brand portfolio management, new product development, advertising response models, and social media in leading academic journals in marketing and related disciplines.

At Ross we prepare our students to become research scholars at top research universities who further the field of marketing in both research and practice.

What attracted me to Ross initially was that the marketing department studied a wide range of topics — from advertising to brain imaging. Chances are you’ll diversify or change your interests through a five-year program, and such a place allows you to explore different topics, guided by field experts, to find what is right for you. Aside from the renowned faculty, the program stood out in terms of the diversity of students. My colleagues came from all over the world and with various backgrounds. Insights from other disciplines like engineering or psychology inform the research that students conduct at Ross.”

LINDA HAGEN, ’16 // ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MARKETING, MARSHALL SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
PROGRAM OF STUDY
COURSES
Students are expected to take a sequence of rigorous courses over the first two years as a prelude to conducting original dissertation research. These cover methodological foundations (e.g., econometrics and multivariate statistics), theoretical foundations (e.g., microeconomics and social psychology), and advanced marketing-specific seminars. The course sequence includes required courses and electives that speak to students’ own interests. We encourage students to achieve master’s-degree competency and certification in one of the basic cognates to marketing, such as psychology, economics, or statistics.

RESEARCH
Aside from working directly with faculty from the outset, students complete a large-scale research paper by the end of their second year of the program, modeled on articles in leading academic marketing journals.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION AND CANDIDACY
A preliminary exam, which covers marketing-specific and other methodological topics, is given at the end of the second year of the program. Students are allowed ample preparation time, including meetings with individual faculty sharing their interests.

ARADHNA KRISHNA // Dwight F. Benton Professor of Marketing
Aradhna Krishna’s research underscores the boundary-less culture of Michigan Ross. She is a pioneer in the field of sensory marketing—the subconscious triggers that affect how people make purchasing and consumption decisions. She explores the way a product’s look, feel, taste, sound, and smell contribute to how it’s perceived and how people respond to it. This requires working with colleagues in other disciplines, such as psychology, and it’s highly encouraged at Ross. “This is an interdisciplinary field and the University of Michigan allows for a very interdisciplinary focus,” Krishna says. In addition to sensory marketing, she also designs winning cause marketing and social responsibility programs, and creates engaging pricing and promotion policies. She says PhDs will find a rigorous academic program in a collegial environment. “We are very serious academics and we really care about our students,” Krishna says. “Ross PhD students are very smart, but also know how to have fun.”
As the dominant social and economic organization of our time, the business corporation wields enormous power. The Ross PhD program in strategy prepares students for research and careers that address issues of corporate character, actions, and success. Drawing from behavioral sciences, the program examines the firm’s internal organization, its relationship with external environments, its strategic decision-making processes, and its overall performance. Strategy research at Michigan Ross focuses on assessing fundamental, underlying differences among seemingly similar organizations.

Many business schools house strategy programs within a larger management department. At Ross, the program reflects the specific research interests of our faculty. At the same time, the program is highly interdisciplinary. Our students and faculty interact with students in other disciplines, including economics, sociology, psychology, and political science, through coursework, research projects, colloquia, and dissertation committees. Our students and faculty also are tied to other programs across the University. We encourage students to conduct research with a broad spectrum of faculty, and we require them to choose a cognate field.

At Ross, I had the opportunity to immerse in my primary field of interest and receive training in related fields, such as microeconomics and organization theory. This combination of depth and breadth is important because it prepares students to conduct research that is rigorous and applicable to a broader audience. Ross also excels at teaching students how to focus their research. A great PhD program is one that prepares students not only to formulate compelling answers to relevant research questions but also to identify relevant questions in the first place.”

FRANCISCO POLIDORO, ’06 // ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MANAGEMENT, MCCOMBS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS – AUSTIN
PROGRAM OF STUDY

Our doctoral program includes formal coursework and collaborative research with faculty, followed by preliminary examinations and a dissertation.

