Department of Business Administration

Information Systems & Operations Management Area PhD Program

The PhD program in the Department of Business Administration at Gies College of Business provides you with an opportunity to become a successful scholar and teacher in your chosen business domain. Our flexible curriculum is suitable for those with backgrounds in business, computer sciences, mathematics, economics, statistics, informatics, engineering, and physics. Gies' collaborative scholarly community and emphasis on faculty mentorship offer you an unmatched experience.

A hallmark of our program is extensive interaction between doctoral students and faculty. Our 1:1 student/faculty ratio provides you with the personalized attention you want through PhD seminars, co-authoring research projects with faculty, and close guidance for dissertation research. You'll be empowered to research and teach subjects like Information Systems, Operations Management, Business Analytics, Project Management, Supply Chain Management, and more.

Gies College of Business is a place to challenge assumptions, invent new approaches, and develop your own style as an educator. We hope you'll consider joining us and jumpstarting your future as part of our Gies Business community.

What does this program entail?

You can choose either an information systems (IS) or operations management (OM) specialization; both will prepare you to excel at knowledge creation, theorization, empirical examination, and dissemination. You will receive extensive training on theories and methodologies that are essential to work on modeling-based and data-intensive problems in IS or OM. After two years of rigorous coursework, you will have ample time to develop a particular research proposal.

IS Area

Research how existing and emerging technologies impact the context and practice of business.

Why is it important to study IS?
Information systems serve as the backbones of modern organizations, and interest in this discipline is steadily growing in academia and practice.

The abundance of data and availability of computational abilities have made the use of machine learning and artificial intelligence possible to design smart systems and sophisticated technologies.

How the Gies IS area assists in driving research forward:
Research is dedicated to the development and management of information systems technologies, as well as their use and their impact on organizations and society.

IS uses a wide variety of methodologies—econometrics, field experiments, optimization, machine learning, statistics, game theory, and theory driven approaches—to develop novel algorithms, test hypotheses, and analyze IS polices.

OM Area

Research in the production and distribution of goods, services, and information to theorize and understand how companies achieve a competitive advantage through superior capabilities in these areas.

Why is it important to study OM?
OM focuses on designing and managing value-added processes across various organizations involved in supplying goods or providing services to meet end consumer needs and achieving competitive advantage through efficient decision-making about sourcing, production, and distribution of goods and services.

How the Gies OM area assists in driving research forward:
Emerging trends explore implications of sustainability, shared economy, e-commerce, blockchain, social networks on managing the supply chain, and operations of various firms.

OM uses methodologies from operations research, economics, econometrics, statistics, machine learning, and applied probability for analyzing interesting and practically relevant research problems that help efficient decision making.

Why Gies is a great place for those interested in IS/OM:

For decades, Gies has demonstrated a commitment to providing accessible education to all students. The Information Systems, Operations, Supply Chain, and Analytics (IOSA) area has developed deep relationships with industry partners to provide our students with experiential learning opportunities and awareness of current trends. Our relationships with corporate partners provide additional real-world context for much of the material that students in the IOSA programs can learn in the classroom.

Benefits of the Gies IS/OM specializations:

- Proximity to other highly ranked programs like engineering and science provides opportunities for interdisciplinary and collaborative programs to cross-pollinate ideas.

- Part of a community of faculty members who engage in the newly emerging research areas of business analytics, healthcare, machine learning, software development, mobile computing, cryptocurrencies, and social issues in supply chain and operations.

- Activities like peer mentoring, a professional development series, community events, and a brown-bag seminar series shape a unique collaborative spirit.

Ecosystem that supports IS/OM

- University of Illinois-Deloitte Foundation Center for Business Analytics
  - Provides a wealth of resources including course material, case studies, symposia, and workshops which are offered for free to faculty, students, and anyone else across the globe who desires to improve their knowledge of data analytics.

- Gies Business Research Lab
  - Supports Gies behavioral research studies in the College by providing researchers with access to student and non-student participant pools, study implementation support, and updated lab space to conduct research.

- Disruption & Innovation Programs
  - Offers hands-on learning opportunities for students of all levels across the University of Illinois to put theory into practice.

- NCSA
  - The National Center for Supercomputing Applications is a leader in advanced computing, software, data, networking, and visualization resources.

- Research Park
  - Hosts large companies' research and development offices, providing the opportunity for researchers to work on real-world challenges.

Benefits

- Full tuition, full medical insurance coverage, computing and travel support, and a generous stipend during the full program of study.

- Our doctoral students enjoy contemporary workspaces in the newly renovated Irwin Doctoral Study Hall, allocated exclusively for doctoral student use.

❝Our faculty conduct cutting-edge interdisciplinary research, with an emphasis on the use of sophisticated data analytic techniques for solving business problems in information systems, supply chain, and operations management. By leveraging the best instruction of expert researchers and practitioners, along with innovative programs that emphasize thoughtfulness and hands-on experience, we prepare our students to be the next leaders in the field.❞

—Professor Sridhar Seshadri, IOSA Area Chair

97%
Graduates entered academia since 2005
Several of the Department's graduates find positions at leading business schools and universities in the United States and around the world.

1:1
Mentorship ratio between PhD students & tenure track faculty

70
Competitive research awards received in BA over the past 5 years

96%
BA doctoral students were very or highly satisfied with program
Fall 2017 survey

308
Peer-reviewed journal publications from BA faculty over the past 5 years.

Application Process

- Admission is based on a variety of accomplishments including educational goals, letters of recommendation, and demonstrated success in research.

- Minimum GPA 3.0

- Basic proficiency in statistics preferred

The Department of Business Administration must receive:
- Completed application form

- Statement of purpose

- Résumé

- Three letters of reference

- Transcripts of all previous undergraduate and graduate work

- GMAT or GRE scores (institution code 1836)

- Scores of internet-based TOEFL

When?
- Applications are considered for the fall semester only.

- Application deadline for potential entry in the subsequent fall semester is January 15.

Contact

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