What Will You Learn in an MBA Curriculum?

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Individuals who are curious about the value of graduate business degree programs can benefit from hearing what the students in those programs have to say. In 2023, when the nonprofit Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC) surveyed more than 660 current and former students in graduate business degree programs, an impressive 90 percent of respondents characterized the value of their graduate business degree as good, excellent, or outstanding.

Earning a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree is a great way for individuals to strengthen their business expertise. For those who are considering enrolling in a professional MBA degree program, it is important to learn about the MBA curriculum and the topics covered in the curriculum.

MBA Curriculum Topics

The courses in an MBA program cover a wide variety of topics that can help individuals significantly enhance their business skills and knowledge. Through required courses and elective courses, which can qualify students for degree concentrations and specializations, students in an MBA program develop in-depth expertise that can prepare them for leadership roles in business.

Required Courses in an MBA Program

MBA programs typically require students to take a set of core courses that equip them with a solid foundation in an array of business topics. For example, required courses in the Professional MBA degree program at Tulane University's Freeman School of Business include:

- **Strategic Management:** This course covers what business strategies are used for and how organizations develop and implement their strategies.
- **Managerial Economics:** This course teaches students how to apply economic theory to management decision-making.
- **Accounting Measurement, Reporting, and Control:** In this course, students learn about measuring and reporting information regarding a business's economic activities, as well as using that information to make decisions and develop control systems.
- **Business Statistics and Models:** This course teaches students how to summarize, analyze, and make inferences from data.
- **Business Communications:** In this course, students learn about communication theories they can apply in various business situations, as well as the behaviors and skills related to those theories.

Specializations in an MBA Program

An MBA curriculum also includes specializations that students can choose from to customize their degree. Choosing a specialization enables students to study particular topics in more detail and develop their expertise in an area of business. The Professional MBA program at Tulane University offers the following five specialization options:

- **Analytics:** This specialization offers courses in areas such as accounting analytics, web analytics, forecasting, and financial modeling.
- **Energy:** Students who choose this specialization study energy markets, energy risk management, renewable energy, and energy trading.
- **Finance:** This specialization teaches students about investments, financial statement analysis, valuation, and financial risk management.
- **Marketing:** Prepares students to develop effective marketing strategies and leverage digital platforms in today's dynamic business landscape.
- **Strategic Management and Innovation:** Students who choose this specialization study mergers and acquisitions, negotiation, executive leadership, and strategic human resources management.

Key Skills You Can Develop in an MBA Program

Students can choose from several formats for their MBA program. These include a part-time professional MBA program, a dual master's degree program, an online MBA program, or a full-time MBA program, each of which has a similar curriculum.

An MBA curriculum not only helps students expand their knowledge of business, it also provides them with the opportunity to strengthen their skills in areas such as:

- Communication
- Decision-making
- Planning
- Leadership
- Team building
- Project management

Completing an MBA program also provides students with the chance to strengthen their skills in areas such as:

- Time management
- Self-discipline
- Analytical and critical thinking
- Creativity
- Demonstrating self-confidence

How an MBA Can Benefit Your Career

Earning a graduate business degree such as an MBA or a master's in accounting can benefit individuals in many ways. Examples of the benefits associated with completing an MBA program are highlighted below.

Increased Earning Potential

When GMAC surveyed corporate recruiters in 2024, it determined that the median starting salary for individuals who had earned an MBA was $120,000. In contrast, the median starting salary for individuals who had earned a bachelor's degree was $69,320.

Expanded Employment Prospects

The curriculum of an MBA program provides individuals with expertise that can enhance their resume and qualify them for more and different employment opportunities. Earning an MBA also can be helpful in getting promoted to any of a number of positions that require an MBA or a graduate business degree.

Enhanced Professional Network

In meeting and getting to know their instructors and fellow students through an MBA program, students have the opportunity to widen their professional network. Making these contacts can be valuable for graduates in pursuing new jobs, seeking new clients, or learning about professional organizations that can help them advance in their career.

Knowledge About New Fields

The courses in MBA programs can expose students to new subjects they may not have studied while earning their undergraduate degree. This can spark an interest in pursuing a new career path. For example, MBA courses in subjects such as analytics, entrepreneurship, or supply chain management can inspire students to pivot to a new field or industry.

Demonstrated Ability to Achieve an Important Goal

Individuals who earn an MBA show current and potential employers that they have the ability to set and accomplish a significant goal. They also demonstrate their commitment to learning and to acquiring new skills that can benefit their employer.

Gain Expertise for Career Advancement With an MBA

The MBA curriculum is designed to provide students with important knowledge and skills they can use to progress in their career. Whether they want to advance in their current field or branch into a new area of business, students in MBA programs gain the expertise that can set them on the path to success.

Those who are interested in pursuing a graduate business education can explore Tulane University's Professional MBA degree program to learn how it can help them achieve their career goals. Designed for professionals with at least two years of work experience, the program is delivered in a part-time, flexible format that prepares students for leadership positions in business.

Begin your journey toward acquiring advanced business expertise today.

Sources:

- Bankrate, "The Top 10 MBA Concentrations and How to Choose One"
- CareerAddict, "Top 15 Benefits and Advantages of Completing an MBA"
- Graduate Management Admission Council, "2024 Report, Corporate Recruiters Survey"
- Graduate Management Admission Council, Enrolled Students Survey — 2023 Summary Report
- Indeed, "Why Get an MBA Degree? 11 Career Benefits to Know About"