



Georgian American University, LLC

**The Regulatory Statement of Doctoral and
Dissertation Council of the Business School**

Contents

Chapter I: General Regulations	3
Article 1. Regulatory sphere	3
Article 2. The Aim of the Doctoral Degree Program / Doctorate	3
Chapter 2.: Doctoral Degree Program	3
Article 3. The Right to Study in a Doctoral Degree Program	3
Article 4. Prerequisites for enrolling in a doctoral degree program	3
Article 5. The provisional field committee and selection interview	4
Article 6. Enrollment in the doctoral degree program	4
Article 7. Terminating the status of a doctoral student	4
Chapter 3: The Dissertation Council of the Business School	5
Article 8. Membership and functions of the dissertation council of the Business School	5
Article 9. The Chairperson of the Dissertation Council of the Business School	5
Article 10. The Secretary of the Dissertation Council of the Business School	6
Article 11. The working regulations of the Dissertation Council of the Business School	6
Chapter IV. The Doctoral Program	6
Article 12. Planning, elaboration, discussion and approval of the doctoral program	6
Article 13. The volume of the doctoral program	7
Article 14. A study component of the doctoral program	7
Article 15. Scientific-research component of the doctoral program	7
Article 16. A free component of the doctoral program	7
Article 17. Head of Doctoral Program	8
Article 18. Individual study and research plans of a doctoral student	8
Chapter V. : Academic supervisor / advisor of a doctoral student	8
Article 19. Academic supervisor / advisor of a doctoral student	8
Article 20. Changing an academic supervisor / advisor and a dissertation topic	9
Chapter VI. : Presentation and defense of dissertation	9
Article 21. Dissertation	9
Article 22. Additional requirements for presenting dissertation	10
Article 23. Presenting / submitting the dissertation	10
Article 24. Preliminary evaluation of the dissertation	10
Article 25. Dissertation committee	11
Article 26. Defense of dissertation	12
Article 27. Conferring the academic degree of a doctor	13
Article 28. Cancellation of the academic degree of a doctor	13

Chapter I: General Regulations

Article 1. Regulatory sphere

The following regulatory statement defines the regulations of administering doctoral program and conferring the academic degree of a doctor at the Business School of Georgian American University, LLC. It also sets forth the main principles of the operation of dissertation council in accordance with the Law of Georgia on “Higher Education”, in accordance with other normative acts and with university regulations.

Article 2. The Aim of the Doctoral Degree Program / Doctorate

The aim of the doctoral degree program / doctorate – the tertiary level of higher academic education – is the intellectual growth of a doctoral student, bringing together academic and research resources, the activation of doctoral activity in the country and quality enhancement, inclusion of the student in the international academic and scientific world, fostering new knowledge production and establishment.

Chapter 2.: Doctoral Degree Program

Article 3. The Right to Study in a Doctoral Degree Program

1. A person holding a Master’s degree or equivalent has the right to study in a doctoral degree program of the Business School.
2. The right to study in a doctoral degree program may be given to the graduate of a foreign higher education institution in accordance with the legislation of Georgia.

Article 4. Prerequisites for enrolling in a doctoral degree program

1. The application acceptance to the doctoral degree program at the Business School of Georgian American University can be announced twice a year – for fall and spring semesters.
2. The applicant must submit the motivation letter addressed to the chairperson of the dissertation council of the Business School in accordance with the research topics announced in advance. The following documents must be attached to the motivation letter:
 - Data on education and work experience (CV);
 - Officially notary-certified copies of a master’s degree or equivalent-degree diploma and diploma-attachment / transcript of grades. (If a diploma or transcript of grades are issued by Georgian American University, LLC, the official certification of copies is not mandatory).
 - ID document and its copy;
 - 2 photos, sized 3/4

- A certified copy of a foreign language proficiency-level certificate, in case of having such;
- Military service conscription document or its copy, military service document and its copy (for those entitled to military service);
- Research statement (minimum 2000 words).

