**Personal Statement for Admission to Ph.D. in Business Administration:**

**David Vasquez**

**I am excited to be writing my personal statement for admission to the doctorate program in Business Administration at Oregon State University. This program offers the perfect opportunity to pursue my goal of working as a leading business researcher at a University. My desire to be a professor led me to gain my MBA here at OSU. While a graduate student in the College of Business I heard about the program starting and knew it was my desire to seek admission. The innovation and commercialization option aligns closely with my interest for this field. Being able to engage in research, publish and work with students will allow me a career that is both rewarding and fulfilling.**

**Area of Interest:**

As stated previously, my goal is to pursue the innovation and commercialization option. There are many disciplines in the field of business but it is this option that captivates me. My interest started while reading about individuals like Duncan Bannatyne, a British investor, who created a business empire from an ice cream truck. My desire to pursue this field has grown the more I have learned. My interest in commercialization of university research has been growing after working with the Office for Commercialization and Corporate Development and seeing stories like Professor Reyes, who is licensing OSU technology to build a new generation of nuclear reactors. My natural curiosity and desire to learn about this field makes me believe it is the one I can contribute the most to as a researcher and scholar.

There are many reasons I find this field fascinating, and I will discuss a few of the major ones. Entrepreneurship, innovation and commercialization is an area that is constantly changing and also very challenging. It presents many new problems that must be solved that do not have clear paths or definite solutions. During my Integrated Business Project in the College of Business at Oregon State University we were often faced with many different business viewpoints from faculty and investors. I enjoyed the challenge of assimilating these views and working to move forward. I also enjoy this field because innovation and entrepreneurship are fundamental to the growth of the economy. This track offers the ability to make an impact and improve the lives of people by researching and helping to drive innovation. As a researcher I would be able to engage in understanding and improving the chances of bringing innovation to market and helping startups succeed.

Another reason for my interest is that this field requires an understanding of the many disciplines that make up business. Successful entrepreneurship requires knowledge of finance, accounting, marketing, economics and management. During my MBA I enjoyed learning about the many facets of business and hope to be able to continue to grow in my understanding of them. Finally the field of innovation, commercialization and entrepreneurship is growing rapidly and being accepted more readily for the value it contributes to society. Universities, corporations and investors are embracing entrepreneurial thought. This will create many opportunities for research questions and the need to solve them.

The program at Oregon State University offers an ideal setting to study this field. The College of Business is immersed in the entrepreneurial community. The ability to study the theory of entrepreneurship and also to engage in innovation happening on campus is what sparks my interest to attend this specific program. I am also interested in this particular program because of the faculty whom I met as a graduate student. I both respected and enjoyed working with them and their willingness to help students be successful. This was very important to me as they will be an integral part of my success here.

**Intended Research Focus:**

Four major areas of potential research interest include entrepreneurship inside of large corporations, innovation and startups in the technology sector, innovation in emerging economies and the commercialization of university innovation. If accepted I would work closely to narrow down a more specific research topic suitable for a Ph.D. dissertation. My goal would be to utilize the many resources the College of Business offers including the experienced faculty and Venture Accelerator to find an engaging research focus. Some broad types of questions I might explore include how larger companies implement entrepreneurial thought and their success rates, how universities could further drive research to produce innovation and the role of venture capital in successful technology companies.

**Personal Experiences:**

There are a number of key experiences that will allow me to be an active and engaged researcher and member of the College of Business and community. These experiences have prepared me for the dedication and perseverance that is needed to successfully complete a graduate degree, especially at the doctorate level. My goal is to discuss my academic, personal and professional background and show how this has led me to want to pursue this field for a career. I will also show how my background will allow me to be successful conducting research at the graduate level.

My background is unique and also my choice of degrees, but they have all been instrumental in my growth and interest in entrepreneurship. I have always been interested in business, technology, science and mathematics and these interests helped shape my decisions. They also helped in my decision to pursue a master’s degree in Radiation Health Physics and then an MBA. As an undergraduate, I was drawn to business and chose to pursue a degree in Health Management and Policy. The reason I chose this degree is that it offered a business focus but also opened up a career in healthcare. Upon completion of this degree **I knew I was interested in working as a professor and chose to return to graduate school.**

**My interest in science led me to take many mathematics courses and also courses from the College of Nuclear Engineering and Radiation Health Physics as an undergraduate. These science based courses were very fascinating and I decided to pursue a master’s degree in Radiation Health Physics. As my degree progressed I applied for and** was accepted into a Ph.D. program in Medical Physics conducted jointly between OSU and OHSU. I was given a full ride and also nominated by faculty and chosen as an ARCS Fellow, there is generally only one student chosen per department. The fellowship provides each student an additional $6,000 a year and mentorship from a leader in the field.

