



USA PhD Program
Mitchell College of Business

Writing Workshop
September 30, 2023

Today's Agenda

Workshop Objectives:

- 1. Overview of the USA PhD Program.**
- 2. Provide a basic understanding of scholarly research.**
- 3. Explain how to complete the PhD admission writing assignment.**
- 4. Answer Relevant Questions.**



USA PhD Team

- **Gwen Pennywell, MCOB Director of Graduate Studies**
- **Joe Hair, PhD Program Director**
- **Mickey Smith, Assistant Director, PhD Program**
- **Bill Gillis, Chair, Management Department**
- **Ermanno Effuso, Business Analytics Coordinator**

USA PhD Program

- **Three Year, Weekend Ph.D. Program.**
- **Cohort 12 – May 2024 start**
- **Concentrations:**
 - ✓ **Business Analytics**
 - ✓ **Management**
 - ✓ **Marketing**



Why an MCOB PhD?



- **World class faculty**
- **Research Doctorate accredited by AACSB**
- **Established non-traditional Ph.D. program recognized globally.**
- **Only doctoral program offered by Mitchell College of Business (MCOB)**

Research Doctorate . . .

- **Theory Driven**
 - ✓ Facilitates explanation and prediction.
 - ✓ A set of systematically related hypotheses that can be tested and confirmed empirically.
- **Dissertation Research**
 - ✓ Applies theory, does not develop theory.
 - ✓ Makes a unique contribution.
 - ✓ Enhances analytical skills.
- **Preparation for mid-career transition to university level teaching or consulting.**

Dissertation: An Example

“Older Workers with Younger Supervisors”



- **Typical questions to resolve:**
 - ✓ How to define concepts – older worker, younger supervisor?
 - ✓ How to measure constructs?
 - ✓ Who, how, and where to collect data?

Typical time till Graduation = 3.6 years

Obstacles to 3 Year Completion

- ✓ Identifying a research topic
 - ✓ Data collection problems
 - ✓ Data analysis / statistics
 - ✓ Writing the dissertation
-
- ✓ Career and family changes

MCOB program is designed to help you address these obstacles.

**81% Graduation Rate
within 4 years . . .**



Scholarly Research

“Scholarly research is the creation of verifiable knowledge.”