3. The applicant to doctoral degree program is required to have at least “B2” (in case of English language program “C1”) level proficiency of the English Language, which is proved through testing. A person who has a relevant-level valid international language certificate and/or has proof of studying for at least one semester in their undergraduate, graduate or post-graduate degree in English, is exempt from testing.

4. Testing will be organized by the administration of the Business School.

5. A recommendation from the provisional field committee and a prospective supervisor’s approval are mandatory for being enrolled on a doctoral degree program.

Article 5. The provisional field committee and selection interview

1. An applicant who meets the prerequisites for the doctoral degree program admission is invited to the interview with the provisional field committee.

2. The provisional field committee is set up at the recommendation of the chairperson of the dissertation council of the School based on the order of the Dean of the School and is made up of 5 members. The committee consists of a professor and / or an associate professor of the dissertation council of the School.

3. A prospective supervisor must attend the provisional field committee session and an interview with the applicant.

4. A person will gain acceptance to doctoral degree course of the Business School upon the approval from the supervisor and upon the majority support at the open ballot of the attending members of the provisional field committee.

Article 6. Enrollment in the doctoral degree program

1. A person is enrolled in the doctoral degree program in the case of successful outcome of the interview at the recommendation of the provisional field committee and the Dean of the School and based on the university president’s order.

2. Within one month after the enrollment in the doctoral degree program, the University, a doctoral student and an academic supervisor sign an agreement which defines the rights and obligations of the parties.

Article 7. Terminating the status of a doctoral student

1. Upon the decision of the dissertation council, based on the university president’s order the status of a doctoral student may be terminated:

- a. in the case of plagiarism or data falsification;

- b. in the case of student's inability to accomplish study or research component of the program within the timeframe as defined by the present regulatory statement;
 - c. in the case of non-fulfillment of the conditions of the contract signed with the University;
 - d. In the cases defined by the legislation.
2. Dissertation council shall consider the termination of the status of a doctoral student at its own initiative, on the basis of the mediation of the academic supervisor or the Dean of the School.

Chapter 3: The Dissertation Council of the Business School

Article 8. Membership and functions of the dissertation council of the Business School

1. The dissertation council of the Business School is a doctoral degree-granting body.
2. The dissertation council of the Business School is made up of all professors and associate professors of the School.
3. By the decision of the dissertation council, any person holding a doctoral degree may become its member.
4. The dissertation council of the Business School:
 - a. discusses the doctoral program of the School;
 - b. makes a decision regarding the termination of the status of a doctoral student;
 - c. decides the advisability of continuation of studies by a doctoral student;
 - d. makes decisions on approving and announcing the research topics;
 - e. makes decisions on changing the dissertation topic of a doctoral student;
 - f. makes decisions on changing the academic supervisor of a doctoral student;
 - g. Within the framework of its legal rights, makes decisions on withholding the doctoral degree from a student in the case of violating academic honesty or integrity;
 - h. Carries out other rights and obligations as defined by the university regulations, by academic council regulations and by the present regulations.

Article 9. The Chairperson of the Dissertation Council of the Business School

1. A Chairperson heads the Dissertation Council of the Business School.
2. A chairperson is selected by the dissertation council from its members for the duration of 5 years by secret ballot at the first meeting of the council which is led by the Dean of the School.
3. A group of 4 members of the dissertation council has the right to nominate a chairperson at the preliminary consent of the candidate.
4. A chairperson of the dissertation council:
 - a. Leads the activities of the dissertation council;
 - b. In the case of necessity, convenes and chairs the session of the dissertation council;
 - c. Organizes the defense of the thematic seminar;
 - d. Makes a decision on the appointment of evaluators;
 - e. Prepares a recommendation on terminating the status of a doctoral student;
 - f. Elaborates a recommendation on the advisability of continuing studies by a doctoral student;

- g. Approves the dissertation defense date;
- h. Defines the membership of the dissertation council;
- i. Presents an annual report to the council on the work accomplished and on future activities;
- j. Carries out other responsibilities as defined by the present regulatory statement.

