

Prospective MBA Student FAQ's

General Questions

Is the MBA a part-time or full-time program?

The program is designed to be a part-time evening program, structured to meet the working professional's schedule, yet some students may go full-time.

Is the MBA program accredited?

Yes. The MBA program is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the professional accrediting body for business schools.

How long will it take to complete the MBA program?

The typical length for completion is 2 ½ to 5 years. The length of time to complete the program varies depending on the number of MBA core and elective courses taken each semester, and whether you take any summer classes. Taking two classes a semester, one could finish in 2 ½ years. Some students will take longer to complete if they must also take the foundation business courses prior to their MBA coursework, which happens if they do not have a business undergraduate degree.

What is the profile of the class most recently admitted?

As for the 17 students entering the MBA program in Spring 2009:

- Average age: 26 years
- Average GPA: 3.3
- Average GMAT: 525
- Average years work experience: 3 ½ years

As for the 26 students entering the MBA program in Fall 2009:

- Average age: 30 years
- Average GPA: 3.40
- Average GMAT: 538
- Average years work experience: 5+ years

Are online classes available?

No, presently no MBA courses are offered online.

Are there students I can speak with about how they like the program?

Yes, contact the MBA coordinator at mba@sonoma.edu to arrange it.

Does the school help with job placement after a degree is earned?

The School of Business and Economics has a Career Center, which offers assistance with advisement, job placement and internships for MBA students.

What is the additional criterion for admission to the Wine Business MBA?

In addition to the main admission requirements to the General MBA, all candidates for the Wine Business MBA will be expected to have completed 24 units of wine related coursework or 24

months of wine industry work experience, or any combination thereof, before being admitted to the Wine Business MBA program.

The wine business MBA has a “24 months wine industry experience or 24 credit hours of wine business-related courses.” What’s that all about and how do I get meet that requirement?

The wine business MBA is geared toward those professionals already working in the wine industry, therefore the prerequisite of the 24 months wine industry experience or 24 credit hours in wine business related courses, or a combination of the two. This prerequisite can be met from a number of ways...verifiable wine industry work experience, as well as professional, trade, and academic coursework through the community colleges, universities, and other institutions. For any academic coursework, transcripts would need to be submitted to Admissions & Records. Professional and trade transcripts would need to be submitted to the MBA coordinator.

Also, realize that the 24 units requirement refers to 24 semester hours and one 4 unit (or semester hour) course is 4 classroom hours for 16 weeks, or 64 contact hours.

If you do not have a business undergraduate degree, you would also need complete the 32 hours of foundation courses prior to taking any graduate coursework.

How do I arrange a campus tour?

Campus tours are conducted daily during the academic year and on a reduced schedule during the summer. Go to the link: <http://www.sonoma.edu/ar/tours.shtml> to book your tour. This is a great way to see our campus.

Application Process

When is the MBA program application deadline?

The application deadline for fall admissions is May 31; the deadline for spring admissions is September 30. All application documents must be received by the deadline.

Do I apply online?

Yes, you can access the application at www.CSUMentor.edu.

What must be provided to the SSU Admissions and Records for an application to be reviewed?

The following must be received by the application deadline:

- application form with essay
- application fee, which is nonrefundable
- official transcripts from each institution attended mailed to SSU Admissions and Records
- GMAT score report forwarded to School of Business and Economics, ATTN: MBA Program from GMAC [The GRE score report is not accepted in lieu of the GMAT score report.]
- TOEFL (for international students)

What are the minimums for GMAT score and GPA to be considered for admittance?

In order to be considered admissible, applicants must score at least 450, the minimum acceptable GMAT score, and at least 20% in both the verbal and quantitative sections of the GMAT and obtain a least a 4.0 on the analytical writing portion. Students will most likely be denied admission with scores below these minimums. The average GMAT of admitted students to the MBA program is 525.

The minimum GPA to be considered for admittance is 2.5; the average GPA for admitted students to the MBA program is 3.3. GPA is determined by the last 60 semester hours or 90 quarter units. Students who meet the minimum requirements are not guaranteed admittance.

What's the code that I use so that my GMAT score report can get to Sonoma State University?

The GMAT/GMAC Institution Code for Sonoma State University is 4723. Sonoma State University is listed as California State University – Sonoma.

What are the factors that will determine my admittance?

GMAT and GPA scores serve as significant factors influencing the admittance or denial of an application. Work experience is not required, but at least two years of professional work experience will increase an applicant's chances of admittance.

How is my GMAT score evaluated if I have taken the test more than once?

The highest GMAT score will be evaluated.

Can I be conditionally admitted into the program if I plan to take/re-take the GMAT after the application period has ended?

The MBA program does not offer conditional admittance awaiting the GMAT. You must take the GMAT and receive an acceptable score before the application deadline.

Can I submit materials, such as GMAT and TOEFL scores, after the application deadline?

You must have taken the GMAT and TOEFL exams prior to the application deadline. GMAT and TOEFL scores will be accepted after the application deadline only if the test(s) were taken before the deadline. In addition, late applications will not be evaluated.

