

Columbia
Marketing
PhD Student Handbook
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1. Overview

The purpose of this handbook is to ease your way through the PhD program. Most of the procedural requirements are discussed. In addition, helpful hints regarding courses and other types of preparation to enter the academic profession are discussed.

This handbook is not intended to take the place of personal interaction. We encourage you to discuss any aspect of the PhD program with any of the faculty in the department. As students come to realize, we have a genuine “open-door” policy.

Four aspects of the PhD program are especially important:

- *Training:* Good, solid training is essential for long term success in an academic career. It is also important to differentiate you from the one hundred or more Marketing PhD’s who will graduate in the same year as you. Solid training implies:
 - Strong methodological skills
 - Solid grounding in a substantial portion of the relevant literature
 - Genuine and creative interest in substantive marketing related issues

To enable you to get such training, Columbia offers the following resources:

- A variety of top quality courses in the University (not just the Business School).
- Very accessible and research oriented faculty
- *Effort:* All of us talk about the sleepless nights we endured as students. Often, we look back on those days nostalgically. The PhD program is rigorous and demands total dedication. This implies preparation and participation in all classes as well as active participation in research. Try to get involved in research projects as soon as possible. Initiate your own research and also develop your research skills by assisting faculty members with their research. Most important, devote “prime time” to the program.
- *Intellectual Entrepreneurship:* The key to success as a faculty member or original researcher is the ability to do research. This means defining a specific problem/topic, thinking of a unique way to address it, doing what is needed to address it (e.g., analytical work and/or data collection and analysis), writing it up clearly, and submitting it to criticism (e.g., from peers, faculty, and journals), all in timely fashion. It also means revising the work, taking into account the (sometimes harsh and/or misguided) comments you receive.
- *Initiative:* Self motivation is the key to success in a PhD program and in any profession. Take responsibility --set goals for yourself and ensure that you attain them. Do not expect daily monitoring by faculty or wait for them to “give” you a topic to work on.

2. General Advice

- *Before you arrive:*

The most important thing to do is to be prepared to work hard and be excited about learning. Of course having a strong background helps. It is assumed students have a minimum knowledge of these areas. If yours is weak, take a course or study on your own before you begin the program.

Micro Economics

Basic Statistics

Calculus

Linear (Matrix) Algebra

- *Research*

- o *Research Assistantships*

Students taking courses should approach faculty for positions as Research Assistants. In the first year, you will be assigned two faculty members to work for as an RA and “owe” each one up to 5 hours per week work. Working as an RA is the best way to get started on research. Continue to take one to two research assistantships per semester.

Responsibilities of an RA may include (but are not limited to):

- library or computer work such as database searches, completion of citations in reference lists, getting books and articles
- preparing questionnaires and experimental stimuli and running experiments
- setting up data sets and analyzing data.
- developing analytical models or running numerical simulations

- o *Joint Research Projects*

As soon as possible, and definitely by the end of your first semester, work with professors whose research interests you share and try to initiate joint research projects. Ideally, papers based on these projects should be targeted at quality journals. Research started in your first or second year in the program, should lead you to graduate with one or two published papers, thus setting your research career off to a great start. This has become more of a requirement in the job market in recent years and the most successful PhD candidates have 2 or 3 completed papers by the end of their third year.

- *Faculty Advisors*

- *First Year*

This person will serve as your guide and counsel you on courses, research etc. When you enter, you will be assigned an advisor based on mutual interests. You are free to change your advisor should you find someone else closer to your research interests. The idea of an advisor is to prevent your drifting aimlessly through the program. Although you have one formal advisor, you should interact and work with multiple faculty members.

- *Subsequent Years*

You are also encouraged to find a faculty advisor in your second year who wants to work with you. This advisor may be different from your first year advisor. Working with different people helps to broaden your perspective. (You may work with the same advisor you had in the first year if you wish.)

- *Dissertation Advisor*

You should also be thinking of finding a dissertation advisor (known at Columbia as a sponsor) and some committee members some time in your second year to help you formulate a dissertation topic. A dissertation proposal should be completed by June of your third year in the program.

- *Seminars*

- *Attendance*

Attend every research seminar organized in the Marketing Department. These seminars are an incredible source of research ideas and provide you with a good idea of the diversity of research in marketing. A marketing camp is also held every summer and four speakers from other universities as well as one or two Columbia speakers present their research. The camp is a great learning experience.

- *Presentations*

Present papers at informal brown-bag lunches in the department. Initiate such meetings and try to get feedback on your research.

