

# Full-time MBA Program

Elective Guidelines

Class of 2016



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## **Full-time MBA Degree Requirements**

The full-time MBA degree is comprised of 46 required core credits, 44 elective credits, and 7 additional degree requirements for a total of 90 credits. Students generally complete 38 core credits and 8 elective credits in the first year and 8 credits of core and 36 credits of electives in their second year. The additional degree requirements are fulfilled throughout the two years.

## **Elective Requirements**

As noted above, most students will complete 2 of the 11 electives in Spring quarter of their first year and then finish the balance in their second year. You may take elective courses earlier than Spring quarter of your first year as long as they don't conflict with your core classes and you meet any required course prerequisites.

## **Additional Degree Requirements**

The seven additional degree requirements include one Foster ProDev course (which you complete in your first quarter core curriculum), the Core Case Competition (in which you will participate in winter quarter of your first year), three Practical Experience activities, and two International Perspective Activities. Details on how two latter requirements can be satisfied are on page 9.

## **Guidelines to Consider in Selecting your Elective Classes:**

**Number of courses/credits required to graduate:** We are more concerned with the number of 3-, 4- or 5-credit elective courses (and/or approved combinations of courses that are counted as equivalent to a 4-credit elective) than the number of total credits. Thus, students are required to complete 11 (4-credit equivalent) elective courses for an approximate total of 44 credits as part of their MBA degree.

**2-credit classes** are equivalent to half (.5) of an elective class. They must be combined with another 2-credit class to satisfy a full elective requirement. Two 1-credit classes can be combined with a 2-credit class to satisfy an elective requirement.

**Standard elective course load:** The normal elective quarter course load for your second year is as follows: Three 4-credit classes (12 credits) Autumn, Winter, and Spring quarter. You may choose to take additional or fewer credits each quarter.

To meet **full-time student** status, you need to take at least 10 credits each quarter. Taking fewer than 10 credits has implications with regard to financial aid, student housing and, in the case of **international students**, student visas. If you choose to take less than 10 credits, check with an academic counselor about your circumstances.

**Degree completion time line:** The full-time MBA Program is designed to be completed within six quarters, and must be completed within six years.

**Grade Point Average:** To graduate, your cumulative GPA must be at least 3.0.

**Graduation enrollment requirement:** You must be enrolled in and pay tuition for at least 2 credits at the UW for the quarter in which you plan to graduate.

**Maximum number of electives in a subject area:** You may take no more than 24 *elective* credits in any single subject area. For example, you may take a maximum of six 4-credit elective courses in marketing.

**Evening MBA electives** are available to Full-time MBA students as well.

**Global Business Forum (BA 545):** This class may be combined in the following ways to be considered equivalent to one (4-credit) elective: 1) three BA 545 classes, or 2) one BA 545 class and IBUS 570 (Study Tour), or 3) two BA 545 classes and any 2-credit elective. The maximum number of BA 545 credits that you may apply towards your MBA elective requirements is three.

**Board Fellows Program (EMBA 529):** You may count three quarters of Board Fellow Program credits as equivalent to one (4-credit) elective.

**CIE Business Plan Competition (ENTRE 540):** A maximum of 4-credits of ENTRE 540 is allowed toward your degree—2-credits from the winter quarter Business Plan Practicum class, and an additional 2-credits are available to you if your business plan is accepted into the Business Plan Competition (and you participate in the competition) in the spring quarter.

**IBUS 570 Study Tour:** Only one quarter (2 credits) of IBUS 570 may apply toward your MBA degree.

## **UW Graduate Courses Outside of Foster MBA Program**

You may request to count toward your degree a total of four (4-credit equivalent) electives from graduate schools (at the University of Washington) outside the Foster Business School. The MBA Program Office must approve these credits before you register. For approval, complete the [Non-MBA Class Request](#) form available on the MBA web site or in the MBA Program Office. Use the form to document the relevance of this coursework to your degree. [Non-MBA Class Request](#) forms should be submitted at least two weeks before the start of the quarter in which you plan to take the non-business class.

- Classes must be offered for college credit (continuing education and non-credit certificate classes are not allowed).
- Language courses are approved only if they are advanced level, non-introductory classes.
- Credits earned in business courses taken at an approved overseas exchange program do not count toward this limit.
- Some non-MBA classes are pre-approved and do not require additional approval. The [Taking Non-MBA Courses](#) page on the Foster web site details the preapproved courses.
- Classes must not have been used to satisfy course requirements for a degree that you were awarded previously. (This does not apply to students seeking concurrent degrees.)
- An equivalent course is not offered at the graduate level for a full year.

