MARKETING PhD

What is a Marketing PhD?

Marketing is concerned with decisions that relate to a firm’s customers, competitors, and network of partners including channel members and promotion agencies. It focuses on how customers make choices and how companies design products, services, and programs to satisfy customer needs. Given the breadth of marketing decisions, marketing scholars study a variety of marketing issues ranging from marketing strategy to product development, consumer decision making, and customer satisfaction. The field of marketing is truly interdisciplinary, drawing theories and methods from disciplines such as economics, psychology, sociology, and statistics, among others.

What is the focus of a Marketing PhD?

The PhD program in marketing is designed to provide students with the skills necessary for a successful academic research and teaching career. We train students to identify and define interesting and important marketing phenomena and develop the necessary methodological tools to investigate these phenomena with original research. As part of this training, students take a common set of “breadth” courses as well as “depth” courses tailored to their specific interests. In addition, students learn by working with faculty members on joint research, conduct a series of original research projects, and assist in the teaching of marketing courses. For additional details on the program requirements, please visit Marketing PhD Program Milestone section.

PhD students are not required to enter the program with a pre-established area of specialization, but during the first year, will be guided to select one of the following:

Consumer Behavior: this area focuses on the study of consumer-level behaviors by conducting laboratory and/or field experiments, among others, to understand consumers’ decisions, actions, and responses and to explain why those behaviors are taking place. This line of research tends to emphasize the cognitive and social psychology of consumer decisions, though alternative perspectives such as sociology and social psychology can also be adopted. Please click here for a sample of the PhD level courses involved in the CB track.

Faculty Members: Samuel Bond and Sara Dommer

Marketing Modeling: this area focuses on the study of a variety marketplace phenomena related to marketing decisions including market entry, competitive reactions, pricing, and innovation, among many others. The focus tends to be on advancing the field’s knowledge related to the understanding of market-level responses or methodological techniques. It attracts students with an interest in the application of higher level econometrics, probability and statistics to marketing questions. Please click here for a sample of the PhD level courses involved in the Marketing Modeling track.

Faculty Members: Xiaoqing Jing and Cem Ozturk

Marketing Strategy: this area focuses on the study of firm and manager behavior, across a broad range of marketing topics including sales force management, innovation management, competitive strategy, and marketing communications. It studies the evolution and effect of managerial decisions and marketing
capabilities, processes, and orientations on firm behavior and performance. Strategy researchers use surveys, archival data, qualitative studies, or large scale third party data to study related phenomena.

Please click here for a sample of the PhD level courses involved in the Marketing Modeling track.

Faculty Members: Ajay K. Kohli, Goutam Challagalla, Francis Ulgado and Omar Rodriguez-Vila

**Why a Marketing PhD at Georgia Tech?**

Because interaction with faculty mentors is an essential component of doctoral training, students in our program generally initiate research projects with one or more faculty members soon after their arrival. Faculty and students are involved in joint research cutting across a wide spectrum of issues at the core of marketing, as well as multidisciplinary topics that interface with other functional areas such as management, economics, and psychology. Some current faculty and PhD student research interests are listed below.

**Faculty Research Interests**

- Impact of interactivity on information quality
- Information quality and consumer adoption of new media
- Multinational firm strategy and behavior
- Online information search and decision making
- Social media
- Seller influence tactics
- Inferential processes and reasoning
- Managing market changes in an e-commerce environment
- Acceptance of new products and technologies
- Marketing by entrepreneurial firms
- Sustainability attributes and brand growth
- Proactive post-sales services
- Market-Driven versus Market-Driving
- Delivering customer solutions
- Sales management

The culture at Georgia Tech encourages multi-disciplinary collaboration across areas within the College of Business, and across Colleges within the Institute. In addition, the Georgia Tech program is designed to expose students early on to the methods and contributions of all three research areas in marketing—consumer behavior, modeling and strategy.

While our program’s emphasis is on preparing students for academic research, our PhD students also learn to teach and have the opportunity to strengthen their teaching skills by leveraging the resources of the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (CETL). The Center runs a number of specialized programs for junior faculty and graduate teaching assistants designed to develop teaching skills.

**Resources:**
Below is a list of some of the main sources for funding support available to students during their time at the program:

- Graduate assistantships offered to all accepted students.
- President’s Fellowship awarded to US citizens based on merit.
- Travel stipend provided to all PhD students in their second year of the program.
- Graduate conference fund for currently enrolled graduate students to present research at leading marketing conferences.
- Additional student association travel funds offered by the Student Government Association.
- Other complementary departmental and sponsored funds.