Article 10. The Secretary of the Dissertation Council of the Business School

- 1. An organizational operation of the dissertation council is carried out by its secretary.
- 2. A dissertation council elects the secretary for 5-year period at the recommendation of the chairperson by the majority of votes in the secret ballot.
- 3. A secretary of the dissertation council:
 - a. Keeps records of the dissertation council sessions;
 - b. Assists the chairperson in organizational matters of the dissertation council;
 - c. Registers doctoral student's documents;
 - d. Consults a doctoral student on the preparation of the required documents and familiarizes him with the rules and regulations of the University;
 - e. Keeps the documents of the dissertation council in the archive and manages the council archives.

Article 11. The working regulations of the Dissertation Council of the Business School

- 1. The sessions of the Dissertation Council of the Business School are held according to necessity, and at least twice a year.
- 2. The sessions are convened by a chairperson at his / her own initiative, or at the proposal of the Dean of the School, of the head of the doctoral program or of at least three members of the dissertation council.
- 3. The dissertation council is legally authorized to act if more than fifty percent of listed participants attend the session.
- 4. The decision of the dissertation council is accepted if it receives the majority votes.
- 5. Any decisions made by the dissertation council are reported in official proceeding minutes which are signed by a chairperson and a secretary of the dissertation council.
- 6. In case of secretary's absence at the session of the dissertation council, a chairperson is legally entitled to authorize any member of the council to act as a secretary.

Chapter IV. The Doctoral Program

Article 12. Planning, elaboration, discussion and approval of the doctoral program

- 1. For the purposes of planning, elaboration and development of the doctoral program, the Dean of the School sets up the committee and appoints the head / heads / coordinator of the program for the accreditation period of the program.

2. The committee shall present the prepared doctoral program to the School Board and to the quality assurance office for evaluation only after having considered the program thoroughly within the framework of the dissertation council. Upon the decision of the School Board and in the case of positive evaluation given by the quality assurance office, the program shall be presented to the academic council of the University for approval.
3. The amendments to the approved education program are made in accordance with the regulations set for the approval of the program.

Article 13. The volume of the doctoral program

1. The duration of the doctoral program is not less than 3 years.
2. The doctoral program consists of study (electives among others) and scientific/research components, out of which study program includes no more than 60 credits.
3. If a doctoral student has not completed the study and research components of the program within the timeframe of six semesters after his/her enrollment in the doctoral program, academic supervisor / advisor of the student appeals to the dissertation council of the School regarding the advisability of extending study/research process by providing documented justification.
4. In case of positive decision of the dissertation council on the appeal of the academic supervisor on the extension of the doctoral study, a doctoral student is required to complete the doctoral studies within the time frame set by the dissertation council.

Article 14. A study component of the doctoral program

1. A study component of the doctoral program aims at helping a student to master his / her skills in the respective field and in methodology, assists a student in the preparation process of the scientific work and prepares him/her for future teaching and scientific activities.
2. The study component of the doctoral program is divided into mandatory and elective parts.
3. The mandatory and elective elements are defined by the doctoral program.

Article 15. Scientific-research component of the doctoral program

1. The aim of the scientific-research component of the doctoral program is to help a student develop and master scientific-research skills.
2. A mandatory scientific-research component of the doctoral program is the scientific work the fulfillment of which is verified by its presentation and defense.
3. The assessment methods and criteria of the dissertation are defined by the respective doctoral program.

Article 16. A free component of the doctoral program

The doctoral program also contains a free component, which is accumulated by a doctoral student in place of an elective study component at the Business School or from any other equal-level academic program at Georgian American University; or through any accredited equal-level academic programs of other higher education institutions of Georgia; or through equivalent academic programs at foreign universities, in the case of approval of the accumulated credits according to the Georgian legislature.

