

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: MASTER OF SCIENCE IN BUSINESS ANALYTICS

for Working Professionals Program



## ATTENDING THE PROGRAM

**What type of student typically pursues an MSBA?**

Students with strong analytical and mathematics backgrounds, who communicate well in written, visual, and oral formats. The program is also attended by students who want to apply data science and machine learning algorithms to provide insights into one or more business areas, and can connect data to business outcomes and strategic decisions.

**Why should I get an MSBA degree? How is it different from an MBA?**

An MSBA is a good fit for someone who enjoys the technical aspects of problems and wants to build skills in business analytics. It's generally the right path if you want to work as the interface between the IT/computer science specialist and the business specialist. One major difference between an MSBA and an MBA is that an MSBA does not offer general management curriculum. Conversely, MBA curriculum does not provide the technical depth to leverage data and algorithms to inform business decisions that you get in a MSBA program.

## PROGRAM STRUCTURE

**How long is the program?**

The program is 23 months long, and the next cohort is from June 2023-May 2025.

**Can I move through coursework at my own pace (faster or slower)?**

The program is cohort-based, to allow you to build strong connections with your classmates. Courses are taken in the order they are scheduled, and you are unable to pace faster or slower through the program. You will remain with your cohort the entire time.

### Is the content different from the on-campus MSBA?

The curriculum and rigor is the same as the on-campus MSBA. The curriculum was designed intentionally for the online format, and built collaboratively by world-renowned McCombs faculty and learning design technology experts. Like the on-campus program, the online version trains you to frame business decisions, to quantify the identified business tradeoffs using data and algorithms, and to explain the quantified tradeoffs in business terms. These skills are acquired through class sessions and projects, and supplemented by meetings with industry leaders around the country (via live online sessions), networking opportunities, and peer collaboration.

The major difference from the on-campus program is the cadence of courses, since you are attending part-time. The Working Professionals program offers additional flexibility, allowing you to participate alongside your busy lifestyle and without interrupting your career.

### What is the schedule?

The schedule for the upcoming cohort is as follows:

#### Summer 2023 - 6 credits

- Core: Data Science Programming (3)
- Core: Information Management (3)

#### Fall 2023 - 6 credits

- Core: Introduction to Machine Learning (3)
- Core: Financial Management (3)

#### Spring 2024 - 5 credits

- Core: Advanced Machine Learning (3)
- Core: Analytics for Unstructured Data (2)

#### Summer 2024 - 6 credits

- Core: Optimization-I (2)
- Core: Unsupervised Learning (2)
- Elective (2)

#### Fall 2024 - 7 credits

- Core: Optimization-II (2)
- Core: Capstone Preparation (1)
- Elective (2)
- Elective (2)

#### Spring 2025 - 6 credits

- Core: Capstone Project (2)
- Elective (2)
- Elective (2)

## PROGRAM STRUCTURE

### How are the course semesters structured?

During Fall and Spring Terms, core courses are 14 weeks and electives are 7 weeks. Electives do not begin until year 2 of the program.

During Year 1 Summer, you'll take two 3-credit courses (10 weeks each). During Year 2 Summer, you'll take one 3-credit course (10 weeks), one 2-credit course ("intensive" - 5 weeks), and one 2-credit course (5 weeks).

### How many courses will I take at once?

You will take two courses at a time. The only exception is Fall Year 2, when you will have an additional 1 credit capstone prep course to secure the data for your capstone. You can take additional electives if you wish.

### Can I select an area of focus or specialization?

You may select electives that focus in areas such as: distribution and supply chain and marketing. However, electives can span areas of specialization, and you are not required to claim an elective focus if you don't want to.

