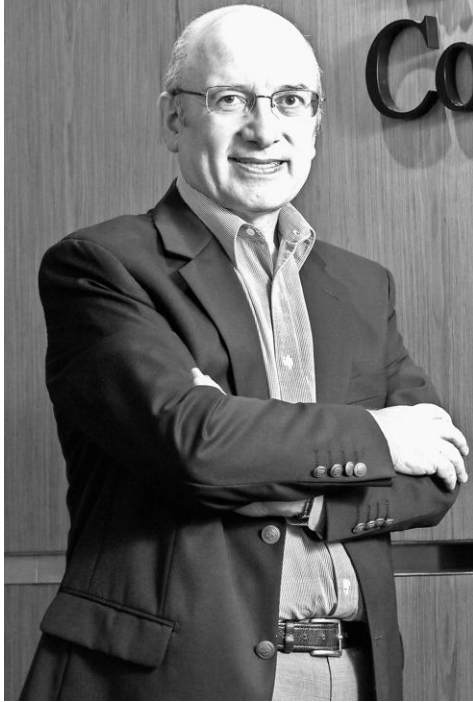


# 城大商學院 College of Business



Professor Muammer Ozer says the programme aims to find innovative answers to complex problems and helps to improve management practices.

# MEANINGFUL RESEARCH

## Senior executives seek answers to pressing business questions

**T**he concept behind the doctor of business administration (DBA) programme offered by City University of Hong Kong's College of Business is to give senior executives the chance to conduct meaningful research into complex issues that affect their own company or industry.

Beyond that, though, their findings should also lead to practical solutions, which benefit not just a single organisation or sector, but ideally can have a positive impact for the wider community too.

"Each of our students comes here to solve an important business question," says Professor Muammer Ozer, director of the DBA programme. "Our professors, with their global expertise and in-depth understanding of China, help them find answers through a combination of coursework, electives and rigorous applied research."

With a maximum intake of 15 students a year, each group represents a diverse mix of

industries, nationalities and chosen topics. The individual thesis subjects might look at anything from leadership to supply chains, digital marketing to private equity, or social media to banking reform.

The common aim, though, in today's fast-moving business environment, is to come up with innovative answers to complex real-world problems and generate new ideas to improve management practices.

"We ask applicants to write a statement about what they want to study and why," Ozer says. "Typically, this is closely related to their work, but we will tell them if it is too narrow or company-specific, too much like a case study, and how to enlarge the scope.

Supervising professors are involved from the initial interviews, so there is a one-on-one relationship right from the start. Of course, much of the later research work is done independently, but supervisors are always ready to help with advice, direction and support."



**The CityU DBA is a challenging journey which is intellectually stimulating and personally rewarding**

PROFESSOR MUAMMER OZER

The first phase of the DBA, which can take from three to six years depending on the student's other work and family commitments, reintroduces executives to the disciplines of formal study and teaches them the techniques of academic research. There are general classes to bring everyone up to speed on economics and management theory plus options to sit in on modules offered by

CityU's MBA and master's programmes.

Importantly, one course covers research methodology. It explains how to conduct surveys, use resources and find the relevant literature, thus ensuring that work on a thesis does not come as a shock to the system. These classes also help to build a sense of camaraderie and mutual support among students, also giving them the chance to share ideas and learn about other industries.

"The CityU DBA is a challenging journey which is both intellectually stimulating and personally rewarding," Ozer says. "During the intensive orientation and structured coursework, we make it clear that thesis writing is based on theory, evidence, data and explanation.

"Students may need to modify and refine the research methodology and question the quality of data before drawing any conclusions. They cannot just make claims based on personal experience or their company's business."