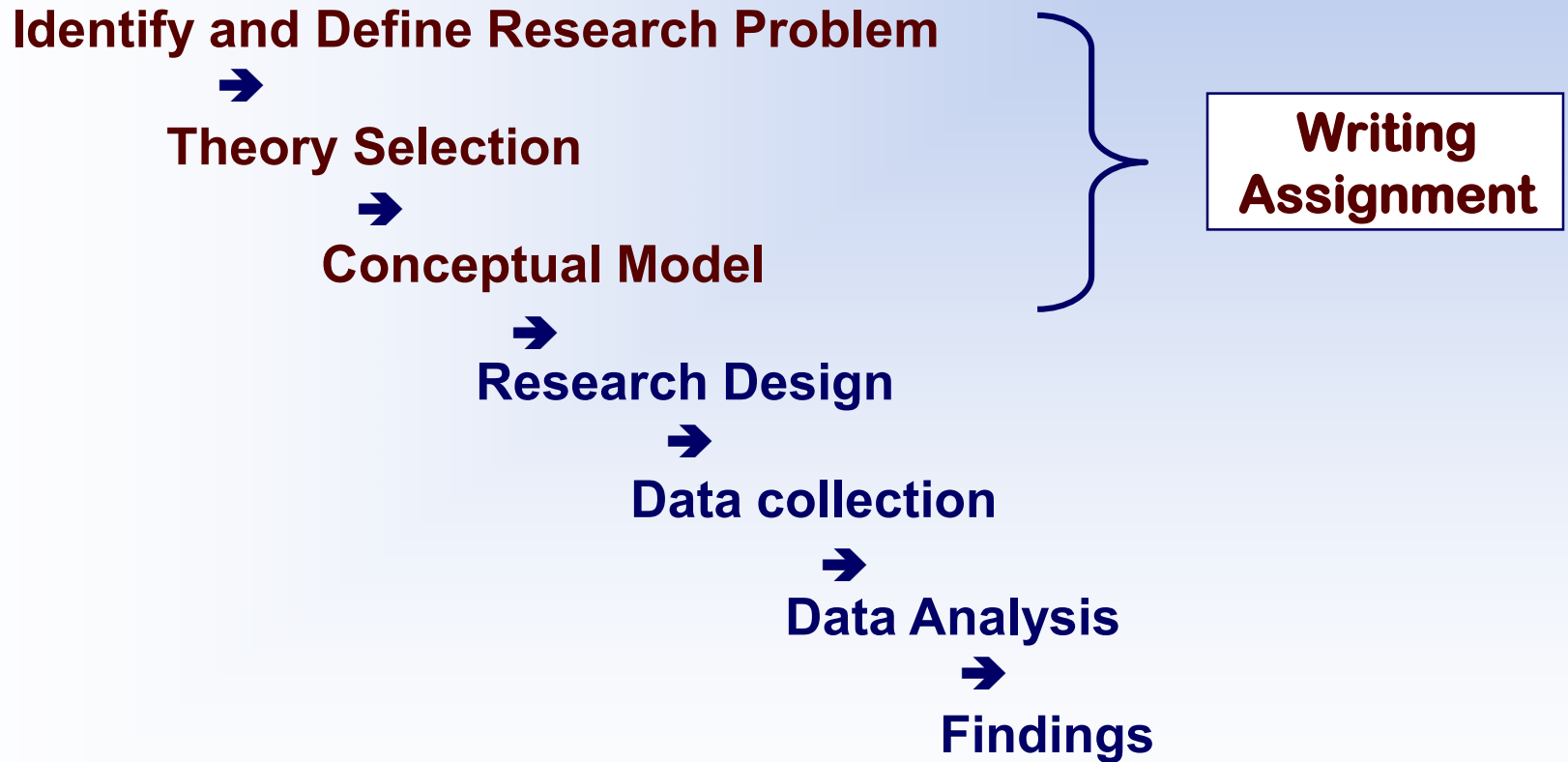
- Empirical
- Replicable
- Analytical
- Theory Driven
- Logical
- Rigorous



**FLAT OR
ROUND?**

Scholarly Research

How is scholarly research conducted?



Define the Problem

- ✓ **Any situation where a gap exists between the actual and the desired state.**
- ✓ **Does not mean that something is wrong – could simply indicate an interest in improving an existing situation.**
- ✓ **Example: How to improve company performance?**

Typical Business Research Problems

Determining . . .

1. How to build your company's brand equity?
2. Why are training programs not as effective as anticipated?
3. What is the best way to communicate with customers – social media, websites, Twitter, Radio, TV ads, outdoor signs?
4. When and how does business analytics improve decision making?
5. Does team building improve outcomes?
6. Which leadership style is best for a particular work environment?