**Undergraduate courses:** The majority of your courses are completed at the graduate level (courses numbered 500 or above). You may request to count toward your degree a total of two (4-credit equivalent) electives of undergraduate coursework toward your MBA degree. These courses would

count as part of the four total Non-MBA courses that you can apply towards your MBA. As with graduate courses outside the Foster School, undergraduate courses must be approved by the MBA Program Office before you register. Some undergraduate courses have been pre-approved and are listed on the [MBA web site](#).

You may only take undergraduate business courses under the following conditions:

- An equivalent course is not offered at the graduate level for a full year.
- The equivalent graduate-level course conflicts with other desired courses.
- The undergraduate course is not elementary in nature.

**Procedures for registering in undergraduate business courses:**

Undergraduate courses have very limited extra capacity. If you wish to register for an undergraduate business course, here are the steps to follow:

- Check to see whether your course is pre-approved by visiting the [MBA web site](#). If not pre-approved, you need to get permission from the MBA Program Office to apply the class toward your degree by completing the [Non-MBA Course Request](#) form.
- Contact the MBA Program Office for permission to contact instructor regarding enrollment.
- Upon receiving authorization, contact the instructor to obtain written permission to be registered for a specific course section.
- Attend the first class of the quarter *as if enrolled* to keep up on coursework. If a space is available, student will need to see the Undergraduate Liaison Adviser during “Drop-In Registration Hours” (during the first week of the quarter) to be registered in the course.

## **Independent Studies**

The faculty of the Foster School of Business recognize that there may be occasions on which Foster curricular offerings do not align fully with a given student’s academic, professional, and personal development goals. In those situations, students may be interested in pursuing independent work for academic credit with the permission and guidance of a Foster faculty member and the MBA Program Office.

Following the guidelines detailed below, you may register for independent study in either 2 or 4 credit increments, and you may register for a maximum of 4 credits of 600-level independent study coursework during any one quarter. Successful completion of such independent study counts toward fulfillment of one-half or one elective requirement, respectively. The MBA Program Office must approve independent study in excess of 4 credits. Although 600-level courses count toward degree requirements, the grades are not included in your cumulative GPA. A maximum of 8 independent study credits count toward the MBA degree. These 8 credits exclude independent study credits taken as part of Field Study Management or for participation in the CIE Technology Commercialization Practicum; for those latter categories of independent study, please complete only the Independent Study Registration Form available on the Current Students portion of the MBA website. For all other categories of independent study, please both review the remainder of this document and submit both an Independent Study Project Agreement and the Independent Study Registration Form. Both documents are available on the [MBA Forms](#) webpage of the MBA website.

### **The Independent Study Process:**

Independent study offers the student a great deal of flexibility with respect to topics to pursue. In exchange, the faculty and staff of the Foster MBA Program expect such study to be truly independent. MBA Program staff provide information to facilitate independent study registration. A faculty sponsor's principal tasks are to provide critical feedback at the beginning and end of the process—first to a student proposal and last to the student's completed work—in order to certify the student's effort as worthy of academic credit. Thus, the student is the primary driver of the independent study process and outcome. More specifically, the student interested in pursuing independent study credit is responsible for the following:

- Identifying a topic area of interest and developing a concise, written proposal. Develop a short (2-5 page) written proposal outlining the basics of the project. Feel free to address whatever topics you deem most relevant, but please include a description of your proposed area of study, learning goals, the time investment to which you are committing, intermittent and final deliverables to be submitted, a timeline for each deliverable or phase of the project, evaluation criteria for measuring project success, and a communication plan for interacting with a faculty sponsor.
- Securing approval from your Academic Advisor  
Present your proposal to your academic advisor (**Sigrid Olsen** for Full-time students and **Tim Hossain** for Evening students) for approval.
- Finding a Foster School faculty member (not a teaching assistant) willing to sponsor an independent study. Depending upon the nature of your project idea, staff in the MBA Program Office may be willing to offer recommendations about which faculty might best fit your learning goals; however, they are unable to manage communications with faculty or otherwise secure faculty support on your behalf. Please note that the School is unable to guarantee that a faculty member will sponsor a given independent study project. Rather, securing a faculty sponsor is a negotiated process between the student and prospective faculty that may regrettably not end in a match due to faculty availability, interest, or expertise.
- Reaching agreement with the faculty sponsor on your independent study proposal. We advise you to first email a potential faculty sponsor to assess initial interest and availability. Presuming a positive initial reaction, you should email your written proposal and request a follow-up discussion. Doing so lowers the transaction costs of negotiating with faculty, increases the odds of securing a faculty sponsor, and provides a roadmap for your own successful completion of the independent study project. Moreover, you must submit a project agreement signed by both you and your faculty sponsor prior to receiving permission from the MBA Program Office to enroll in any independent study course. The project agreement form is available on the MBA registration website, and it requires your project plan as an attachment.
- Completing the top portions of the Independent Study Request form and Project Agreement documents, forwarding them to the faculty sponsor for completion of his or her portion, retrieving the completed form, and bringing both signed documents to the MBA Program Office. Independent study registration must be completed within the first two weeks of the quarter, so you are advised to begin your search for a faculty sponsor well in advance of the

