

REGULATION FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION [DBA]

These regulations apply to students admitted to the curriculum of Doctor of Business Administration in the academic year 2023-2024 and thereafter.

(See also General Regulations)

Admission requirements

DBA1 To be eligible for admission to the degree of Doctor of Business Administration, candidates shall

- (a) comply with the General Regulations;
- (b) hold a master degree (or above), preferably in business and related field, of this University or another qualification of equivalent standard from this University or from another University or comparable institution accepted for this purpose;
- (c) possess at least twelve years of experience at managerial levels on top of prior experience in reaching management ranks; and
- (d) satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination, if required.

DBA2 Candidates who do not satisfy the requirements specified in DBA1 above may in exceptional circumstances be admitted subject to the approval of the Board of the Faculty of Business and Economics, if they have

- (a) demonstrated adequate preparation for studies at this level;
 - (b) demonstrated to the Admission Committee that they possess more than twelve years of exceptional business experience at senior management level;
 - (c) a professional qualification and membership of a professional body accepted for this purpose; and
 - (d) satisfied the examiner in a qualifying examination, if required.
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Registration

DBA3

Successful candidate shall in the first instance be granted provisional registration for the DBA degree, such registration to be confirmed only when successful candidates satisfy the requirements set out in regulation DBA10 below.

Award of degree

DBA4 To be eligible for the award of Doctor of Business Administration, candidates shall

- (a) Comply with the General Regulations; and
 - (b) Complete the curriculum and satisfy the examiners in accordance with the regulations set out below.
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Period of study

DBA5 The curriculum shall extend over a minimum of four academic years and a maximum of six academic years on a part-time basis. A period of study fewer than four academic years can be granted on exceptional cases if the candidate has fulfilled all the requirements to ensure the award of degree. Candidates who have been granted leave of absence under regulation DBA6 are also required to complete their study within the specified maximum period.

Leave of absence

DBA6 A candidate who wishes to be absent from the approved course of study or research shall be required to submit a written application for leave of absence. Study leave may be granted for the purposes of study outside the place where courses are delivered and non-study leave may be granted when a candidate is best advised for personal, health or other reasons to have time completely away from his/her academic responsibilities. Unless special circumstances warrant an exception, leave of absence under both categories shall not normally be granted for a cumulative period of more than twelve months for the entire period of study. Any period of leave granted shall be counted towards the period of study and any period of non-study leave granted shall result in the extension of the period of study by the period of absence.

Completion of curriculum

DBA7 To complete the curriculum, candidates shall

- (a) satisfy the examiners in the coursework for the degree as set out in the syllabuses;
- (b) complete, to the satisfaction of the examiners, a thesis as specified in regulation DBA12 below; and
- (c) satisfy the examiners at the oral examination.

Coursework requirements

DBA8 Candidates shall be required to take courses and satisfy the coursework requirements as prescribed in the syllabus. The approved course of study and research includes a compulsory coursework component with formal requirements relating to such coursework being determined, from time to time, by the Policy Board of Postgraduate Education. The coursework requirements must be fulfilled before the candidate is permitted to submit a thesis.

Supervision and progress report

DBA9

- (a) Candidates are required to be supervised directly by one or more supervisors appointed by the Program Supervision Committee, with the primary supervisor being a professoriate staff member;

- (b) Co-supervisors can be arranged from the profession where appropriate;
 - (c) Candidates are required to submit a progress report at six-monthly intervals.
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Probation and confirmation of candidature

DBA10

- (a) Candidates whose applications are accepted shall be subject to a probationary period, which shall not normally exceed 2 years on a part-time mode. By the end of the probationary period, candidates must have
 - (i) completed the required proportion of coursework prescribed in the curriculum; and
 - (ii) submitted a Research Proposal to the satisfaction of the Program Supervision Committee;
 - (b) At the end of the probationary period, a decision shall be made on whether the candidature shall be confirmed or terminated.
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Discontinuation

DBA11 A candidate may be discontinued

- (a) if academic progress is not satisfactory; or
 - (b) if the student has failed to meet the requirements as stipulated in this set of regulations.
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The thesis