Problems Involve Relationships Between Two Types of Variables

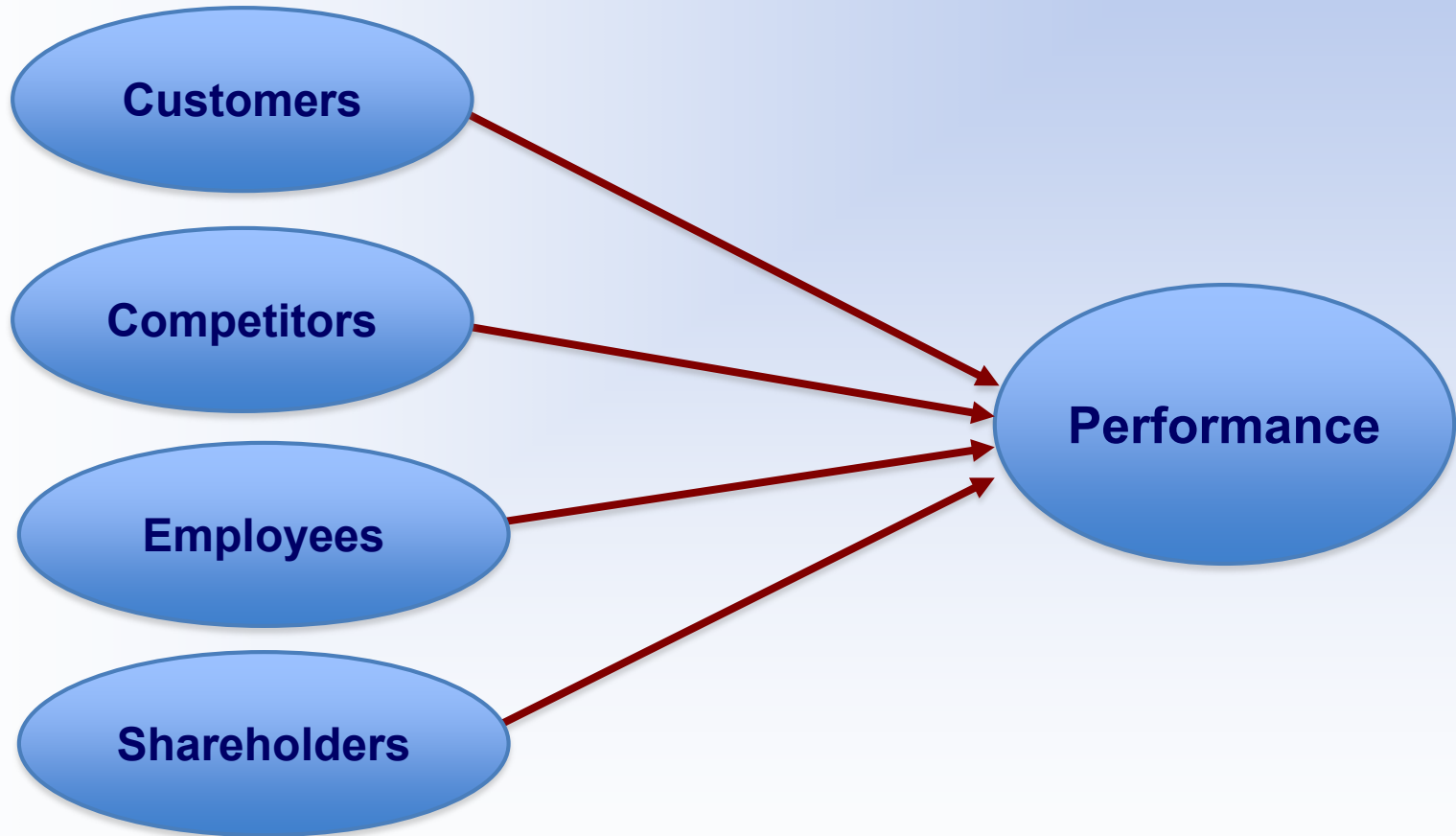
Variable = the observable and measurable characteristics a researcher examines; e.g., performance, job satisfaction, trust, commitment, sales, profit, market share, reputation, etc.

Types of Variables:

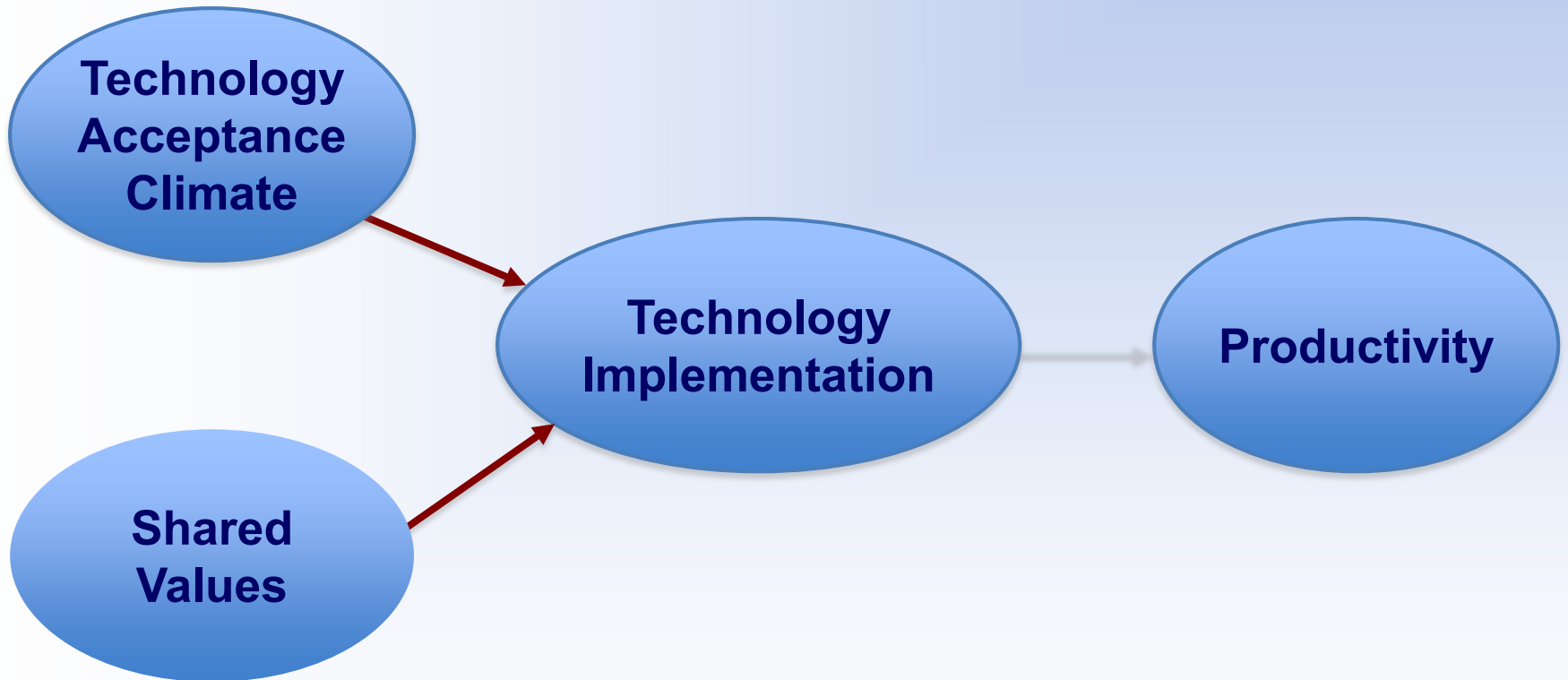
- **Dependent variable = an outcome variable the researcher hopes to explain and/or predict.**
- **Independent variable = a variable that may influence or explain the dependent variable either in a positive or negative way.**

Conceptual Model (1)

Stakeholder Theory



Conceptual Model (2)



Writing Your Research Paper . . .

- 1. Reflect on the research problem you select.**
- 2. Explain why the problem is important and how it makes a contribution to knowledge.**
- 3. What is known about the problem? Summarize what you have learned from reviewing the literature.**
- 4. Refine the problem – list possible independent and dependent variables, propose hypotheses, and develop a conceptual model.**
- 5. Suggest ideas for data collection.**
- 6. List scholarly references.**
- 7. Make sure you have met the requirements for the exercise.**

Requirements and Timelines

- 16 - 18 pages in length (not including cover page, abstract, tables, figures and references).
- Must be received by **January 31st 2024** for admission consideration in 2024 class (Cohort 12).
- Submit electronically in Microsoft Word format, Ariel 12 pt. font, to: jhair@southalabama.edu
- Do not send a hard copy.



Questions?