start of the academic quarter in which you seek credit. The MBA Program Office can provide you with the appropriate course name, course number, SLN, and faculty code for the faculty member who has agreed to sponsor your independent study. Course credits for independent study are assigned on an “equivalent credits” basis, e.g., a 2-credit independent study should entail 60-80 hours of effort during the quarter (akin to a traditional 2-credit course that meets in-class for 2 hours per week and entails 4-6 hours of effort outside of the classroom per week). Likewise, a 4-credit independent study should entail 120-160 hours of effort during the quarter. Please note that this total is exclusive of work developing the proposal and securing faculty sponsorship.

Full-time students complete registration using MyUW. Evening students must send a request to enroll in the class to the MBA Program Office at [mbaregis@uw.edu](mailto:mbaregis@uw.edu), and either type of student should drop off a hard copy of the signed project agreement and Independent Study Request form in the MBA Program Office prior to registration.

- Executing the independent study project plan, submitting all deliverables as outlined in the plan, and presenting at the end of quarter independent study Colloquium. Just as with any other Foster course, student deliverables should be submitted to faculty via an agreed medium and on time. The MBA Program Office and Foster School of Business faculty recommend that independent study students meet with their advisors on a minimum of 3 occasions beyond initial set-up meetings. These include meetings in weeks 3, 6, and 9. Submission of the final deliverable—including any presentation to an external client—must occur by the first day of the final examination week listed on the University of Washington Academic Calendar in order for the faculty sponsor to evaluate the work product, offer feedback if appropriate, and assign a course grade. Just as in a traditional course, late work jeopardizes the student’s ability to earn academic credit for the experience.

Further, each student registered for independent study must prepare and deliver a brief (10-15 minute) oral presentation outlining his or her study and findings at the end of quarter Independent Study Colloquium. The presentation should both describe the independent study you pursued, explain its significance, and summarize key findings or learnings for a motivated observer who was otherwise not involved with your project. The Colloquium itself is held at 12:30 PM the last Friday of the quarter (the last day of instruction). The MBA Program Office will provide you with room information as the meeting date approaches. Sponsoring faculty are invited but not required to attend, though at least one Foster faculty member or MBA Program staff member will attend each quarter. A student who does not present a satisfactory oral presentation at the Colloquium will be ineligible to receive academic credit that quarter. Presuming that he or she has otherwise made satisfactory progress on the project, a grade of I (incomplete) will be assigned, and the student will be invited to present at the next regularly scheduled Colloquium the following academic quarter. Please note that this means the student’s grade will be delayed by one full quarter (which in some cases could delay a student’s planned graduation). In the interest of timely receipt of academic

credit, please ensure that you add the Colloquium presentation to your personal schedule when you submit your independent study registration materials to the MBA Program Office.

**Types of Independent Study and Required Work Product:**

The faculty envision 3 types of independent study, each with its own minimum work product required to earn academic credit. These are:

1. Academic-based independent study in which students work mirrors that of an existing course offered at another university. At times a student may be interested in pursuing a traditional academic course that is not offered at the University of Washington. In such a situation the student may secure a syllabus from an existing course at another university, complete the work outlined on the syllabus, and author a paper which critically evaluates the content domain of the course. The paper must follow a standard format for grammar and citation consistent with graduate-level university work (e.g., MLA, APA, etc.) and address the potential application of independent study content to real-world organizational challenges or opportunities. The minimum paper length for a 2-credit independent study course critically evaluating an academic content domain is 10 pages (double-spaced, 11-12 point font, with 1-inch margins), and the minimum for a 4-credit course is 20 pages.

Please note that the paper requirement is in addition to any project paper(s) required as part of the regular course syllabus. If the syllabus specifies an exam in lieu of a project or paper, the student should propose and complete an additional project-based paper as negotiated with the sponsoring faculty member.