DBA12

- (a) The thesis should be at least 40,000 words long (exclusive of tables of cases and statistics, notes and appendices containing material and bibliographies). The thesis topic shall be related to the broad field of business, economics and finance. The thesis must represent an original contribution to applied knowledge and/or the understanding of business or economic phenomenon, and contain material worthy of publication in quality applied outlets.
 - (b) Candidates shall serve written notice of intention to submit a thesis for examination at least 3 months prior to the expected date of submission. The notice shall be accompanied by a provisional thesis title.
 - (c) Candidates shall not be permitted to submit a thesis until all coursework requirements have been satisfied.
 - (d) Candidates shall be examined by the examiners appointed for this purpose on both the thesis itself and at the oral examination.
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Thesis examination results

DBA13

- (a) Candidates who have satisfied the examiners shall be recommended for conferment of the degree of Doctor of Business Administration.
- (b) Candidates who have not satisfied the examiners in the thesis component:
 - (i) may be required to submit the thesis after making corrections or amendments as required by the Board of Examiners, without a new examination; or

- (ii) may be required to revise and resubmit the thesis for a new examination within a specified period, and may also be required to satisfy the examiners at a new oral examination, or any other examination as appropriate, on the subject of the revised thesis; or
 - (iii) may be required to attend a new oral thesis defense, or any other examination as appropriate; or
 - (iv) may be deemed to have failed, without the option of resubmission.
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Coursework examination results

DBA14

- (a) Candidates shall satisfy the examiners in all prescribed courses as required in the syllabuses. Examination shall normally be held at the end of each course, unless otherwise specified.
 - (b) Coursework shall be assessed on a pass/fail basis.
 - (c) Candidates who have not satisfied the examiners in respect of the Coursework requirements at the first attempt shall normally be permitted to present themselves for re-examination in the same course or retake the course. Candidates may take another course to make up for the failed elective.
 - (d) Candidates who are unable because of their illness to be present for one or more papers in any written examination may apply for permission to present themselves at a supplementary examination to be held before the beginning of the following semester or academic year. Any such application shall be made in written format within two weeks of the first day the candidates' absence from the examination.
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Publication based on thesis

DBA15

Any publication based on work approved for a higher degree should contain a reference to the effect that the work was submitted to the University of Hong Kong for the award of the degree.

November 2016

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (DBA)

These syllabuses apply to candidates admitted to the Doctor of Business Administration in the academic year 2023-2024 and thereafter.

CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

Candidates must complete a total of 120 credits for the curriculum which comprises the following:

Twelve core courses as follows:

- DBAP7011 Political Economy and Economic Policy (3 credits)
- DBAP7012 Globalization, Financial Crisis and Chinese Economy (3 credits)
- DBAP7013 Advanced Financial Management (3 credits)
- DBAP7018 Advanced Microeconomics (3 credits)
- DBAP7019 Advanced Macroeconomics (3 credits)
- DBAP7021 Organizing Competitive Advantages (3 credits)
- DBAP7024 Leadership and Organization (3 credits)
- DBAP7025 Innovation and Entrepreneurship (3 credits)
- DBAP7031 Marketing in China and Global Market (3 credits)
- DBAP7032 Strategic Marketing Innovation and Model Design (3 credits)
- DBAP7033 Big Data and Business Analytics (3 credits)
- DBAP7036 Supply Chain and Logistics Management (3 credits)

Four elective courses (3 credits each) or DBAP 7044 International Enterprise Management (6 credits) plus two elective courses (3 credits each) and

All courses in the research and enrichment modules which comprises the following courses (72 credits in total):

- DBAP7046 Responsible Conduct of Research (3 credits)
- DBAP7047 Behavioral Research Methods (3 credits)
- DBAP7048 Research Methods in Finance, Economics and Accounting (3 credits)
- DBAP7017 Frontiers in Economics and Accounting Research (3 credits)
- DBAP7027 Frontiers in Management Research (3 credits)
- DBAP7037 Frontiers in Marketing and Business Analytics (3 credits)
- DBAP7045 DBA Thesis (54 credits)

Not all the courses listed in the syllabuses will necessarily be offered each academic year.