COURSES

Students generally take two years, or four to five semesters, to complete the requirements of 16–20 courses. Courses, some of which are taken outside Michigan Ross, include:

- economics and organizational theory (5-6 courses)
- methods (5-6 courses)
- strategy applications
  (6 doctoral seminars, plus seminars in related areas)
- cognate applications
  (often business economics, management and organizations, psychology, or sociology)

RESEARCH

By Jan. 1 of the third year in the program, students must complete a research paper. It may use existing data but also must demonstrate the student’s capacity for original research.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION AND CANDIDACY

Written qualifying exams have two components: an area exam and a research methods exam. Both exams usually are taken during the summer after the second year of the program, after completion of all doctoral coursework. Successful completion of all courses and the comprehensive exams qualifies a student for candidacy. The remainder of the program is devoted to the dissertation.

Strategy dissertations tend to have both theoretical and empirical components. Students generally develop a model of a phenomenon or problem and then collect data to test their theoretical predictions and generate implications of their study.

YUE MAGGIE ZHOU  //  Associate Professor of Corporate Strategy

The distinct quality of the Michigan Ross PhD Program is reflected in its faculty’s relentless effort in cutting-edge research, its vibrant and collegial intellectual community, and close collaboration between faculty and doctoral students, says Maggie Zhou. Faculty members spend a great amount of time mentoring, training, and advising students. Students are strongly encouraged to research across disciplinary boundaries. “We are one of the top programs in the country that embrace an interdisciplinary approach to strategy research,” she says. “We apply high standards of research rigor to all topic areas, and we seek to develop the next generation of thought leaders in solving fundamental and emerging problems in the strategy field.”

Maggie’s own research examines the role of complexity in setting limits to firm growth, corporate and competitive strategies, and organization design. “I believe managing complex internal activities and institutional environments is essential for firm growth and economic development in a global economy.”
Technology and operations is central to a wide range of global management challenges facing business today: increasing globalization has placed supply chain management at the core of the world economy; the rapid evolution of technology, from e-commerce to social media, is presenting enormous information technology and operations management challenges; and sustainability concerns have raised operational efficiency as an urgent management concern.

At Ross, we study these important issues by using the overlapping heritages of operations management, organizational information technology, operations research, management science, and statistics. Students master rigorous, model-based, empirical, and experimental research methods and apply these to current research problems. Our students and faculty have explored innovations in health care services; technology enabled business ecosystem innovation; sustainability in supply chains; global health care delivery; supply chain risk management; renewable energy management; revenue management for sports events.

Michigan’s faculty are world class, publishing in the best journals and researching a diverse range of topics. Their accessibility, encouragement, and uncompromisingly high standards ensure superior training, enabling graduates to pursue productive academic careers at leading business schools. There also is an opportunity to teach an entire undergraduate course in operations management, which provides superb classroom experience.”

RODNEY PARKER, ’02 // ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF OPERATIONS AND DECISION TECHNOLOGIES, KELLEY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, INDIANA UNIVERSITY
PROGRAM OF STUDY

COURSES
First-year courses focus on fundamental mathematical modeling and analysis tools, including dynamic programming, stochastic processes, game theory, and inventory theory. Courses in the second year allow students to apply these tools to technology and operations topics, develop areas of specialization, and round out their business education.

RESEARCH
Students complete research papers at the end of each of the first two years of the program.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION AND CANDIDACY
Students must complete two preliminary exams, one at the end of each of the two years of coursework. The remainder of the program is devoted to the dissertation.