### What are the core courses and the elective courses?

The following are core courses in the MSBA-WP program:

- Data Science Programming
- Information Management
- Introduction to Machine Learning
- Financial Management
- Advanced Machine Learning
- Analytics for Unstructured Data
- Optimization-I
- Optimization-II
- Unsupervised Learning
- Capstone Preparation
- Capstone Project

The following are elective courses in the MSBA-WP program:

- Marketing Analytics
- Supply Chain Analytics
- Demand Analytics/Pricing
- Advanced Data Analytics in Marketing
- Financial Technology
- Data Driven Healthcare
- Operations
- Social Media Analytics
- Time Series Analysis
- Ethics of Analytics
- Data Security

## PROGRAM STRUCTURE

---

**What is the capstone?** The capstone explores foundations of business analytics related to database management, data analysis techniques, and business decision-making to solve a business problem of a client.

---

**Will the capstone be as rigorous as the on-campus capstone?** The capstone will be as rigorous as on campus, and will offer additional flexibility.

## PROGRAM FORMAT

---

**What is the format of the program?** The MSBA-WP program has three components:

- Asynchronous online learning (self-paced, online)
- Synchronous weekly meetings with peers and faculty (live online)
- 5 required in-person immersives (in-person)

---

**What happens at a synchronous session?** Synchronous sessions use a modern and innovative platform to collaborate. They are not straight lectures, and allow for direct interaction with faculty members, peers, and guest speakers. These sessions allow you to engage in demonstrations, participate in active, hands-on learning, and network.

---

**What if I can't attend a synchronous session?** Synchronous sessions are required. If you cannot attend a session for some reason, you will need to justify your absence directly to your instructor.

---

## PROGRAM FORMAT

---

### **What are ‘immersives’?**

Immersives are required, on-campus experiences that take place at The University of Texas at Austin campus. The goal of immersives is to supplement online learning, and provide an opportunity for you to do the following in person:

- Engage with industry leaders
- See demonstrations of MSBA content applied to real-world industry problems
- Engage with colleagues and faculty to practice data storytelling
- Interact with Career Management to receive career support
- Network with your cohort, peers, colleagues, faculty, and industry leaders from both the online and on-campus programs

### **When do immersives take place?**

There are 3 types of Immersive Sessions:

- Orientation (before Year 1 Summer)
- Program (after Year 1 Fall, Year 1 Spring, and Year 2 Fall Semesters)
- Capstone (during Year 2, after Spring Semester)

## RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

---

### **What resources are available to me during the program?**

Resources include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Student Resource Hub with Virtual Lobby
- On-site Orientation
- Academic Success Coaching
- Career Services Programming
- Advisory Council
- Much More

You can talk to an admissions officer to learn more.

### **What resources will help me with my job search or promotion?**

We offer career services throughout the duration of your program, as well as interaction with McCombs’ massive alumni network. Additionally, the MSBA Advisory Council is comprised of industry leaders for the purpose of advising the MSBA staff on the development of the program. Council members serve as liaisons and advocates of MSBA students and offer advice and guidance to the curriculum.

### **How much is tuition?**

Tuition is \$48,000 in-state, and \$53,000 out-of-state.

---

### **Are financial aid or merit scholarships available?**

There are merit and need- based scholarship options available. We also encourage submission of FAFSA. Admitted students can learn more about financial aid through McCombs Financial Services.

---

### **Is the GRE/GMAT Required?**

In some cases, your previous work experience or academic achievement may be sufficient for the admissions committee to evaluate your preparedness for the program. Waiver eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis, as part of a holistic look your application. However, there are a few criteria which may indicate you are more eligible for a waiver.

- Applicants with academic backgrounds in business, engineering, math or a similar field
  - Applicants with work experience in at least one of the following: Writing code, manipulating large data sets, organizing data, or using coding algorithms to solve problems
- 

### **When is the application deadline?**

Admissions are on a rolling basis, and we have several rounds of deadlines for applying, as follows:

- October 17, 2022
  - January 9, 2023
  - March 13, 2023
  - April 17, 2023
- 

### **When are admissions decisions announced?**

Decisions are rendered 6-8 weeks after each application deadline.