Core Courses

Candidates must complete a total of 36 credits from the below nine core courses:

DBAP7011 Political Economy and Economic Policy (3 credits)

- Political Economy Theories
- International Relations in the Post-Financial-Crisis Era

- Sino-U.S. Political Relations and the Global Economy
- Public Administration System and Financial Reforms in China

This course delivers a comprehensive picture about the fundamentals and patterns of political economy. It covers four related sub-topics, from underlying theoretical models to actual realization under different contexts. It sheds light on international relations in general and Sino-U.S. relation in particular, and discusses the implications that international relations may cast on the real economy and vice versa. Moreover, the course also evaluates the constitution and operating efficiency of public administration system of China in promoting financial reforms, which is of immense practical significance when China is undergoing a new phase of deepening reform.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7012 Globalization, Financial Crisis and Chinese Economy (3 credits)

- Development of Capital Market in China
- Global Financial Market
- Capital Market and Real Economy

This course introduces the history, structure and functionality of the capital markets of China and around the world. In the context of financial market globalization, the course will discuss the regulatory policies and institutional background of China capital market. It sheds particular light on the gradual transition of China towards a market-based financial system and configuration of government policies in face of the multi-layer capital market development. The course also extends beyond the capital market in China. As China is getting more and more integrated with the rest of the world, it is crucial to examine the overall development of financial market around the world and assesses its implications on the real economy.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7013 Advanced Financial Management (3 credits)

- Investment Decisions and Risk Management
- Cross-border M&As and Financing Strategies
- Economic Roles of Banks and Banking Regulation

This course covers advanced topics in corporate finance and investment. It introduces methods and criteria to assess potential investment opportunities, so as to create value for the firm while at the same time control risks arising from operation environment, policy uncertainty and market conditions. It also introduces strategic considerations during cross-border M&As, such as financing with syndicated loans. It also covers operation of banking sector, highlighting the role of banks in the economy. These topics are organized to address the challenges confronting corporate leaders in the increasingly competitive market, and they also echo the call for greater scrutiny and risk control in the aftermath of the financial crisis.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7018 Advanced Microeconomics (3 credits)

- Markets evaluations and predictions
- Competitive and strategic decision making

This course approaches microeconomics at advanced levels. It introduces analytical microeconomic concepts, models, and frameworks and emphasizes on their applications in managerial decision making. Topics covered include consumer decision theory, firm theory, market equilibrium, game theory, competition strategies, information economics, and political economy. It is designed to present ideas and techniques at a level of sophistication suitable for doctoral business students, aiming to help them conduct independent research and use economic way of thinking to analyze industry and business practices.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7019 Advanced Macroeconomics (3 credits)

This course gives students the background they need to understand the global economy and China's development. The key topics include long run economic growth, technological change, industry structural change, booms and recession, monetary and fiscal policy, and international linkages, inequality within country and between countries, sustainable development. At the end of the course, the students should be able to read and understand the discussions of macroeconomic issues in economic journals. The course also will introduce students to the latest research and prepare them to undertake research.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7021 Organizing Competitive Advantages (3 credits)

- Product Market Competition and Business Strategies
- Intellectual Property Rights Protection
- Production and Supply Chain Management

This course focuses on how to organize strategies for dealing with the competitive dynamics among rival firms. It highlights various ways of organizing production (make or buy in dealing with the supply of parts and components) and its impacts on the competitive advantages in the product markets (differentiation versus low-cost). Key issues to be covered: the role of the state in the economy and its impacts on business strategies; strategies for dealing with the imperfect intellectual property rights protection; technology for market dilemma; changing competitive landscape triggered by the learning-by-doing by the local partners; organizational design for strategic positioning; outsourcing versus in-house production; holdup risk and managing external suppliers; moral hazard and incentive schemes for resolving moral hazard; and hybrid organizational forms.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7024 Leadership and Organization (3 credits)

