MISSION: The mission of Iowa's Ph.D. program in Management and Organizations (M&O) is to train future scholars for placement in top research and teaching universities. We develop our students to conduct the highest quality applied research, teach to standards of excellence, and be active participants in their local and professional organizations. Graduates of our program are placed in tenure-track positions at accredited universities around the world, where they continue to engage in top-level scholarship, teaching, and service.

ADMISSION PROCESSES & CRITERIA: Admission into our program is highly competitive, with an average of 3 students admitted out of an average 41.4 applications (2003-07). We keep our selectivity rates low (mean=7.8%) to maintain a faculty-student ratio of approximate 1:1, and because we are committed to educating, mentoring, and graduating each student we enroll. Thus, we do not “weed out” students after they have been admitted; instead we only admit students that we are confident will succeed. Our selection criteria include GMAT(or GRE), GPA, candidates’ statement of purpose and letters of recommendation. We strongly consider whether their career goals and research interests are aligned with our program strengths.

We have been highly effective at converting admissions to enrollments, with an average of 2.5 students enrolled per year (2004-2007). [NOTE: We did not admit any students in fall 2008 because of a strategic decision revise our doctoral curriculum.] In spring 2009, we approached the recruiting season with a new curriculum, a revised program website, and invitations to high potential candidates for on-campus visits with faculty and Ph.D. students. Applications jumped from our previous average of 41.4 to 58 that spring. From this pool we extended 6 offers; 3 were accepted. Attesting to the high quality of our new students, 2 of the 3 admitted students received competitive Presidential Fellowships from the Graduate College, and their average GMAT score was 707 (92%). The 3 students who did not accept our offers went to highly competitive programs at University of Florida, Texas A&M, and UCLA.

We are decidedly selective for students, with our incoming students’ GPA averaging 3.64, compared to that for all UI graduate programs of 3.45, and 3.63 in the College of Business. Our 2004-2007 average for applicants’ GRE scores was 1220, 223 points higher than the national average for all Management programs.

We commit to fully funding all our students for 5 years. Unless the student is offered a Presidential or Dean’s Fellowship, the assignment typically includes a 50% teaching assistantship for the 9-month academic year, and a summer scholarship from Ponder funds. To further support our students’ learning and research, the M&O Department pays for student membership to our professional organizations (Society for Industrial & Organizational Psychology and the Academy of Management) for two years, provides funds for doctoral student travel to national conferences throughout the program, and has recently started offering a $2500 per student research budget, allocated in stages as the student successfully passes major program milestones. This budget may be used at the discretion of the student for funding research projects, or paying for professional memberships and journal subscriptions. When possible we will fund a student on an externally funded grant (~ 1 per year).
PROGRAM OUTCOMES: Our program has been extremely successful graduating students and placing them in academic positions. Between 2003-2008 we graduated 7 students with Ph.D.s, with a median time to diploma of 5.4 years (less than the average median of 5.9 years for all Ph.D. programs). These numbers are similar to those from 1996-2000, in which our median time to diploma was 5.3 years, and a 78% completion rate (both better than the average of 5.8 years and 55% for all Ph.D. programs). In the past when students have not finished the program it has typically been because they were also attempting to hold down a full or part-time job. Four years ago we made the strategic decision to no longer allow “part-time” students, and have since seen a 100% graduation rate.

After graduation the vast majority of our students are placed in tenure-track academic positions. We had a total of 11 students graduate between 2003 and 2008. Of these 9 (82%) went into tenure-track positions, 1 remained in Iowa to raise a family and teaches as an adjunct for our department, and 1 took a position as a Research Scientist at HumRRO (Human Resources Research Organization; an independent non-profit organization conducting research, developing products and providing services to improve individual, team, and organizational outcomes). That student has recently moved into a tenure-track position at the University of Central Florida. Even during the tight labor market in spring 2009, both of our students who were on the job market took tenure-track academic positions – one at the University of Alberta and the other at Southern Illinois University. Both positions were good fits for the candidates’ qualifications and lifestyle preferences. We currently have 12 students enrolled, with three of them on the job market this academic year. We are already actively working to place each of these students, all in their 5th year. We are placing students competitively, with other recent placements at University of Minnesota, Texas A&M, Notre Dame, University of Oklahoma, Australian School of Business, Indian School of Business, Creighton University, and Tulane.

