



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
GRADUATE PROGRAMS
STUDENT HANDBOOK

The University of Southern Mississippi
College of Business
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Table of Contents

Introduction

Contact Information

Course Registration

Non-Credit Courses

Transfer Courses

Academic Integrity Policy Statement

Grading System

Appeals Process

Scholarship

Application of Credits and Dismissal

Withdrawal Procedures

Graduate Assistantships

Policies and Procedures

Benefits

Master of Business Administration

Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Prerequisite Courses

Foundation Courses

Advanced Courses

Electives

Emphasis Areas

Graduation Requirements

Master of Professional Accountancy

Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Prerequisite Courses

Professional-Level Courses for MPA

Graduation Requirements

The following represent the rules and policies to which you will be held as you progress toward completion of your MBA or MPA degree at Southern Miss. Be sure to read, clarify as needed, and adhere to all the conditions necessary for you to complete your degree requirements successfully.

Except as noted below, (*) the University's Graduate Bulletin supersedes the College of Business (CoB) Student Handbook.

Contact Information

Graduate students are **required** to keep the Graduate Office in the CoB aware of any changes in your mailing address, phone number, and/or email address from when you first applied to the MBA or MPA program. Any written or oral correspondence will be considered delivered if your existing contact information in the Graduate Office is utilized.

Course Registration

Each student must have their class schedule approved by the Director or Assistant to the Director of Graduate Services in the CoB. All new students must be advised before registering for classes.

Non-Credit Courses*

Students in the CoB are limited to six hours of non-degree credit.

Transfer Courses

Students in the CoB are limited to six hours of transferred credit. Applicants who wish to transfer six hours cannot count non-degree courses taken at Southern Miss toward their degree. Any non-degree courses may be considered transfer credit.

The Academic Integrity Policy statement:

Registration in all graduate courses within the College of Business *automatically* makes the College of Business Integrity Policy applicable to you and every student in this class.

A copy of the Integrity Policy is located below and available online at the College of Business web site at www.usm.edu/colleges/cbed. You must read and adhere to this policy.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

College of Business

I. PREAMBLE

The students, faculty (i.e, any person hired to conduct classroom activities or research at the university), and administrators of the College of Business (CoB) recognize that honesty and integrity are fundamental expectations in the academic and business communities. Accordingly, we hereby establish this Policy to be adhered to by all CoB administrators, faculty, and students.

II. FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS' RESPONSIBILITIES IN SUPPORT OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The faculty and administrators of the CoB share responsibility with our students for implementing the CoB's Academic Integrity Policy. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, accepting responsibility for:

A. Informing students that every student enrolled in a CoB course is automatically bound by the college's Academic Integrity Policy. Additionally, faculty will include the following paragraph in their course syllabi that references the Academic Integrity Policy: Because this course is offered in the College of Business, all students enrolled in this course will adhere to the CoB's Academic Integrity Policy.

Students may access the policy directly at www.usm.edu/business/students/acad_policy.html

Or by going to www.usm.edu/colleges/cbed and clicking on Academic Integrity Policy in the upper right hand corner.

B. Clearly specifying parameters of permissible and impermissible conduct in specific contexts, such as course assignments.

C. Ensuring that examinations are properly proctored.

D. Whenever feasible, updating and modifying examinations and other graded assignments.

E. Responding to violations of this Policy according to the established procedures (see "Procedures for Responding to Violations of Academic Integrity Policy").

F. Communicating information regarding violations of this Policy and proceedings of the Academic Conduct Committee only to the Chair of the Academic Conduct Committee, the relevant CoB Department Chair, the Associate Dean of the CoB, the Dean of the CoB, the appropriate administrator of student affairs for the CoB, and persons who are present at any proceeding held by the Academic Conduct Committee.

G. Treating all students in a fair, non-arbitrary, and nondiscriminatory manner.

H. Using students' work for their own purposes only with their knowledge, permission, and proper crediting.

III. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES IN SUPPORT OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Academic dishonesty threatens the entire University community. It undermines the personal and intellectual development of our students. It is unfair to those who do not cheat because it devalues their efforts to learn and the grades they have earned through honest effort. It is unfair to graduates because it degrades the reputation of the CoB and undermines the value of their degrees. It is unfair to faculty because it trivializes their efforts to educate and assess the progress of their students. Finally, it is unfair, as well as harmful, to the student who engages in it because it interferes with his or her moral and intellectual development.