- *Professional Associations, Journals, and Conferences*

- *Associations*

There are many associations that academics in marketing choose to join. Some of these are The American Marketing Association (AMA), The Association for Consumer Research (ACR), The College on Marketing of INFORMS, and The Society for Consumer Psychology (SCP). Each of these associations sponsors conferences, publishes a newsletter, and is associated with the publication of one or more journals. Take advantage of the student membership rates and join one or more of them early to give you a feel for current events in marketing. Conference schedules, calls for papers, and competitions are announced in the newsletters.

You should also keep informed about the Marketing Science Institute, which circulates working papers and every two years establishes a set of research priorities for the field, and the N.Y. marketing modelers which meet each month.

o Journals

Keep up with the current literature by reading journals.

Marketing journals include the Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Consumer Psychology, Journal of Marketing, Marketing Science, and Marketing Letters. Management Science is a good general management journal. All these journals are published quarterly. It is a good idea to start subscribing to some journals early.

Other relevant journals include International Journal of Research in Marketing (IJRM), Journal of Retailing, Journal of Product Innovation Management, and the Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science (JAMS).

Also read journals in basic disciplines of your interest. Psychology related journals include the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Psychological Bulletin, Psychological Review, Social Cognition, Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Performance, Psykometrika, Journal of Mathematical Psychology, Journal of Economic Psychology, and Journal of Behavioral Decision Making. *Economics* journals include Econometrica and American Economic Review.

o Relevant Conferences

It is an excellent idea to attend some conferences as they introduce you to the state of the art in current research, help you monitor trends in marketing research, and often provide ideas for future research. They are especially useful if you present a paper at them (usually coauthored with a faculty member). The most relevant (depending on your interests) are:

- *Association for Consumer Research* conference: This is held in October and the

deadline for submissions is usually April 1. There are refereed proceedings, *Advances in Consumer Research*, in which presented papers and abstracts of special sessions are published. ACR also periodically holds international conferences, usually in June. A must for behavioral researchers in marketing.

- *Marketing Science* conference: This is sponsored by INFORMS College of Marketing and is usually held in March. Every third year or so Marketing Science is held abroad in the summer. Submissions are abstracts (not complete papers), usually due in November, and there are no proceedings. A must for quantitative researchers in marketing.

- *AMA Summer Educators* conference: This is held in August and is where the recruiting process for faculty positions begins. Submission deadline is in January and proceedings are published.

- *AMA Winter Educators* conference: Held in February, this is a less frenetic version of the Summer Educators conference. The deadline is in August and there are published proceedings.

- *Society for Consumer Psychology* conference: This is held immediately preceding the AMA Winter Educators conference in February. The deadline for submissions is the beginning of September. Proceedings are published in which presenters have the option of including their papers.

Many of these conferences have consortiums preceding them which are targeted at doctoral students. If you are planning to attend a conference, you should also try to attend these. The school will reimburse you for reasonable expenses according to the following criteria:

- maximum reimbursement of \$500 per student per fiscal year for conference attendance (not as a presenter). Additional funding available (up to the yearly maximum of \$1250) when presenting at a conference.
- receipts and documentation must be presented.

3. Program Requirements

- *Course work* (see Program of Study section also)

- o *Required Core Courses*

Three quantitative courses (probability, univariate statistics, multivariate statistics), one economics courses (micro), and one research methodology course are required courses for all PhD students in marketing. Students with appropriate background may substitute more advanced courses.

- o *Marketing seminars*

Four seminars (two quantitative, two behavioral) are required of all students and are offered every second year. The quantitative seminars include empirical as well as analytical modeling. The behavioral seminars include information processing as well as decision making. There is also a seminar offered each summer which you should attend. Several other seminars (e.g., Bayesian Analysis in Marketing; Experimental Design; Bridging Behavioral and Quantitative Research) are offered and are recommended for all PhD students.

- o *Courses in basic disciplines*

Additional courses should be taken in *basic disciplines*, usually outside the Business School, that provide the foundation for your research interests. These could be methodological or substantive courses.

- o *Number of courses*

Normally, students take four courses in each of the Fall and Spring semesters and two courses each summer for the first two years. Additional courses as needed are usually taken in year three, and to a lesser extent, year four.

- o *Specialized Courses (Electives)*

Most students tend to specialize in either behavioral or quantitative approaches to research. These students take different courses. Behavioral students are required to take Experimental Design and Quantitative students are required to take Econometrics or Game Theory. The rest come largely from the list that follows and are selected in consultation with faculty members.

- *Exams and Papers*

- *First year paper*

You are required to submit a *first year paper* at the end of your first summer (August 31st).