In addition, the Scheller College of Business has the following resources to help advance behavioral research:

- On-site computer lab for conducting experiments, focus groups, and other research.
- Lab equipped with video and audio recording options and one-way mirrors.
- Student subject pool (~250 participants) available every semester.

To promote inter-university collaboration, we host in rotation the Annual Georgia Research Symposium whose participants include faculty and students from Emory University, University of Georgia, and Georgia State University. It is a day-long event to promote the exchange of research ideas and work-in-progress in consumer behavior, modeling and strategy.

*PhD Student Research and Placements*

Our students have gone on to take up faculty positions at a variety of schools including Boston College and University of Kentucky. Examples of our current students’ research include:

- **Zoey Chen**

- **Dan Sheehan**

**For More Information about Marketing at Georgia Tech:**

Please visit our Marketing website at:
http://mgt.gatech.edu/fac_research/acad_areas/marketing.html

**SAMPLE CLASSES:**
Marketing Modeling track
(* = required courses)

Seminars

Marketing strategy*
Consumer behavior*
Theory construction*

Methods

Introduction to research methods*
Empirical models in marketing*
Regression analysis*
Statistical methods*
Multivariate data analysis*
Applied econometrics
Applied statistics and econometrics
Microeconomic theory i
Econometrics i
Microeconomic theory ii
Game theory
Econometrics ii
Discrete choice econometrics
Bayesian statistics
Time series econometrics
Industrial organization
Computational statistics
Nonparametric data analysis
Applied statistics and econometrics ii
Applied game theory
**Consumer Behavior track**
(* = required courses)

**Seminars**

- Consumer behavior*
- Marketing strategy*
- Theory construction*

**Methods**

- Cognitive psychology*
- Introduction to cognitive science*
- Social psychology*
- Introduction to research methods*
- Regression analysis*
- Statistical methods*
- Cognition and development i*
- Cognition and development ii*
- Multivariate data analysis
- Empirical models in marketing
- Statistical models and designing experiments
- Analysis of behavior
- Cognitive modeling
- Advanced design of experiments
- Advanced statistical modeling
- Statistical analysis ii
- Equation modeling
**Marketing Strategy track**

(* = required courses)

**Seminar**

Marketing strategy*
Consumer behavior*
Theory construction*
Organizational theory

**Methods**

Empirical models in marketing*
Introduction to research methods*
Regression analysis*
Statistical methods*
Multivariate data analysis*
Microeconomics
Econometrics i
Econometrics ii
Qualitative research methods
Limited dependent variables
Structural equation modeling
Event and survival analysis
Longitudinal and time series analysis
Bayesian statistics
MARKETING PhD PROGRAM MILESTONES

Successful completion of a Marketing PhD program requires the student to demonstrate the capacity to do high quality independent academic work. Below is a description of the PhD program milestones, designed to guide students in their training, determine the status and continuity of the student in the PhD program, and ensure the successful and timely completion of the PhD program:
Description of Marketing Program Milestones

First Year Research Project

First Research Proposal Submission
Under the direction of at least one area faculty, a research proposal must be prepared and submitted to the area PhD Coordinator outlining the tentative research questions to be explored in the first year research paper.

First-year Student Review
This review reflects course work, research activities, and performance of GRA/GTA duties. The assessment reflects the input of all area faculty. A written assessment will be reviewed with the student and placed in his/her file.

First Research Paper Submission
A written document describing the work must be available to all area faculty.

First Research Paper Presentation
Each student makes a presentation of his or her first-year paper at a meeting open to all College faculty. The presentation is assessed by all area faculty.

Second Year Research Project

Second Research Proposal Submission. Under the direction of at least one area faculty, a one page research proposal must be prepared and submitted to the area PhD Coordinator outlining the tentative research questions to be explored in the second year research paper.

Second-year Student Review
This review reflects course work (including PhD seminars), research activities, results of comprehensive exams, and performance of GRA/GTA duties. The assessment reflects the input of all area faculty. A written assessment will be reviewed with the student and placed in his/her file.

Second Research Paper Submission
A written document describing the work must be available to all area faculty.

Second Research Paper Presentation
Each student makes a presentation of his or her second-year paper at a meeting open to all College faculty. The presentation is assessed by all area faculty.
**PhD Comprehensive Exam**

**PhD Comprehensive Exam and Candidacy**

Three outcomes are possible. (1) A student may pass the written exam; (2) A student may be asked to complete a follow-up exam or take additional course work focused on specific topics where the original written response was deficient. If the outcome of this follow-up activity is satisfactory, the student continues in good standing in the PhD program. The PhD Committee can be petitioned to adjust future milestones; (3) A student may be asked to leave the doctoral program. Upon successfully completing the Comprehensive Exam, a student is admitted to PhD Candidacy. At this time, a PhD student is formally permitted to begin the PhD dissertation.

