**Statements of Goals and Research Interests**

1. **Why are you interested in pursuing a PhD?**

When I first started College I had a limited understanding of academic research. Packing up my car to drive almost 1,200 miles from Fort Collins, Colorado to Corvallis, Oregon was both exciting and challenging. The long trip over the Rocky Mountains was worth it as I found a home at Oregon State University where I gained my undergraduate and two master’s degrees. My experiences led to a love for learning and seeking knowledge, which is the primary reason why I plan to pursue a PhD. Growing up I always respected and admired scientists, but had no clear idea of the career path to get there. Fortunately, the knowledge and opportunity to pursue this path opened up at Oregon State University. I hope to be able to pack up my car again and drive (and sail) the 342 miles to continue pursuing this dream at the University of Victoria.

There are many specific reasons I am interested in pursuing a PhD at the University of Victoria. The first is that it a bridge to the career path I am working towards; to be a tenure track faculty member at a research based university. The second is it will allow me to work hands on conducting research and working with colleagues and faculty engaged in research based on similar interests. The third is it will allow me to share this knowledge through instruction and working with students. Fourth, it will strengthen my ability to engage in empirical and theory based research, as working to analyze and understand data is something I enjoy. What these reasons might not cover is my passion for gaining a PhD, I truly love academic research, learning and the friends and the relationships that come as a graduate student.

1. **How does what we do align with your aspirations? What are your career plans?**

I firmly believe that the PhD program offered by the University of Victoria directly aligns with my career aspirations. These include gaining my PhD in International Management and Organization with a research focus on strategy, entrepreneurship and international management. I then hope to gain a tenure track faculty position at a research institution. An important part of my aspirations is that I want to engage in research that has personal meaning as well as importance for academia and industry. I hope that in my research I will be able to engage with the international business and entrepreneurship community and that my research will help enable innovation, alleviate poverty and do so in ways that are sustainable for the environment and companies engaging in them. The faculty, research and program structure at the University align with my own research interests and would allow me become a scholar engaged in meaningful work.

1. **Why are you interested in studying at the Gustavson School of Business? Is there any research conducted at Gustavson that particularly interests you?**

The research and faculty at the Gustavson School of Business is one of the key reasons I hope to study at the University. Not only is the research published in top journals, I personally find the research questions faculty are exploring to be fascinating and meaningful.The research conducted in the Strategy and International Management stream particularly stands out. A number of themes that run through the research being conducted that draw my interest include the focus on the field of entrepreneurship, poverty alleviation and sustainability. There are two broad areas in the field of international strategy and entrepreneurship that particularly caught my interest. The first is analyzing firms that are “born global” and achieve an international presence early in their life. The second is entrepreneurial firms that are a mechanism for poverty alleviation. One seminal piece that explored and synthesized these issues was “International entrepreneurship research in emerging economies: A critical review and research agenda” by Professor Danis.

Much of the research involved entrepreneurship as a driver of economic growth. What stands out to me personally about this philosophy is that it allows for research that blends important social issues to core business theory. Another recent publication that stood out was Professor Leung and Professor Peredo’s article, “Emergent identity work and institutional change: The ‘quiet’ revolution of Japanese middle-class housewives.” The ability to look at how role-constrained actors with limited power can expand their boundaries was fascinating and tied together aspects of strategy, entrepreneurship and international business. Some other areas included Professor Brannen’s interdisciplinary research involving anthropology and Professor Baggs’ international research with foundations in economic theory. Finally, I really enjoyed Professor Chittoor’s work analyzing the transition of Asian countries toward market economies. What stood out is his ability to look at the social and economic impacts of entrepreneurship and do so in a way that could be published in such a top ranked journal.

1. **Are there current issues in the world today that you would like to address?**

A current issue I would like to address is the ability to improve the quality of life for individuals in developing countries through entrepreneurship; specifically through the use of technology related entrepreneurship. I am particularly interested in the work that the Gates Foundation does and their role in stimulating economic growth. I am currently looking into using data from their global efforts as a database for studying emerging economies. While I am interested in the humanitarian side of business my research interests rest solidly on the ability to create opportunity as it relates to strategy and entrepreneurship. This includes that my research has potential to be published in leading academic business journals.

1. **Provide a 1 page statement of your research interest, and describe what motivates this interest, and how you intend to pursue this in our PhD Program.**

I have a range of research interests but the area in strategy that particularly grabs hold of my curiosity is international business, strategy and entrepreneurship. The motivation for my entrepreneurial interests comes from a fascination of the real life stories behind entrepreneurs. For instance, the explosive popularity of Instagram that relies heavily on network externalities or Peter Theil’s background and beliefs that markets tend strongly towards the economic extremes of perfect competition or monopoly. My interest in international management comes from how fascinating I find different cultures around the world to be. My older brother lived in Japan and I was fortunate to live with him for a while and this really helped solidify my interest in international business. The intersection of strategy, culture, language, economics and politics creates an almost infinite number of research questions that can improve how business is conducted and the quality of life for those whose livelihood depends on these endeavors.

There are a number of ways I would plan to pursue these interests if accepted into the PhD Program. I feel that there are two main components that make up good research and these include that the work has academic relevance and that there is an underlying need for this research outside of academia. My first step in establishing my research would be to get to know the faculty, students and University of Victoria community. At Oregon State University my relationships have allowed me to work as an instructor in the College of Business, at the OSU Advantage Accelerator, at the Willamette Startup Weekend, as a project sponsor in the Computer Science Department and as a part time developer with two small startups. Some things that I hope to take advantage of are looking for research opportunities through the Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives, the Meet the Editors visiting speaker series and hopefully being able to take part in the research exchange that Professor Suddaby is creating.

The second step would be getting up to speed on current research being conducted in the Gustavson School of Business. The main way to do this would be through the research seminars and interactions with faculty during the first two years focusing on course work and research projects. As stated previously I found the majority of faculty to be engaging in research that I find fascinating. Because of this there are many opportunities and I would work to narrow down my questions to some specific hypotheses where data could be collected and empirically tested.

Some very early potential research ideas include working to address the fragmentation found by Professor Danis that exists in international entrepreneurship in emerging economies. Another article I found interesting was published by Professor Grant looking at Fotolia and how they engage in entrepreneurial strategy even though they are in a mature industry. These are a few ideas and my goal would be with the help of faculty to narrow them down to research that shows potential for future publication.

1. **Give a candid appraisal of your strengths and weaknesses.**

I have a number of weaknesses that I hope to strengthen as a doctoral candidate. My current understanding of previous research regarding strategy and international business literature needs to gain further depth. I also need to gain a better understanding on the current and future state of research and what is important to scholars in the field. My research ideas need to be narrowed down to enable me to pursue my interests; but also be able to add to existing theory and make meaningful contributions. My research interest statement reflects some of these weaknesses in that my research interests need to be narrowed down. I am confident that if accepted I would be able to do this through working with faculty, taking courses and research seminars.

One strength important to a PhD is my previous research experience including successfully completing two master’s degrees. My thesis in Radiation Health Physics involved in depth data collection and statistical analysis. I have also taken our graduate level statistics sequence and econometrics courses.Some personal strengths include my drive and passion to gain a PhD in international business, strategy and entrepreneurship. This includes a knowledge of the hard work, dedication and perseverance needed to be successful. Another important strength related to a PhD program is that I am self-driven and manage my time wisely under pressure. I also have found ways to keep graduate school enjoyable. Key among these is the relationships I make with those around me, which is why I would plan to be as involved as possible in the Department.