Do I need to submit the community college transcripts and/or transcripts from other institutions I attended, even though they are indicated on the University transcripts I graduated from?

Yes, you need to submit transcripts from all institutions that you have attended. The exception is that if you graduated from SSU, you do not need to submit SSU transcripts. But it is important to verify required foundation coursework from the other transcripts.

Curriculum/Course requirements

What is the structure of the MBA curriculum?

The MBA program offers two programs:

- The General MBA includes 10 courses: 7 core courses (21 credits) and 3 elective courses (9 credits).
- The Wine Business MBA includes 10 courses: 8 core courses (24 credits) and 2 electives (6 credits).

How many credits do I need to complete to receive my MBA?

To fulfill MBA degree requirements, candidates must complete 30 graduate credits.

Is it possible to transfer credits from another MBA program?

Yes, you may transfer up to six graduate credits from another AACSB accredited MBA program to satisfy core and elective requirements. Prior approval is necessary.

Can I focus my MBA on a business concentration?

The MBA program offers two options, the General MBA, and an MBA with a Wine Business concentration. You may be able to focus in a special area of interest through the electives offered.

How many elective courses are required?

The General MBA requires 3 elective courses (9 credits), and the Wine Business MBA requires 2 electives (6 credits).

Is it possible to take SSU School of Business and Economics MBA classes prior to being admitted to the program?

No, you must be accepted to the program in order to take any classes in the program.

Are there any study abroad opportunities?

Yes. Study abroad opportunities are available. Coordination with the MBA Coordinator and prior approval of the intended courses is necessary.

What are the foundation courses?

Any applicant accepted into the MBA program must have completed the foundation courses prior to enrolling in any graduate courses. The 200-level foundation courses could easily be taken at any community college. But the 300-level must be completed at a 4-year university, such as SSU. One scenario would be to complete the 200-level courses, while applying for the MBA program so that the 200-level would be completed prior to the start of the semester that you are accepted into the program, and then once in the MBA program only have the 300-level to complete. You could also complete the 300-level courses at another 4-year university. Graduates with an undergraduate business degree will most probably have fulfilled these requirements.

Class Schedule

When do the classes meet?

Presently, classes meet once a week, Monday to Thursday, usually from 7 - 9:40 p.m. (Fall and Spring). Summer classes typically meet from 6-10 p.m.

How long is each semester?

Fall and spring semesters meet for 16 weeks each and the summer session varies depending on the number of meetings per week.

Fees and Financial Aid

I hear there's a new fee. What's that all about?

As you may have heard, and as explained below in more detail, the California State University system recently approved a supplemental fee for graduate business programs, including Sonoma State's MBA program. The supplemental fee is in addition to the general state university fees, which were also increased. We know that this may present a challenge to some, so want you to know that increased financial aid opportunities are available. You must complete and file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (known as the FAFSA) to be considered. This new award category is "free money," a grant rather than a loan, to help cover the new fees.

Even with the increased fees, an MBA is a solid investment in you. Studies have shown that someone who has earned an MBA earns more on average than a colleague who holds only a Bachelor degree. More importantly, studies show that a graduate degree tends to result in greater satisfaction with both one's career and one's life. Moreover, Sonoma State's MBA program remains a strong value compared to other programs in the region, and we remain committed to continuous improvement of the program.

A few more specifics:

- The fee is \$210 per semester unit and applies to both new and continuing students enrolled in the MBA program.
- The Board of Trustees of the California State University assessed the Graduate Business Professional Fee to begin in fall 2009. The fee is applicable for all state-supported MBA programs subject to accreditation by AACSB (the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business).
- The fee is applied to units associated with required courses taken by students enrolled in masters of business degree programs. Thus, if an undergraduate course is required by the master's of business degree program, the MBA fee would apply.
- President Armiñana has designated 25% of the Graduate Business Professional Fee revenue to be set aside for need-based financial aid. This need-based financial aid is being called "MBA Fee Grant," a new category of aid for which an MBA student would be eligible. For more information about this MBA Fee Grant, please go to SSU Financial Aid Office link at <http://www.sonoma.edu/finaid/>.
- Please refer <http://www.sonoma.edu/ar/registration/fees.shtml>, which details all of the fees required of all resident post-graduate students each semester.

What is the cost of tuition?

For the 2009-10 academic year university and campus-based fees for California residents are \$2072 taking 1-6 units per semester, and \$3113 taking 7 or more units per semester; MBA courses are (3) unit courses. Then the \$210 per semester unit must be applied to the number of units you take. More information on fees can be obtained at the link:

<http://www.sonoma.edu/ar/registration/fees.shtml>

Are there scholarships or other financial aid available?

Scholarships are often available; please refer to the Scholarship Office link:

<http://www.sonoma.edu/scholarship/>. Other financial aid opportunities can be found at the link:

<http://www.sonoma.edu/finaid/>.