2. Application-based independent study which concludes with a persuasive recommendation to a real-world organization outside the University of Washington. Foster faculty appreciate the inherent value of application of rigorous, evidence-based academic content to empirical problems. In this type of independent study, the student addresses a complex, real-world, unstructured challenge or opportunity faced by an organization outside the University of Washington. He or she identifies a specific problem, chooses a goal or goals to serve as the performance standard for alternatives addressing the problem, evaluates all viable alternatives, and outlines a recommended course of action complete with implementation plan, timeline, resource requirements, anticipated outcomes, and risks and contingent actions. In many situations the recommendations may be presented orally to the host organization, but they must also be offered in a written document intended to persuade in order to warrant independent study credit. The minimum paper length for a 2-credit independent study course providing managerial recommendations is 6 pages exclusive of supporting exhibits (double-spaced, 11-12 point font, with 1-inch margins), and the minimum for a 4-credit course is 12 pages exclusive of supporting exhibits. The paper must follow a standard format for grammar and citation consistent with graduate-level university work (e.g., MLA, AP, etc.) and should include an executive summary outlining the essence of the logic and rationale supporting the recommendation. In the case of Full-Time students, the written document may be submitted to the MBA Program Office along with the appropriate forms for consideration of fulfillment of a Practical Experience requirement.



3. Research-based independent study for which the final deliverable is a teaching case that may be used in a subsequent MBA course. In this variety of independent study, the student conducts independent research related to a topic of academic and/or professional interest and creates a Harvard-style teaching case to illustrate the concepts in question. For example, in the past a student assessed a market opportunity for a new venture and then wrote a teaching case that described the nature of the opportunity such that readers could assess the opportunity themselves. Please note that the case organization and actors may be either real or fictional, and students should secure the proper release for any non-public material used in the case. The case must follow a standard format for grammar and citation consistent with MBA-level teaching materials, and it must include a teaching note that provides a case synopsis, suggested study questions, a discussion of those questions, and Excel spreadsheets or other supporting analysis materials. If the case is based upon a real organization, the teaching note should also provide a brief overview of what happened in the organization following the period covered by the case. The minimum case length for a 2-credit independent study course is 6 pages of text (double-spaced, 11-12 point font, with 1-inch margins), and the minimum for a 4-credit course is 12 pages. Typical teaching notes run 4-10 pages in length, though you should feel free to use as much space as necessary to convey the information you would like to offer.

## **What Satisfies the Practical & International Degree Requirements?**

As noted earlier, you are required to complete two supplemental activities (beyond the Foster Professional Development course and Core Case Competition that you will complete as part of your core curriculum):

3 Practical Experience Activities

2 International Perspective Activities

There are a variety of ways to satisfy these requirements, and the activity does not need to be completed for academic credit. Outlined below are some of the more common ways to meet these requirements. Keep in mind that this is not an exhaustive list, and you may discuss alternative activities with the staff of the MBA Program Office.

### **Practical Experience Activities:**

*Students who are sponsored by their company are waived out of one of the three practical experience requirements.*

- Applied Strategy core course
- Internship/Project as monitored by MBA Career Services
- Second-year Field Study Management Project, as monitored by Gordon Neumiller
- Participation in the CIE Business Plan Competition at the Investment Round (proposal must be submitted to business plan competition in the spring and accepted to the Investment Round)
- Participation in Entrepreneurial Law Clinic for a minimum of 2 quarters

- Select MBA elective classes (specific classes which satisfy this requirement will be identified on the elective schedule)
- Independent Study Projects with company clients (must be pre-approved by the MBA Program Office)
- Other activities can be used to satisfy a Practical Experience activity with approval of the MBA Program Office. For an activity to satisfy a practical experience requirement, it must contain the following elements: 1) has significant interaction with an established or developing business; 2) provides either research, a service or a deliverable for the company; and 3) has a formal written or oral report presented to the company at the completion of the project; and 4) includes a mechanism for critical, constructive feedback regarding your performance with one or more clients in the organization.

Activities which **DO NOT** satisfy the practical experience requirement include:

- BEDC Board Fellows Program (unless you have completed activities as part of Board Fellows that have met the Practical Experience Activity requirements listed above)
- Participation in case competitions
- Projects completed for the UW or Foster School units
- Study Tour Leader
- MBAA or other student organization leadership roles
- Leadership Fellow

### **International Perspective Activities:**

*Students studying in the Foster MBA Program on an F-1 or other type of visa are considered to have satisfied the international perspective requirement.*

