

Nomination of

**Oklahoma State University
School of Entrepreneurship**

for the

**2013 USASBE
Excellence in Entrepreneurship Education Awards**

in the

National Model Doctoral Program Category



Nominated by:

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Executive Summary

Founded in 2009, the doctoral program in entrepreneurship offered by the School of Entrepreneurship at Oklahoma State University seeks to produce well-rounded scholars that possess competencies in research and teaching and an awareness of the co-curricular student engagement and community outreach activities undertaken by entrepreneurship programs. The overall structure of the program follows that of a traditional doctoral program, but with an exclusive and unique focus on the entrepreneurship discipline. That is, the doctoral program is a full-time program that includes forty-two hours of coursework and eighteen hours of dissertation work. Students work with a faculty advisor to put together a program of study that includes 12 credits in the major field of entrepreneurship, a 6-credit entrepreneurship research project, 9 credits of a minor field, 12 credits of research methods, and an additional 3-credit elective requirement.

In terms of coursework, we offer five different doctoral seminars related to entrepreneurship ('The Entrepreneurship Process', 'Contemporary Research Topics in Entrepreneurship', 'Theoretical Foundations of Entrepreneurship Research', 'Individual Theories in Entrepreneurship Research', and 'Entrepreneurship: Cross-Disciplinary Interfaces'). The doctoral seminars seek to provide both depth and breadth of understanding of entrepreneurship as well as the core theoretical lenses employed in examining entrepreneurship-related phenomena. In addition to the doctoral seminars, students are required to take Entrepreneurship Research Project, in which the students undertake an empirical study beginning in the summer between their first and second years and culminating in the following spring. While students are responsible for leading this project, they are closely advised by faculty. This project seeks to provide students with an initial hands-on experience in tying theory to the methodological considerations needed in performing high-quality research. Complementing these courses that comprise the entrepreneurship major are (1) a required minor of a topic chosen by the student and approved by the faculty, and (2) a research methods concentration. The minor seeks to provide students with coursework in a topic of interest that informs and is informed by entrepreneurship research, and the research methods concentration provides the fundamental understanding of research methodologies that facilitate effective research.

Development as a scholar involves a significant transfer of tacit knowledge from faculty mentors to students. Toward this end, we employ a unique approach to developing our doctoral students. Our program involves a replicable *stepwise process of development* in which doctoral students are initially embedded in a closely-defined and guided relationship with a research faculty member before increasingly gaining autonomy in becoming an independent scholar. The first step involves assignment of the doctoral student to a research faculty member to initially work (and share authorship) on publishable research initiated by the faculty member. In their first semester, they must also submit an original piece of research (usually with a faculty member) to the Babson Research Conference. In this first phase, students may rotate through assignments to two or more different research faculty members. A next major step towards becoming independent scholars is the Entrepreneurship Research Project in which students lead their first empirical, journal-targeted study while being closely advised by the faculty. A further major step

in the development of the students is the comprehensive exam, after which candidates begin their dissertation processes as the final step towards becoming independent scholars.

Beyond the overarching structure of the program, however, we undertake a number of initiatives in terms of research, teaching, and outreach-related activities to develop our doctoral students. Again, these initiatives can be efficiently and effectively replicated as implemented or with minor adjustments.

Our research initiatives include:

- Entrepreneurship Lunchtime Research Series – Each month during the fall and spring semesters (eight times per year), one or more of the faculty and/or doctoral students present their latest research projects. This series allows faculty and doctoral students the opportunity to exchange ideas, provide feedback to presenters, and practice in presentation skills.
- The Riata Distinguished Scholar – Each year, a prominent entrepreneurship scholar is invited to Oklahoma State University and is recognized as the Riata Distinguished Scholar. During the scholar's visit, doctoral students formerly meet with the scholar and have a number of other opportunities to engage with the scholar about his/her own professional development, career choices, handling the journal review process, and viewing a presentation of the scholar's latest research project, among other opportunities.
- The Riata Faculty Fellows – The Fellows is a group of faculty from across Oklahoma State University that conduct entrepreneurship-related research. This group includes faculty from a wide range of departments, such as the agriculture, veterinary sciences, psychology, architecture, and engineering. The Riata Faculty Fellows engage with the doctoral program at least a couple of times per year to share research and professional insights.
- Research Methods Series – This initiative is a doctoral student-centric program in which the students select from a number of advanced methodological techniques (e.g., structural equations modeling, hierarchical linear modeling, conjoint analysis, etc.), teach themselves when, how, and why this technique is used, study various entrepreneurship articles that have used the techniques, and then teach the other students about the particular methodology.