- Leader Personality
- Leadership Skills

This course deals with the study of what constitutes effective leadership in organizations. Different perspectives of leadership such as the dispositional, motivational and relational approach will be studied. Contemporary research on this topic will be examined. Topics include leader personality, transformational leadership, leader member exchange and leader empowerment.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7025 Innovation and Entrepreneurship (3 credits)

- Corporate Innovation
- Start-ups and Business Models
- Entrepreneurial Financing

This course aims to provide an overview of the innovation and entrepreneurship process by focusing on new venture creation from idea generation, building compelling business model and opportunity recognition to managing new business startup and dealing with the venture capitalists. Entrepreneurship is about business innovation, how to create new value in firms through new business concepts and models. Students will learn how to develop business models that create new value for customers in a startup venture and will also learn about the values, management, marketing, and financial skills that most often associated with successful innovative and entrepreneurial activities.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7031 Marketing in China and Global Market (3 credits)

- Global Marketing Market and Product Development
- Branding Strategy and Strategic Pricing

This course is designed to help students develop knowledge and analytical skills for addressing current issues relating to the design and implementation of effective marketing strategies in China and the global market. Selected topics include global market segmentation and targeting, consumption characteristics and socio-cultural complexities in China and global market, new product/innovation development, global branding strategy, strategic pricing, and global communication.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7032 Strategic Marketing Innovation and Model Design (3 credits)

- Marketing Innovation
- Marketing Models and Analytics

This course is designed to help students develop knowledge and analytical skills for addressing current issues relating to how integrating innovative thinking and redesigning marketing model affect the competitive dynamics of markets. Selected topics include global technological trends, innovations (incremental, breakthrough, disruptive, etc.) and firm performance, crowdsourcing, R&D and marketing interface, and marketing model redesign.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7033 Big Data and Business Analytics (3 credits)

- Business Analytics with Big Data
- Decision Making with Uncertainty

The course is designed to equip students with strategic understanding of big data and business analytics, and how they can help businesses to gain competitive advantages in the digital revolution. Selected topics include introduction to big data, introduction to business analytics,

data-driven decision making with uncertainty, and integration of business analytics/big data with business strategy and innovation.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7036 Supply Chain and Logistics Management (3 credits)

- Supply Chain Management
- Manufacturing Operation and Logistics Management

The course is designed to prepare students to apply business strategies, analytical methodologies and information technology in supply chain management. Traditionally industries have focused on operation evaluation and performance improvement of manufacturing process; however, the deficiency of supply chain coordination results in severe downgrade of business competitiveness. With advent of information technology, computers not only improve manufacturing operation and management, but also enhance strategic decision making as well. This course focuses on the systems approach to planning, analysis, design, development, and evaluation of supply chain management.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

Elective Courses

Candidates must complete a total of 12 credits from any four elective courses (3 credits each) or DBAP7044 (6 credits) plus two elective courses (3 credits each) from the below courses for elective studies:

DBAP7014 Global Accounting Standards and Practices (3 credits)

- Financial Accounting Principles
- International Accounting Standards and Financial Disclosure
- Accounting Control and Management Behavior

This course covers topics on both financial accounting and management accounting. The first two sub-sections essentially introduce the financial disclosure principles and standards under different financial reporting regimes. It will familiarize the students with similarities and differences of financial disclosure across countries, which is of particular interest for the students with the plans to engage in cross-border mergers and acquisitions or to go public in an overseas stock exchange. The third sub-section emphasize the execution of management strategies. Students will learn about the various mechanisms that can be used, including performance measurement systems and balanced scorecards. These strategies will enable the students to more efficiently allocate resources among firms and within a firm, to incentivize and monitor the managers, as well as to ensure the integrity of the employees, eventually cultivating healthy and productive corporate culture.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7015 Global Financial Innovation (3 credits)

- Financial Derivatives and Alternative Investment
- Financial Innovation and Supervision