This paper usually includes a detailed *review* of the literature in an area of interest plus some analytical or empirical work. Work closely with your faculty advisor on this paper but you can discuss this paper with any of the faculty members and get feedback on your ideas. This paper can be an extension of a paper that you wrote for a course but should be substantially different from any course submissions. This paper should be submitted to the PhD committee and will be evaluated by a committee of faculty in Marketing. You will be asked to present it in September of your second year.

- *Field exams*

Timing and content. You will take your marketing field exam at the end of your second year in June. You should have no incomplete grades in any courses at this time.

The field exam is comprehensive and tests your substantive knowledge and methodological skills. It consists of both closed-book and open -book questions and in general is taken in parts over three days.

Day 1: Written Common. This portion of the exam is closed-book and consists of three to four general questions. These questions require broader knowledge than that provided in the courses. Focus on critical thinking and integration of the literature.

Day 2: Written Behavioral or Quantitative. This part of the exam is closed-book and is either behavioral or quantitative, depending upon your focus. The questions draw on the literature in the area and ask you to explain and extend the concepts learnt.

Day 3: Written Individual. This is a take-home, open-book section with one *special* question in your area of interest. This question requires a detailed understanding of the research in this area and ideas on possible extensions of this literature. You need to submit a short description of your chosen area at least one month before the field exam.

- *Dissertation proposal*

You should have a written and defended *dissertation proposal* by August 1st of your third year. This proposal should be submitted for the Marketing Science Institute dissertation proposal competition by July 31 of your third year.

o *Dissertation*

You should complete your dissertation by the end of your fourth year. If you choose to stay on for a fifth year, the time should be spent on generating papers and submitting them to journals, i.e. in effect be a post-doc.

o *Research Papers*

Ultimately what determines success in academia is publishing papers in leading journals. Your most important task is to learn how to do this and to actually do it. The process of learning to do this is basically an apprenticeship, i.e., learning from the faculty members you work with.

● **Sample Program of Study: Formal Courses**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Course</u>
1.	Fall	Research Methods Probability Micro Economics Core Marketing Seminar (6-weeks quantitative, 6-weeks consumer behavior)
1.	Spring	Univariate Statistics Core Marketing seminar (6-weeks behavioral, 6-weeks quantitative) Elective Elective
1.	Summer	Multivariate Statistics Pro-seminar in Marketing
2	Fall	Core Marketing seminar (6-weeks quantitative, 6-weeks consumer behavior) Elective Elective Elective
2.	Spring	Core Marketing seminar (6-weeks behavioral, 6-weeks quantitative) Elective Elective Elective
2.	Summer	(Pro-seminar in Marketing)
3.		2-3 More Electives

5. A Summary of Key Deadlines

Approximate Dates

Activity

First Year

End of first year (August 31)

First year paper

Second Year

One month before field exams
End of second year (June)

Submit a short description of your chosen area
Field exams

Third Year

End of third year (summer)
July 31

Defend dissertation proposal
Submit dissertation proposal to MSI competition

Fourth Year

End of fourth year (August)

Complete doctoral dissertation

Fifth Year (If needed)

Work on papers and submit them to journals

6. **Program Administration**

- *Doctoral Program in Marketing Committee*

A committee coordinates the PhD program in the Department. Annual activity reports, field exam arrangements, first and second year papers should be submitted to them. The current committee is **Asim Ansari (Co-chair), Gita Johar (Co-chair), Oded Koenigsberg, Ran Kivetz, Don Lehmann.**

- *Columbia Business School Doctoral Office*

The Doctoral office deals with questions you may have about financial aid, program requirements, and other administrative details such as applications for field exams, dissertation proposal defense etc.

7. **Progress Reports and Evaluation**

- *Annual Activity Report*

We have designed an *annual activity report* and an evaluation process to ensure that we provide you with timely feedback and guidance on all aspects of your progress. The following areas are included: course work, departmental exams and paper submissions, work as teaching and research assistant and progress on research projects. The report summarizes (a) your progress in the last year in the above three areas, (b) how that performance compares with your plan for that year, and (c) your plans for the next year in the same three areas.

You are required to submit a self assessment of your progress and plans to the Marketing PhD committee at the end of the Spring semester every year (May 1st). The department uses this to evaluate your progress and make suggestions to you.

8. The Academic Job Market

- In the summer following your third year in the program you should be ready to begin the process of looking for a job for the September starting a year later. At this point you should have defended your dissertation proposal and, hopefully, come close to completing it and submitted 1 – 2 papers for publication.