IZAK DUENYAS // Herrick Professor of Business, Professor of Technology and Operations, Professor of Industrial and Operations Engineering, Faculty Director of Executive MBA Program

“Ross students are among the brightest PhD students in the nation,” says Izak Duenyas. “The program is extremely competitive, and we only admit students who have excellent technical training but also a natural interest in good business problems and using analytical and empirical models to discover interesting new insights about business issues.” Duenyas’ own research interest is supply chain management. His most recent focus is on how companies manage supply chain issues under information asymmetry. That applies to inventory management in the supply chain, sourcing, production, and outsourcing. Duenyas believes good academic research is driven by close collaboration with industry. “What sets the Ross PhD program in technology and operations apart from other programs is the problem-driven focus of the faculty and students,” he says. “We work with companies continuously. Instead of dreaming up problems in our offices, we are interested in finding out the important problems that keep high-level executives awake at night. Most students work with multiple faculty members and on several papers at a time exploring different issues. This focus on real problems addressed by cutting-edge methodologies is what makes Ross one of the top programs in the world.”
A doctoral education is a once-in-a-lifetime investment that requires committing personal resources of time and talent. Although the intellectual stimulation and satisfaction are rewarding, balancing coursework, assistantships, research, and other responsibilities can be challenging. You must be self-directed, with a passion for learning, a love of thoughtful inquiry, and excellent communication skills. The intimate size of the Ross Doctoral Studies Program is designed to foster in-depth research and develop teaching abilities in close partnership with the school’s renowned faculty.
TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Because the graduates of our program typically pursue academic careers, and teaching at a top-notch school such as Michigan is demanding, we require our PhD students to teach an undergraduate course for one semester.

Our teacher development program guides students by providing special mentors and addressing instructional concerns through multiple avenues, including:

- lectures, workshops, and brown bag discussions
- a teaching methodology course
- class observations of master teachers
- videotaping of instructional presentations
- experience with the latest technologies

The diverse techniques our faculty employ — from the case method to action-based learning to interactive video — provide a solid base for exploration.
DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

COURSEWORK

The first two years of the program usually are devoted to courses that satisfy University, school, and area requirements.

UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS > COGNATE COURSES: two graduate-level courses in University departments or colleges outside Michigan Ross. This requirement is designed to increase students’ intellectual breadth. Students commonly elect cognate courses in economics, psychology, sociology, statistics, or engineering.

MICHIGAN ROSS REQUIREMENTS > GENERAL BACKGROUND COURSES: basic knowledge in accounting, finance, marketing, and organizational behavior. Students entering with an MBA usually will have satisfied this requirement. Others fulfill it through doctoral, MBA, or executive education courses.

Analytical tools courses: mastery of statistical inference. Typically, students take a one-year, graduate-level sequence in statistical methods and probability through the University’s statistics or economics departments. Individual areas determine the appropriate sequence and additional courses to prepare students for research in their fields.

AREA REQUIREMENTS > DOCTORAL SEMINARS: These sequences acquaint students with research literature and current themes and controversies in the field. Area seminars are supplemented by schoolwide doctoral seminars in research methods and research on decision-making under uncertainty.

RESEARCH

Although coursework is important, the main goal of the doctoral program is to impart independent research skills. We achieve this under a mentorship model.

RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS Students work with faculty formally and informally as research assistants, beginning in the first semester.

RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS Students must satisfy research requirements specified for their area.

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Because doctoral students generally are preparing for demanding business school teaching careers, we provide a comprehensive and individualized Teacher Development Program. This program requires students to teach at least one undergraduate course in their specialty, often during the third year of doctoral study. Students are paid as teaching assistants for the courses they teach.

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM The Teacher Development Program provides students the support and resources necessary to enable them to teach at the high level expected at Ross and other elite schools. Specific goals of the program include enabling students to:

> develop mastery of key instructional methods
> acquire a broad range of teaching strategies and that facilitate learning
> create student-oriented instructional environments that are conducive to learning
> identify criteria by which to monitor teaching effectiveness

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS

Preliminary examinations are a prerequisite for candidacy. They are designed and administered by each area to evaluate a student’s mastery of basic knowledge.