Enrolling a diversity of students is an area we hope to improve. Although 25% of our current doctoral students are women, we have no ethnic minorities currently in the program. Between 2004-2008 we nominated 1 student for a Dean’s Fellowship (which was offered, but not accepted). This is an area that concerns us, and our application statistics showed that in spring 2009 we only had 1 ethnic minority out of 58 applicants. Unfortunately, this candidate’s GMAT scores were substantially below our average, raising significant concerns of whether she would be able to complete the program successfully. To increase our recruitment of diverse students we are preparing a brochure about our program that Renea Jay (Director of Ph.D. programs in the College of Business) will take to the Ph.D. Project conference in November. The College of Business is an academic supporter of the Ph.D. Project, as well as the National Alliance for Doctoral Studies. Together, the College’s 3-year support for these programs exceeds $25,000. The challenge for us is converting this support into admissions in our program. Having a more ethnically diverse faculty would also be useful for recruitment. During our last recruiting session we aggressively tried to recruit a minority female applicant, but were unsuccessful.

PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS: Our faculty in recent years has been reduced from 16 to 12 tenured/tenure-track FTEs. Our ideal program size is 15 students, so that each student gets nearly one-on-one attention from tenured faculty, but we also have a reasonably sized cohort (6-8) for taking classes. M&O faculty are leaders in the areas of micro-organizational behavior (OB) and human resource management (HR), gaining worldwide recognition for impactful research and leading the top journals in our field. In data recently published by the Dept. of
Management at Texas A&M on the productivity rankings of OB/HR programs, the University of Iowa ranked 14th for publications in top tier journals from 2005-2008. The faculty includes top scholars in the areas of personality, meta-analysis, teams, person-environment fit, learning and knowledge transfer, leadership, expatriates, employee-organization relationships, compensation, selection, employment testing, and HR strategies. Each faculty member has a strong commitment to teaching and mentoring Ph.D. students in research and/or teaching.

Because the faculty is our greatest strength, in 2008-2009 we revised our Ph.D. curriculum to provide students greater access to faculty in the classroom and through mentored research. Based on data we collected from students, alumni, faculty, and competitor programs, we reorganized our classes so that all required coursework can be completed in 2 years, with classes being taught by a wider range of faculty than in the past (9 of our 12 faculty will teach Ph.D. courses). Further, we added a mentored research experience for Years 1 and 2, in which the students select to work with specific faculty on existing projects. This redesign of our curriculum and dedication of financial resources to the program was undertaken to allow us to better meet our strategic objective of graduating all our students in five years, while also placing them in top academic programs. The only weakness currently influencing our students is that our faculty members are often selected to take on prestigious, but time consuming roles as Editors, Associate Editors, and leadership positions in professional societies. This sometimes makes it hard for students to get involved with faculty on multiple projects. The new mentored research projects are a way for us to facilitate this interaction, even with busy faculty.

Faculty who are not scheduled to teach courses in our Ph.D. program will be working with doctoral students on teaching-related activities. Our students will take a course on business school teaching in their third year, prior to teaching stand-alone courses. Our goal is to have each student gain experience as a TA for Introduction to Management in their first 2 years, followed by a TA for more specialized undergraduate or MBA courses in Year 3, and moving into at least 2 different stand-alone courses prior to graduation. This schedule develops the students’ teaching skills first with a faculty mentor, and moves them gradually into more independent teaching which we have found is necessary for good tenure-track placements.

Challenges that we face are primarily in the form of wealthy competitor programs. Each year we offer the basic Graduate Assistantship package of ($22,630 in 2009-2010) to incoming students. This last year we were recruiting students who were also looking at programs like the University of Maryland, Texas A&M and University of Florida who provided packages of $30,000-$40,000 to incoming students. Awards such as Presidential Fellowships and additional support for these students from Department funds (primarily generated by MBA-PM teaching) are critical to attracting the best and brightest talent. With our revised curriculum, personalized recruiting, and commitment of Department funds for things like professional memberships, travel, and doctoral student research budgets, we continue to invest in these students as the culmination of our research, teaching, and service commitments.

**CONCLUSIONS:** The doctoral program in M&O is thriving. With our recently revised curriculum, new website and other recruiting strategies, highly competent new students, faculty enthusiasm for more time with students in and out of the classroom, and successful placement history, we are confident that we can continue to accomplish our mission of training future scholars for placement in top research and teaching universities.