This course offers a general introduction to derivative products and alternative investment

channels, together with the request for supervision from related authorities. On one hand, there are significant benefits coming along the process of financial innovation. This course will cover the basics of different types of financial derivatives (e.g. futures, options, swaps and structured products) and alternative investment niches (e.g. hedge fund, commodities and distressed assets), and will also focus the concepts of hedging and arbitrage from the angles of trading strategies and pricing foundations. On the other hand, although financial innovations become increasingly prevalent in the recent decades, they are subject to opaque operating environment and loose regulatory disciplines, to some extent leads to the recent financial crisis. Therefore, the course also highlights the necessity of regulations and supervision in this field.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7016 Global Wealth Management (3 credits)

- Private Banking
- Private Equity and Value Investment

This course examines the fundamentals of private banking and asset management. Topics include the market segmentation and key drivers of the industry, different business models employed by major market players, basic allocation and wealth planning as well as a variety of asset management products and services. As one of the key channels of asset management is to invest the money into private equity funds, the course also provides a practical understanding of the deal structuring, valuation techniques, post-investment management and exit options of the private equity funds, enabling the students to develop a concrete concept and a systematic framework of value investment.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7111 Advanced Finance Theory (3 credits)

- Key paradigms in finance
- Empirical methods in finance research with China-specific examples
- Major topics in Chinese finance

This purpose of this course is to help participants develop a deep understanding of the current corporate finance in China (e.g., its origin, common practices, pitfalls, prospects, etc.) through a research-oriented approach; understand key paradigms (e.g., Efficient Market Hypothesis, MM Theorem, CAPM, etc.) in finance and enable participants to apply these paradigms to real financial research. It also analyses major topics in Chinese finance, such as assessing good finance and bad finance; how to promote more efficient financial intermediation in China; build-up REITs and local government finance.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7022 Strategic Management (3 credits)

- Market Analysis and Strategies Formation
- Strategic Thinking and Business Judgement

The course aims to address this pivotal issue by focusing on formulating and implementing business strategies. Successful strategic management requires a detailed understanding of the overall environment surrounding a firm as well as the ability to create value to serve customers

in the face of competition. The course will focus on the analytical and managerial tasks involved in developing strategies that create value by satisfying customer demand in an ever-changing competitive landscape. It will also attempt to help students improve their strategic thinking and all-around business judgment.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7023 Organizational Behavior (3 credits)

- Human Behavior in Corporations
- Corporate Culture

This course deals with the study of human behavior in organizations. Both internal factors such as personal characteristics and situational factors such as organizational characteristics that affect human behavior in organizations will be considered. Contemporary research on this topic will be examined. Topics include personality, work motivation, group dynamics, leadership, and organizational culture.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7026 Strategic Human Resource Management (3 credits)

This course adopts a strategic perspective on human resource management. It focuses on designing the systems and processes that attract, utilize, reward, and develop human resources for the achievement of organizational goals. The course enables students to obtain a thorough understanding of the current research in Strategic Human Resource Management and to develop the skills and expertise necessary to evaluate, criticize, and contribute to the research areas of Strategic Human Resource Management.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7028 Business Creation and Dynamics (3 credits)

Business creation is both an exciting and a big topic. This course aims to provide an overview of business creation processes by focusing on the dynamics of how the sequence in which multi-dimensional actions can be effectively enacted so as to more likely achieve positive outcomes. Creating businesses have now become very complex. Students will learn to appreciate and build up business concepts, people, structures, pricing, selling, finance and operations capacities which enable the successful business creation processes.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7034 Strategic Information System Management (3 credits)

- Information Technologies Management
- Information Strategies Design

This course is designed to help students develop knowledge and analytical skills for addressing current issues relating to managing information technologies and designing effective information strategies in an organization. Selected topics include information strategy for organizational agility and sustainability, strategic information management in marketing, operations, etc., managing of e-commerce, and challenges in knowledge management.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7035 Services Marketing and Management (3 credits)

- Customer Service Management
- Service Pricing
- Customer Satisfaction

This course is designed to help students develop knowledge and analytical skills for addressing current issues relating to achieving service excellence in an organization. Selected topics include understanding and managing customer service expectations and evaluations, service innovation and design, integrated service strategy, customer participation and value co-creation, pricing of services, managing customer complaints and service recovery, and customer satisfaction and delight.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7044 International Enterprise Management (6 credits)