I set up a practicum at Good Samaritan with the Oncology ward to determine if this is the field that I wanted to spend my life in. Working first hand with cancer patients and discussing with medical doctors potential research made me realize this was not the field for me. However, I still had a very clear purpose. During this time I had been taking graduate level business courses and reading extensively on my own about this field. I was positive business, specifically innovation and commercialization, was what I hoped to have a career in.

**A degree in Radiation Health Physics and an MBA are very different, but I am actually very glad of the time spent learning and researching both areas. They both allowed me to grow and will allow me to be successful as a Ph.D. candidate. The first of the ways it strengthened my abilities as a scholar is that I was selected to design software for my research thesis. The design provided funding for my education through the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. This experience was very important and allowed me to learn many fundamental aspects of research by engaging closely with faculty from the Department of Nuclear Engineering and Radiation Health Physics. It also gave me experience writing and defending a thesis before a graduate committee. Another important opportunity was it allowed me to write and win an additional research grant submitted with Dr. Hamby, a faculty member.**

**The next major opportunity that this provided was the ability to work as a teaching assistant for graduate and undergraduate courses. I also applied for and was selected as an instructor for the Diagnostic Imaging Department at LBCC and completely designed and instructed two courses to fit the requirements of the American Society of Radiological Standards. Finally, the ability to design software sparked a passion for technology and computer science. I am currently building software for a startup that just was accepted into the Austin Entrepreneurship Program here at OSU.**

**This brings me up to when I started my MBA at Oregon State University. I knew that the program was expensive and actively sought funding to help cover the costs of tuition and living expenses. I interviewed and was fortunate to be selected as an Employer Relations Graduate Assistant with Career Services; quite a change from spending my days in a lab with radioactive isotopes. As the first Employer Relations Assistant with Career Service I acquired many skills that will help me excel in the new Ph.D. program here. The first is I helped establish many new programs for our Department. This included an Advisory Committee made up of employers, an Employer Newsletter and our training protocols for future assistants. I also built and tested Beaver JobBlasts which send out jobs from our database to students who match the desired major of each job posting. I also gained leadership experience supervising our undergraduate Career Assistants.**

**While working as an Employer Relations Graduate Assistant I was heavily involved taking business courses and working on the Integrated Business Project for the MBA program. The IBP thesis was ideal preparation for working on a Ph.D. level dissertation. It combined an understanding of research methodology and the application of this to a real business that had to meet the expectations of both academic and investor standards.**

**My Unique Qualities:**

My background experiences are rather unique. I am glad that I have been able to have them as I feel that they have provided me a firm foundation to excel as a researcher in this field. Completing a doctorate is a challenging endeavor but having successfully completed two master’s degrees I feel confident that it is attainable and can also be an enjoyable experience. My breadth of background will enable me to be a well rounded researcher and think in unique ways about research problems and how to solve them. This diversity is particularly useful in commercialization and innovation where knowledge is needed to grasp both the business and scientific components of the research being commercialized.

**My Commitment to Success:**

I have a strong aspiration to succeed and gain my Ph.D. My academic record shows how committed and dedicated I am to achieving this goal. I have spoken with many faculty members about working towards a Ph.D. and many have told me that a lot of times it comes down to drive, commitment and the ability to persevere. During my two master’s degrees I did a good job of finding a strong work life balance that allows me to enjoy being in graduate school and I know this is an important aspect of success.

**Key Factors Leading to My Goal to Obtain a Doctorate:**

There are a number of key factors that have led me to my decision to obtain a Ph.D. I am particularly interested in coming to Oregon State because of the quality and strength of the College of Business faculty. I would greatly enjoy working with them on a personal and professional level. Another reason is that OSU is actively engaged in both theory and practice and this aligns with my personal interest. I have a strong desire to be actively engaged in programs like the Venture Accelerator and Entrepreneurship Club as I hope to be a strong researcher but also knowledgeable and connected to help bring innovation to market. Finally, the fact that the program itself is new is exciting. Being a member of the founding class would allow me to help shape the program and is an incredible opportunity. My goal is to be an active member of the community and contribute back as a student.