**Annual Student Reviews**

**Third-year and Subsequent Annual Student Reviews**

The review of students at the end of the third year reflects course work, research activities, performance of GRA/GTA duties, and any teaching experiences. The assessment reflects the input of all area faculty. A written assessment will be reviewed with the student and placed in his/her file.

**PhD Dissertation**

**Proposal for the PhD Dissertation**

With guidance from the faculty, students will develop a Proposal for the PhD Dissertation. The Proposal should demonstrate that a student has the ability to (1) think independently, (2) take the initiative to develop and structure a research problem, rigorous solution, and analysis, (3) write-up the research in a clear, organized and concise manner representative of papers published in major academic journals, and (4) make a research presentation close to the quality necessary for successful job interviews. Failure to successfully present a dissertation proposal by the end of the fourth year will result in loss of funding for fifth year studies. Notification of the Proposal must be sent to all College faculty at least two weeks before the presentation. It must be held during the semester, which includes exam week.

**Dissertation Execution and Defense**

Once a student has successfully presented a dissertation proposal, the student must follow the final steps needed to take to complete the PhD degree. A good source for this information is:


Students are expected to complete their PhD Dissertations by the end of their fourth or fifth years. Students present their doctoral research at an oral defense open to the entire faculty in the Scheller College of Business. Students qualify for a PhD upon successful defense of their dissertations.
FAQ FOR MARKETING AREA PhD SITE

**Q. How many students are enrolled in the marketing program?**

The marketing area enrolls 1-2 new doctoral students each year. The total size of the program varies from approximately 6-10 students.

**Q. Is it necessary to have an MBA, extensive work experience in marketing, etc.?**

No. Although prior experience can be helpful, students from a wide variety of backgrounds have performed well in the program. In many cases, applicants have earned a master's degree in a related field such as economics, engineering, mathematics, psychology, sociology, or statistics. Students pursuing behavioral areas often benefit from experience with psychological research, experimental methods, etc. Students pursuing quantitative areas often benefit from prior experience with statistical methods, computer programming, etc. However, the primary requirements for success in the marketing program are capacity for analytical thought, intellectual curiosity, and a strong work ethic.

**Q. What do students do after receiving their PhD?**

The PhD in marketing is designed for individuals who are primarily interested in scholarly research. Almost all of our graduates are employed in academic or research institutions.

**Q. What are some distinguishing characteristics of Scheller’s program?**

Selectivity – The marketing area is highly selective, with a student-to-faculty ratio lower than one to one. The small size of the program allows students to undergo a customized experience and ensures intensive, one-on-one interaction with faculty throughout the program.

Faculty – The Scheller faculty are at the forefront of research and scholarship in the modern discipline of marketing. Doctoral students begin working with faculty during their first semester. Faculty members offer a diverse range of expertise, spanning all major sub-fields of marketing. This environment allows doctoral students in the early stages to explore a range of potential interests, while allows students at later stages to pursue interdisciplinary research with the benefit of expert faculty mentorship.

Location – Georgia Tech is one of the premiere engineering universities in the world. The Scheller College of Management consistently ranks among the nation’s top business schools at the doctoral, MBA, and undergraduate levels. The school is located in the heart of Atlanta, offering students the opportunity for collaboration with area institutions. The marketing area
maintains productive relationships with nearby universities (Georgia State, Emory, UGA); it is common for doctoral students to take classes from and collaborate with faculty at area schools.

**Q. How much does the program cost? Do students receive financial assistance?**

Doctoral students at Scheller receive a highly competitive financial package that includes tuition, registration, health fees, and a monthly stipend. For more information, see the left tab ‘Financing Your Degree.’

**Q. Where can I learn more about doctoral studies in marketing?**

The website of the American Marketing Association includes a community forum devoted to doctoral students, offering a variety of useful information for those considering a PhD: [http://www.marketingpower.com/Community/ARC/Pages/Career/PhD/default.aspx](http://www.marketingpower.com/Community/ARC/Pages/Career/PhD/default.aspx).

**Q. Whom may I contact with further questions?**

General questions about doctoral studies at Scheller may be addressed to our Graduate Program Manager, Ursula Reynolds. Specific questions about the marketing PhD may be addressed to our area PhD coordinator, Dr. Goutam Challagalla.

**Q. How do I apply?**

For information on applying, please see the left tab ‘Application Process.’