Article17. Head of Doctoral Program

1. The doctoral program is led by a professor or associate professor at the Business School.
2. The doctoral program may have the second head/coordinator.
3. The second head/coordinator of the doctoral program may be an invited person who has a relevant academic degree and qualification in the respective field.
4. The head of the doctoral program:
 - a. coordinates the process of preparation / amendment of the existent program;
 - b. facilitates the participation of the interested parties in the preparation/operation of the program;
 - c. coordinates the activities of the academic and invited staff involved in the operation of the program;
 - d. carries out a systematic analysis of the operation of the education program and of the components of the program, and reports the results to the School Board and to the quality assurance office;
 - e. Provides the information about the program and its components and consults the students and other interested persons;
 - f. Settles the organizational issues connected with the operation of the program.
5. The head of the doctoral program is the main contact person with quality assurance office of the School and of the University, who is informed regarding the results of the internal and external evaluation of the program, of technical monitoring and of the results of academic expertise and is entitled to take actions for the purposes of program improvement.
6. The head of the doctoral program is accountable to the School Board and to the Dissertation Council.

Article18. Individual study and research plans of a doctoral student

1. Within one month of enrollment in a doctoral program, a doctoral student drafts individual study and research plans in agreement with the academic supervisor.
2. The School administration notifies in a written form the dissertation council about the completion of studies by a student and submits his/her transcript of grades.
3. The individual research plan of a doctoral student should outline the aims of the research, the structure of the dissertation and a provisional timeframe of research completion.

Chapter V. : Academic supervisor / advisor of a doctoral student

Article 19. Academic supervisor / advisor of a doctoral student

1. An academic supervisor / advisor of a doctoral student may be a member of the School Dissertation Council professor, associate professor or any other person approved by the Dissertation council holding a doctoral degree and research experience in the field of the dissertation.
2. An academic supervisor / advisor of a doctoral student:
 - a. Monitors the fulfillment of the study component by a doctoral student;

b. Provides consultation to a doctoral student on the completion of the research component. For this purpose, the advisor holds regular meetings on the following important issues:

- Drafting an individual research plan;
- Searching relevant literature and databases;
- Selecting the methodology design;
- Appropriate planning and writing up of a dissertation;
- Participating in local and international scientific activities and reporting the results;
- Integrating in the local and international scientific network;
- Publishing scientific articles in refereed journals;

c. Conducts a periodic evaluation of a doctoral student's progress.

3. A doctoral student may have more than one academic supervisor / advisor;

4. The number of doctoral students assigned to an academic supervisor / advisor depends on his / her teaching and research workload.

Article 20. Changing an academic supervisor / advisor and a dissertation topic

1. An academic supervisor / advisor can be changed in the beginning of a semester at the validated request of a doctoral student;
2. An academic supervisor / advisor can be changed at the validated request of an supervisor / advisor;
3. In the case of changing an academic supervisor / advisor, a dissertation topic may remain unchanged upon the agreement between previous and new supervisors;
4. A dissertation title / topic may be changed in the beginning of a semester based on the validated justification by a doctoral student and a supervisor.

Chapter VI. : Presentation and defense of dissertation

Article 21. Dissertation

1. A dissertation should present the result of scientific-research work conducted independently by a doctoral student. A dissertation should reflect the validated results of theoretical and / or experimental research, should contain scientific novelty and should contribute to the development of the scientific field.
2. As a rule, a dissertation is written in the Georgian language. The permission to write the dissertation in the English language is granted by the dissertation council of the Business School. The dissertation on the English language program is written in English.
3. In the case of writing a dissertation in the English language, the main results of the dissertation research are to be presented in the Georgian language.
4. The architectonic of a dissertation is defined by the doctoral program.

Article 22. Additional requirements for presenting dissertation

1. A doctoral student is admitted to the public defense of the dissertation, if he / she has produced a published article relevant to the dissertation topic in a peer-reviewed journal with an impact factor; or if the article has been accepted for publication in a peer reviewed journal with an impact factor; or has been published or accepted in a peer reviewed electronic or printed journal, or has been published / accepted in a foreign peer reviewed journal of relevant field and with international circulation, or has been published / accepted in the proceedings of an international scientific conference.
2. International review of the entire dissertation or of its abridged version (30-60 pages) is the equivalent to the requirement outlined in the first section of the following article.
3. In order to allow a doctoral student to the public defense of the dissertation, the decision of the School Dean and / or the conclusion of the evaluation committee of the school scientific / research paper are required in accordance with the “ The rule of checking for the existence of plagiarism of the executed work at the university”.