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

When students have fulfilled the above requirements, they are eligible to prepare a doctoral dissertation — an original and significant piece of research that is conducted and written under the guidance of a faculty committee. The average time from dissertation proposal to oral defense of the completed project is two years.
CRITERIA

We rank creativity, the capacity for independent thinking (demonstrated through work or research), and excellent academic skills high on our list of qualifications. We also consider high scores on standardized tests, fit with faculty research interests, and contribution to the diversity of the student community. All students must possess a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university and, through previous courses or other means, demonstrate working knowledge of college-level algebra, calculus, and intermediate microeconomics. Accounting and marketing students also must demonstrate proficiency in linear algebra and advanced calculus. An MBA or master’s degree in an allied field may be helpful but is not required. It will not shorten the time in the program. We especially invite applications from qualified students with nontraditional backgrounds, foreign students, women, and members of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.

APPLYING TO THE PROGRAM

Michigan Ross and the Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies at the University of Michigan jointly administer the application to the PhD program in business administration through a single submission. The application and most of the related credentials are submitted online. As a part of the application, individuals must designate a single area of study from among the seven areas offered by Michigan Ross.

You will find detailed information regarding the application process, our faculty and their research, and our seven academic areas at michiganross.umich.edu/phd.

FINANCIAL AID

Michigan Ross provides merit-based financial aid to all students admitted to our doctoral program. We provide five years of funding, which includes a full tuition waiver, health insurance, and a generous stipend package that combines fellowship funding and a graduate assistantship. We do not require an additional application for financial aid.

Michigan Ross provides assistantships year-round. Students spend three-and-a-half years as a research assistant. These assistantships, which typically require 10-12 hours of work per week, are not just a source of financial assistance; they are the centerpiece of the program’s mentorship philosophy. In addition to research, all students spend at least one term as a graduate student instructor, typically during their third year.

We encourage students to apply for additional external sources of support when available. We also nominate students for University fellowships when they are eligible.

STUDENT PROFILE

NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN PROGRAM
89

AVERAGE TIME TO COMPLETE THE PhD
Five years

SELECTIVITY
Acceptance rate of about 5%

UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS
Undergraduate majors include: business, economics, engineering, English, history, math, political science, psychology, and sociology

ACCEPTED STUDENT PROFILE
  › Age range: 21-38 at enrollment
  › Average undergraduate GPA: 3.61
  › Average GMAT score: 744
  › Average GRE scores: verbal – 161, quantitative – 168
  › Minimum TOEFL requirements: 106 iBT, with scores of 26 or higher in each section
  › Many have post-graduate business experience
  › 10% are from underrepresented minority groups

FINANCIAL AID

Michigan Ross provides merit-based financial aid to all students admitted to our doctoral program. We provide five years of funding, which includes a full tuition waiver, health insurance, and a generous stipend package that combines fellowship funding and a graduate assistantship. We do not require an additional application for financial aid.

Michigan Ross provides assistantships year-round. Students spend three-and-a-half years as a research assistant. These assistantships, which typically require 10-12 hours of work per week, are not just a source of financial assistance; they are the centerpiece of the program’s mentorship philosophy. In addition to research, all students spend at least one term as a graduate student instructor, typically during their third year.

We encourage students to apply for additional external sources of support when available. We also nominate students for University fellowships when they are eligible.
WE ARE DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARS.
Francine Lafontaine
Senior Associate Dean for Faculty and Research, William Davidson Professor of Business Economics and Public Policy, Professor of Economics

Brian Jones
Director, PhD and Research Administration

Ashley Stauffer
Graduate Coordinator

THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Michael J. Behm
Mark J. Bernstein
Shauna Ryder Diggs
Denise Ilitch
Andrea Fischer Newman
Andrew C. Richner
Ron Weiser
Katherine E. White
Mark S. Schlissel (ex officio)

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY NOTICE
The University of Michigan, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action. The University of Michigan is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight, or veteran status in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions. Inquiries or complaints may be addressed to the Senior Director for Institutional Equity, and Title IX/Section 504/ADA Coordinator, Office of Institutional Equity, 2072 Administrative Services Building, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1432, 734-763-0235, TTY 734-647-1388. For other University of Michigan information call 734-764-1817.

© 2018 The Stephen M. Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan
WE ARE MICHIGAN ROSS.