- AMA interviews

The process typically begins in June when the department starts to receive letters from schools that have faculty openings. By mid to late June you will send your vita and a letter of recommendation from your advisor to schools in which you have some interest and for which the faculty believe you are an appropriate job candidate. If the schools are interested, they will set up interviews at the AMA summer educators conference in August. Before AMA, you need to prepare a short presentation of your dissertation research, think of questions you may have for the schools, and hold mock interviews with our faculty. At AMA you will spend much of your time in hotel rooms being interviewed by faculty from other schools, for about 45 minutes each. This is an exhausting, but exciting and valuable process because you will meet many prominent researchers and get their reactions to your work.

- Campus interviews

When you get home from AMA you need to get back to work on your research while you wait for schools to call (usually after Labor Day) to invite you for campus interviews. These interviews are generally scheduled from late September through early December, but can continue on into the spring term, and involve one or two night stays. You will present your dissertation research, meet with faculty individually, and be taken out to eat. Sometimes you will be shown some of the local sights and a sampling of real estate. Job offers for the following September are made on the basis of these interviews, with initial offers made in late November or December.

9. AMA Doctoral Consortium

Each spring the Department selects *one* doctoral student to be sent to the annual American Marketing Association Doctoral Consortium, this is held on a college campus in June or July. At the consortium, students attend presentations by faculty from many universities on a variety of research topics as well as other issues, such as teaching and the publication process. Students have a chance to meet, talk to, and socialize with prominent researchers in marketing and some of the best students in doctoral programs from around the world. Attending the Doctoral Consortium is an honor reserved for outstanding students.

10. Selected Courses at Columbia University

Psychology

G4001	Cognition Pro-seminar
G4002	Learning Pro-seminar
G4003	Personality Pro-seminar
G4006	Social Psychology Pro-seminar
G4250	Psychology and the Computer
G4260	Special Topics in Cognitive Psychology
G4285	Psychological approaches to knowledge representation
G4450	Advanced seminar in learning and motivation
G4630	Advanced seminar in current personality theory and research
G4640	Advanced seminar in motivation
G4650	Seminar in the social psychology of communication
G4670	Theories in Social and Personality Psychology
G4680	Issues in research in motivation, personality, and development
G4275	Language, Communication and Cognition
G4680	Issues in Research in Motivation, Personality, and Development
G6006	Introduction to Mathematical Statistics
G4280	Probability in Human Reasoning
G9250	Measurement of Human Motivation
G9650	Theories and research in Social Science of Psychology

Sociology

G4324	Survey methods
G6110	Network analysis
G6227	Structural equation models
G9050	Frontiers in organization theory
G4103	Sociology of organizations

Economics

G2618	Advanced Microeconomic Analysis
G6423	Applied Econometrics
G6425-6426	Econometric Theory I and II
G6427	Topics in Econometrics
G6413	Advanced mathematical models for Economists
W3918	Seminar in Econometrics
W3922	Seminar in Public Economics
G4340	Developing Countries in World Economy
G4410	Mathematical Methods for Economists
G6225-6226	Topics in Economic Analysis
G6425	Econometric Theory

Statistics

G8261	Advanced Stochastic Processes
G8263	Stochastic Differential Equations and applications
W4327	Design of Experiments
W4437	Time Series Analysis
G8301	Statistical Decision Theory
G8303	Advanced Topics in Nonparametric Inference
G8305	Advanced Topics in Survival Analysis
G8307	Empirical Bayes methods in Estimation and Prediction
G8313	Stochastic approximation and adaptive inference
G8317	Longitudinal data analysis
G8321	Statistical inference for stochastic processes
G8327	Advanced topics in time series analysis
W4325	Generalized Linear Models
G6101	Statistical Modeling/Data Analysis
G8243	Advanced Probability Topics
G8271	Discreet Martingales
P8120	Analysis of Categorical Data

Industrial Engineering and Operations Research

E4500	Dynamic Programming
E4705	Studies in operations research
E6600	Linear Programming
E660 I	Large-scale linear programming
E6602	Nonlinear Programming
E6603	Combinatorial Optimization
E6605	Network Flows
E6608	Integer Programming
E6704	Queuing theory and applications
E6706	Queuing networks
E6710	Markovian Decision Processes
E680 I	Simulation
E3608	Mathematical Programming
E4004	Operations Research - Deterministic Modeling
W6408	Inventory Theory
W3658	Probability
W4606	Elementary Stochastic Processes

Philosophy

V3501	Theory of Knowledge
V3551	Philosophy of Science
BC3652	Philosophy of Mind

Teachers College

TM5123	Experimental Design
TJ 5540	Proseminar in Social Psychology
TK4029	Theories: Human Cognition and Learning
TK5096	Psychology of Memory
TK6520	Social Development
TK6523	Cognitive Development