Article 23. Presenting / submitting the dissertation

1. The text of the dissertation must be submitted to dissertation council of the Business School in four printed and bound copies and in an electronic copy for uploading it to the university website.
2. To be admitted to the dissertation defense, a doctoral student must submit the following documents to the dissertation council:
 - A document verifying the fulfillment of the study component as defined by the study plan;
 - A report on the individual research carried out during at least three semesters before the defense, as defined by the individual research plan and approved by an academic supervisor. The above-mentioned requirement will start to apply from the 2020 spring semester;
 - A written conclusion produced by an academic supervisor / advisor (or co-advisor), stating that he/she has read the dissertation and considers it to be ready for presenting at the public defense;
 - A document verifying the fulfillment of the requirement stated in the Article 22 of the present regulation.

Article 24. Preliminary evaluation of the dissertation

1. Within 10 days after the submission of the dissertation, the head of the dissertation council makes a decision regarding assigning two evaluators (reviewers) for the dissertation.
2. One evaluator of the dissertation must be a professor or an associate professor at the Business School, and another professor must be an external evaluator (outside university) holding a doctoral or equivalent degree in the relevant field. Exceptions to the above-mentioned rule will be allowed in special cases based on the decision of the Dissertation Council of the Business School.
3. Evaluators (reviewers) shall present their reviews of the dissertation to the dissertation council within two months after being handed the dissertation.
4. Evaluators (reviewers) assess a dissertation topic according to the following criteria:
 - Significance (topicality) of the dissertation topic;

- Evaluation of the used research methods;
- Significance and implications of the received scientific results;
- Cited and used scientific literature and sources;
- Quality of writing and organizational structure of the dissertation; etc.

5. Evaluators (reviewers) make decisions regarding the acceptability / unacceptability of presenting the dissertation for public defense;

6. If one evaluator (reviewer) decides against the public defense of the dissertation, the dissertation council appoints a third evaluator (reviewer) who is given one month to produce his/her evaluation of the dissertation.

7. If the third evaluator decides against the public defense of the dissertation, the dissertation will not be allowed to the public defense.

8. In the case of not allowing the dissertation to the public defense, the dissertation council decides to give the doctoral student extra time to work on the dissertation for no longer than one year. In the case of failure to present the revised dissertation within the set timeframe, the status of the doctoral student will be terminated.

9. By the decision of the head of the dissertation council, a revised dissertation will be handed to the same or new evaluators (reviewers). If the revised dissertation receives negative evaluation from one evaluator, the dissertation will not be allowed for public defense and the status of the doctoral student will be terminated.

10. The head of the dissertation council must notify the doctoral student about the decision of the evaluator (reviewer) in a written form. A doctoral student is informed about the evaluations of the dissertation.

Article 25. Dissertation committee

1. In the case of allowing the dissertation to the public defense, the head of the dissertation council sets up a dissertation committee within two weeks.

2. A dissertation committee is made up of the minimum of five members from the scientific field relevant to the dissertation topic.

3. A member of the dissertation committee maybe a professor or an associate professor at the Business School, as well as an external person holding a doctoral or equivalent degree in the relevant field. Dissertation evaluators (reviewers) are also the members of the dissertation committee.

4. The head of the dissertation committee must be a professor or an associate professor at the Business School, who is not an evaluator (reviewer).

5. Within one week after setting up the dissertation committee, the secretary of the dissertation council hands the dissertation and its reviews (evaluations) to the committee members.

6. The dissertation committee sets the date for the defense;

7. Minimum one month ahead of the defense, the secretary of the dissertation council notifies the doctoral student about the members of the dissertation committee, about the date and place of defense, and negotiates with him/her the possibility of wider public attendance and the permissible number of attendees.