- Two quarters of BA 545 Global Business Forum (does not need to be taken for credit, but you must successfully complete the required assignments and reading as well as meet the same attendance parameters as those taking it for credit)
- Select MBA elective classes (specific classes which satisfy this requirement will be identified on the elective schedule)
- International classes from UW programs outside of the MBA Program (classes must be pre-approved by the MBA Program Office)
- One quarter of upper division business language (should be pre-approved by MBA Program Office)
- Participation in an MBA Study Tour (does not need to be completed for academic credit)
- Participation in one-quarter exchange program sponsored through the Global Business Center
- Internationally focused internship/project (either in U.S. or abroad) as validated by MBA Career Services
- Internationally focused Field Study Management. You need to provide documentation that these projects had an international element and have this verified by Gordon Neumiller.
- Independent Study with significant international focus comparable to select MBA elective classes. Requires approval of MBA Program Office
- Other activities can be used to satisfy an International Perspective activity with the approval of the MBA Program Office. For an activity to satisfy your international perspective requirement, it must include an academic element, such as a project for a class or company focused on an international aspect of business and have significant contact with a culture outside the U.S.

Activities which **DO NOT** satisfy the international perspective requirement include:

- Participation in a case competition with an international focus such as the Global Social Entrepreneurship Competition
- Activities which consist primarily of interaction with international students on the UW campus
- Student organization roles
- Travel not related to study tours, exchange programs or internship/projects

## **Are There Requirements for Certificate Programs?**

**Certificate Programs** are formal programs and requirements vary with each program. The Certificate in Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) has an application process, as well as a specific set of classes you need to complete in order to earn the certificate (some flexibility and substitution is available). The Global Business Program (GBP) also has a set of criteria you must meet to complete their certificate. If you are interested in pursuing either of these certificates, contact the specific program office directly or review their web site.

CIE <http://foster.washington.edu/cie/>

GBP <http://www.foster.washington.edu/centers/gbc/Pages/globalbusiness.aspx>

### **Additional Programs of Study**

Environmental Management Certificate

<http://depts.washington.edu/poeweb/>

International Development Certificate

<http://evans.washington.edu/courses-degrees/certificates/international-development>

Nonprofit Management Certificate

<http://evans.washington.edu/courses-degrees/certificates/nonprofit-management>

Real Estate Studies

<http://www.reuw.washington.edu/>

## **What Are My Elective Requirements If I'm Pursuing Concurrent Degrees?**

The MBA Program has a number of formal and informal concurrent degree programs. To satisfy the MBA Program requirements for these degrees, students must complete the core curriculum, seven elective classes from the UW MBA Program, supplemental MBA degree requirements and four classes in the concurrent degree program.

You will need to work closely with your advisor for the other degree program to make sure that you satisfy all the core and elective requirements for that degree as well.

If you are pursuing an informal joint degree, you should discuss your plans with your academic advisor. Additional information can be found the MBA [website](#).

## **How Do I Know Which Electives to Take?**

There is no magic formula for choosing electives, but the following are suggestions on how to get more information about the course content and instructors. Keep in mind that some electives are prerequisites for other classes and you need to complete the prerequisite to take the other classes.

### **Instructor Evaluations**

Instructor evaluations from previous quarters are available in the University's [Course On-line Evaluation Catalog](#), which you can search for instructor evaluations by course prefix.

### **Course Syllabi**

The MBA Program Office has compiled a collection of syllabi from past quarters. These syllabi can give you a better picture of the topic coverage, style of instruction, type of assignments and exams, etc. The syllabi are on the [MBA Web Site](#).

### **Your Fellow Student Colleagues and/or Program Alumni**

Current and former MBA students (from the full-time or evening program) are your best resources as many of them have taken the courses taught by various instructors.

### **Core Instructors**

The faculty is an excellent resource for giving insight and suggestions on additional courses to take in their field of expertise.

### **Career Contacts**

If you are looking for suggestions on courses that would be good for the work place, you might as well start in the workplace. People in positions to which you aspire probably have suggestions on what subject matter or specific content would be good for you to understand to help you meet your career goals.

## **Registration Resources**

### **MBA web site and Email**

[General Information](#)

[Registration information](#)

[Registration questions](#)

### **Academic Calendar & Final Exam Schedule**

[Link:](#) Important academic dates: start and end dates of each quarters, holidays, final exams, and registration deadlines.

### **Course Evaluation Catalog**

[Link:](#) Searchable database of course and instructor evaluations.

### **UW Quarterly Time Schedule**

[Link:](#) Listing of specific quarter course schedules.

### **MyUW Instructions**

[Link:](#) Access to on-line schedule and other student records.

### **UW Course Catalog**

[Link:](#) Comprehensive listing of UW courses and descriptions.

### **UW Registration information**

[Registrar Home Page for Students](#)

### **Tuition and Fee Deadlines**

[Link:](#) University Assessment of Fees Calendar

### **Withdrawal, Quarter-Off, and On-Leave Policies**

[Link:](#) UW Registrar Official Policies