This course aims to cultivate the global vision and integrated skills of the students, and promote knowledge and culture exchange between the students and the faculty in other leading business schools. This course is featured with intensive cross-cultural elements. It incorporates theories and practices in international financial management and strategic management in a comparative approach. Specifically, it requires the students to conduct case analysis on the representative enterprises at home and abroad, compare their corporate policies, management styles and performance outcomes, and produce a comprehensive case report. Students who elect to complete this course are required to complete a 3-credit course only for elective study.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7049 Advanced Research Methods (3 credits)

This course introduces advanced methods in modern research, with illustrative applications and discussions of academic papers recently published at top journals that utilize such research methods. As there is a rapidly rising trend of conducting research using machine learning based methodology in both theoretical and empirical research in business related fields, this course seriously covers a set of major ML concepts and methods.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7051 China Financial Innovation and Economic Reform (3 credits)

- China's national development strategies and economic reform
- China REITs market innovation

This course introduces the great changes all over the world and China's national development strategies and economic reform in the New Era. It enables learners to understand the international and domestic environment, and China's national strategy and development map. As for the Financial innovation part, it mainly introduces the REITs market in China and globally, which enables learners to understand the history, the financing function, the investment function etc., and the global experience of REITs.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7052 Global Economy and Capital Market (3 credits)

This course introduces the analytical framework of short-term macroeconomic fluctuations, with a special focus on China's economic policy-making rationale, macro data analysis, and interpretation of China's economic policy practices.

Macroeconomic policies affect the decisions of each individual. In order for us to make decisions optimally, we should be able to understand how the macro economy and macroeconomic policies work. In this course, we teach students fundamental macroeconomic theories and analytical tools and use them to understand China's practices in the past decade. We will focus on the following 4 aspects: 1) China's short-term macro data; 2) China's macroeconomic policy tools; 3) the rationales of using these policy tools in China and the implications to business and individuals; 4) the impacts of China's policy choices on global economy and geopolitical situations.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

Research and Enrichment Modules

Candidates must complete a total of 18 credits from below research and enrichment modules and complete the thesis component in 54 credits:

DBAP7046 Responsible Conduct of Research (3 credits)

The purpose of this course is to reinforce the importance that The University of Hong Kong places on the preservation of these values in all research conducted at the university. In this course, students will learn essential vocabulary, principles, and practices conducive to the promotion of research integrity in general and in their relevant disciplines. Students can expect to encounter terminology, texts, and tenets that relate to good conduct in the teaching and research professions.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7047 Behavioral Research Methods (3 credits)

This course focuses on qualitative research methods, introducing definition, techniques and applicable scope of the method. It will extend the research capacity of the students from describing and summarizing basic facts and patterns to investigating why and how of decision making, not just what, where and when.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7048 Research Methods in Finance, Economics and Accounting (3 credits)

This course focuses on quantitative research methods, introducing definition, techniques and applicable scope of the method. It will cover mathematical modelling, statistical analysis and statistical tools (e.g. Stata, SAS and VBA).

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7017 Frontiers in Economics and Accounting Research (3 credits)

This course introduces cutting-edge research topics and methodology in the field of economics and finance.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7027 Frontiers in Management Research (3 credits)

This course introduces cutting-edge research topics and methodology in the field of management and strategy.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7037 Frontiers in Marketing and Business Analytics Research (3 credits)

This course introduces cutting-edge research topics and methodology in the field of marketing and business analytics.

(Assessment: 100% coursework)

DBAP7045 DBA Thesis (54 credits)

- Research Proposal (3 credits)
- Preliminary Defense (3 credits)
- Thesis Defense (oral examination) (48 credits)

This course consists of three subsections. Research proposal marks the start of research project, which shall commence after the students have demonstrated their knowledge foundation through the coursework. Preliminary defense enables the students to receive comments and suggestions from the thesis committee on the preliminary draft of the thesis. Thesis defense (oral examination) is an overall assessment of the coursework and research capability of the students. It requires the students to present their research outcome to the thesis committee and defend for it.