Article 26. Defense of dissertation

1. Dissertation defense is open to public. The information about the defense shall be posted on the university website two weeks' prior to the defense date.
2. The language of the defense is Georgian, however, different conditions may be considered and set by the decision of the dissertation council.
3. The dissertation committee is authorized for public defense if $\frac{3}{4}$ of its listed members are present.
4. If one of the evaluators (reviewers) cannot attend the defense for excusable reasons, the head of the dissertation committee reads his/her evaluation statement fully.
5. If the academic supervisor / advisor cannot attend the defense for excusable reasons, he/she notifies the committee about it in a written form and sends the committee members a personal character reference of the doctoral student.
6. If a doctoral student cannot be present at the defense for excusable reasons or the necessary quorum of the committee has not been able to gather, the dissertation council decides on setting a new date for defense in the same semester.
7. At the defense session of the dissertation committee, the head of the committee announces the name of the doctoral student, the topic of the dissertation, the names of the academic supervisor / advisor and evaluators (reviewers), outlines the procedures of defense and presents a short biography of the doctoral student.
8. The defense procedure of the dissertation involves the presentation of the topic, scientific debates and the conclusion of the committee.
9. On behalf of the doctoral student, the presentation of the topic involves the following major components: presentation of the topic, clear demonstration of its scientific novelty and of research results. The duration of presentation is negotiated in advance with the committee and lasts from 20 to 40 minutes. The doctoral student uses visual illustrative aids during the presentation.
10. The presentation of the topic is followed by scientific debates, which can last no more than 90 minutes. The doctoral student answers the questions of the committee members, as well as of the public. The evaluators (reviewers) present their assessments to the committee and to the wider public. The doctoral student is required to respond to their comments. The committee defines the process and order of scientific debates
11. After the completion of the scientific debates, a doctoral student is given no more than 15 minutes to make concluding remarks.
12. The dissertation committee makes a decision at the closed meeting. The members of the committee give a confidential assessment to the dissertation on a 100-point scale system, whereupon the average of total points is calculated (the sum of the received points is divided by the number of the committee members).
13. The evaluation of the dissertation topic is carried out by the following assessment system:
 - a) Excellent (summa cum laude)- an excellent piece of work - 91-100 points;
 - b) Very good (magna cum laude) – the result which exceeds the set requirements in all respects -81-90 points out of maximum;
 - c) Good (cum laude) - the result which exceeds the set requirements - 71-80 points out of maximum;
 - d) Average (bene) – the work of average level, which meets the major set requirements - 61-70 points out of maximum;

- e) Satisfactory (rite) – the result, which still meets the set requirements despite certain faults - 51-60 points out of maximum;
- f) Unsatisfactory (insufficient) – unsatisfactory-level piece of work, which does not meet the set requirements owing to the serious faults and lapses - 41-50 points out of maximum;
- g) Totally unsatisfactory - (sub omni canone) – the result, which does not meet the set requirements at all - 40 points and less.

14. If the student receives a positive assessment, the doctoral degree is conferred upon him/her.

15. In the case of receiving unsatisfactory assessment (insufficient), the doctoral student is given an additional time within one-year period to present a fully revised dissertation.

16. In the case of receiving the assessment of totally unsatisfactory - (sub omni canone) the doctoral student is not permitted to present the same dissertation.

17. The head of the dissertation committee announces the decision of the committee publicly. The decision of the dissertation committee may not be appealed.

18. An official record of the entire process of dissertation defense, and its results, is drafted and is signed by all the members of the committee.

19. The dissertation is posted on the university website.

Article 27. Conferring the academic degree of a doctor

1. If a doctoral student receives a positive evaluation, the dissertation council of the Business School confers an academic degree of a doctor upon him / her. The formulation of the academic degree follows a uniform principle: the name of the specified field in the possessive case and the word *Doctor*.

2. In the case of an academic degree conferral, a student is issued a proof document – a diploma.

3. A diploma is signed by the Dean of the School and by the University president.

Article 28. Cancellation of the academic degree of a doctor

1. Within the framework of its authority, the dissertation council is obliged to cancel the conferred academic degree of a doctor in the case of detecting the violation of norms of academic honesty and integrity.

2. If the instances of plagiarism or the usage of fraudulent dissertation documents by the doctoral candidate are identified after the dissertation defense or after the conferral of the academic degree, the dissertation council has the right to annul the academic degree at any time and to void / invalidate the diploma.