Our teaching initiatives include:

- Teaching requirement – Each student in our program is required to teach one class per semester. We have the good fortune of having flexibility in what students teach, with a curriculum consisting of over forty entrepreneurship courses. To date, doctoral students have chosen to teach courses that include Introduction to Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Marketing, Strategic and Entrepreneurial Management, Imagination, Emerging Enterprise Consulting, and Growing Small and Family Businesses. The diversity of courses they can teach typically means they have richer teaching experiences

within the entrepreneurship discipline than many of the candidates from other universities with whom they compete for academic positions.

- Teaching tutorials – Prior to teaching, doctoral students work with the faculty to prepare their syllabi and teaching materials. In addition, given the focus on teaching entrepreneurial competencies (e.g., opportunity recognition, risk mitigation, resource leveraging, etc.), students learn what exercises promote the development of entrepreneurial competencies and gain an understanding of how each class fits within the undergraduate program aimed at providing the undergraduate students a portfolio of competencies.
- Experiential Classroom – An annual program put on by Oklahoma State University, Indiana University and the University of Florida in which approximately 80 young faculty from around the world come to learn best practices in how to effectively teach entrepreneurship. Each of our doctoral students participate in the Classroom before teaching.

The third component of our preparation of future academic leaders is to provide them with a rich appreciation for the role of entrepreneurship programs in the areas of service and outreach. We distinguish between outreach related to the scholarly discipline versus outreach and engagement with the entrepreneurial community. With regard to the former, doctoral students undertake a number of initiatives to understand their roles and responsibilities as scholars within the broader discipline of entrepreneurship.

- Conference attendance/participation – Students are encouraged to submit papers and attend conferences, such as the Academy of Management meetings, Babson College Entrepreneurship Research Conference, and USASBE annual meeting. They will also sometimes serve as discussants. Students are provided funding for at least one conference per year.
- Scholarly reviews – Reviewing for conferences and journals is a particularly important responsibility of scholars. Students are expected to review for conferences, and encouraged to find opportunities to review for journals. In addition, students are provided guidance in terms of how to write reviews and are required to write reviews in multiple seminars. The proper conduct of scholarly reviews is also a focal point in some of the doctoral seminars.
- Assisting faculty members in disciplinary activities – Our faculty members are actively involved with committees, boards and related volunteer work for the Academic of Management, the United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship and the Global Consortium of Entrepreneurship Centers. They also serve on dozens of editorial review boards. Doctoral students work as graduate assistants with our faculty members, and some of their duties include assisting with review processes, helping to organize doctoral consortia, building databases, and other activities related to faculty service.

In terms of engagement with the community, the Riata Center for Entrepreneurship and the School of Entrepreneurship at Oklahoma State University together conduct a number of outreach-related activities. While our doctoral students do not manage these events, they serve as volunteers and observers, and we encourage their attendance at these events so that they can become aware of the types of outreach-related activities conducted by entrepreneurship programs and how entrepreneurship programs connect with their communities. Our outreach-related initiatives include:

- Riata Business Plan Competition – One of the Riata Center’s outreach events is the School of Entrepreneurship’s annual business plan competition.
- WEInspire – Another Riata Center event is the WEInspire women’s entrepreneurship conference held annually in Oklahoma City in which over 700 women entrepreneurs congregate annually.
- Cowboy Bootcamps for Entrepreneurs: Held at an urban (Tulsa, OK) and more rural (Enid, OK) location each Fall, the Cowboy Bootcamps run for six weeks and help local residents who are starting and growing new ventures.
- Disabled Veterans’ Bootcamp – The Riata Center hosts a number of entrepreneurship bootcamps throughout the year. One example is the disabled veterans bootcamp that seeks to provide entrepreneurship basics to approximately 70 disabled veterans each year.
- Healthcare Innovation Conference – This is an annual conference that assembles academics and practitioners dedicated to entrepreneurship and innovation within the healthcare domain. The conference held its inaugural event in Oklahoma City this past spring.

The key to making a strong educational program work is a dedicated and competent faculty. The faculty in the School of Entrepreneurship at Oklahoma State University consists of eight scholars devoted to entrepreneurship research, and three clinical faculty members. This group has achieved a top ten ranking in the annual research productivity survey conducted by Texas Christian University. The faculty members represent a diverse range of research interests ranging from corporate entrepreneurship to social entrepreneurship to understanding the individual entrepreneur as well as contextual influences on the entrepreneurship process. The faculty members lead by example, with each of them continuing to publish in top entrepreneurship/management journals.

Some of the initiatives highlighted within our submission are unique to the School of Entrepreneurship at Oklahoma State University. At the same time, we believe that our doctoral program can effectively serve as a National Model Doctoral Program, and doctoral programs at other universities can efficiently implement the same or similar initiatives within their programs. Our faculty members regularly visit other universities to share elements of our program, as well as to give scholarly presentations. In addition, we regularly share the structure of all of our doctoral courses with other programs. To support this objective, we provide brief thoughts throughout our submission on how other programs can adopt similar initiatives.