According to this policy, cheating is the unauthorized and inappropriate behavior as defined by the instructor. However, academic dishonesty can take many forms, but not limited to, the following:

A. Preparation of Course Work

1. Plagiarism (copying words, concepts, or ideas from any source and submitting the material as one's own without acknowledging the source by the use of footnotes, quotation marks, or both).
2. Submission of the same or substantially similar assignment to two different faculty members, without permission of both.
3. Unauthorized use of outside sources or another student's material.
4. Citation of sources not actually used in preparation of an assignment.
5. Providing to or receiving from any source assistance inconsistent with the instructor's expressed expectations regarding collaboration.
6. Revealing information to other students regarding pending written or other assignments, unless authorized by the instructor.
7. Falsification of data or results from research or laboratory experiments; deliberate written or oral misrepresentation of results in all matters of research and reporting.
8. Obtaining course assignment answers in a manner or from sources not authorized by the instructor (includes but is not limited to inappropriate use of the Internet).

B. Examination Behavior

1. Unauthorized use of books, notes, papers, calculators, or other materials or devices during exams.
2. Taking an exam for another student, or permitting another student falsely to identify himself or herself in taking an exam.
3. Receiving unauthorized help from or giving help to another student during an in-class or take-home exam.
4. Taking longer than the allotted time to complete an exam.
5. Revealing information to another student about an examination which has not been returned to students by the instructor or has not been authorized by the instructor.
6. Obtaining examination answers in a manner or from sources not authorized by the instructor (includes but is not limited to inappropriate use of the Internet).
7. Altering answers on an examination after it is given back by the instructor in an attempt to change one's grade.

C. Communications

1. Knowingly making a false charge under this Policy.
2. Disclosing information about any charge or proceeding under this Policy to anyone other than the Chair of the Academic Conduct Committee, the relevant CoB Department Chair, the Associate Dean of the CoB, the Dean of the CoB, and the persons who are present at any hearing held pursuant to this Policy.
3. Knowingly giving false information to a member of the faculty to request an alternative date or time for an examination or assignment.
4. Knowingly giving false information to another academic institution or a prospective employer about academic performance.

D. Use of the University Libraries and Library materials

1. Improperly removing materials from a library (e.g., by failing to sign out materials or falsifying an authorizing signature).
2. Intentionally misplacing materials within a library.
3. Marking, cutting, or otherwise defacing library materials.

E. Use of Computer Facilities

1. Unauthorized use of a computer file, program, user name, user ID or user password.

2. Making unauthorized copies of software licensed by the University or acquired for use in a course.
3. Interfering with others' use of computer programs or facilities (i.e., imposition of a "virus," "worm," or other malware or alteration of a class program).

IV. POLICY VIOLATIONS

All members of the CoB community are strongly encouraged to report all suspected violations of this policy. A faculty member who is responsible for a course may respond to a violation within the context of the course in the manner he or she deems appropriate in accordance with the University of Southern Mississippi Student Handbook and will report the violation and his or her disposition of the violation using the [“Academic Misconduct Incident Reporting Form”](#) to the Associate Dean of the CoB. Instances of academic dishonesty may also be referred to the Academic Conduct Committee of the CoB by a faculty member, administrator, or student. When the Committee, after holding a hearing on a complaint, determines that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty, it may recommend an appropriate sanction.

Grading System

- A indicates excellent work and carries 4.0 quality points per semester hour.
- A- indicates excellent work and carries 3.7 quality points per semester hour.
- B+ indicates good work and carries 3.3 quality points per semester hour.
- B indicates good work and carries 3.0 quality points per semester hour.
- B- indicates good work and carries 2.7 quality points per semester hour.
- C+ indicates average work and carries 2.3 quality points per semester hour.
- C indicates average work and carries 2.0 quality points per semester hour.
- C- indicates average work and carries 1.7 quality points per semester hour.
- D+ indicates inferior work and carries 1.3 quality points per semester hour.
- D indicates inferior work and carries 1.0 quality points per semester hour.
- E indicates a course in progress. Not included in the grade point average, a grade of E shall be awarded for graduate thesis, recital and dissertation courses and for such self-paced or skill courses as the graduate Council may designate. An E shall be changed to a P only in the case of credit for thesis and dissertation and then only for the last recorded credit for these courses. Otherwise, the E remains on the record indicating that to receive credit the student must re-register for the course, repeating it on a regular basis until completing it. Upon completion, the appropriate grade, whether P or valuative, shall be assigned.
- F indicates failure and carries no quality points.

- I indicates that a student was unable to complete course requirements by the end of the term because of extraordinary circumstances beyond his or her control. Poor performance or unexplained absences are not justification for the assignment of an “I”. If an “I” has not been removed by the end of the next semester (excluding summer term), it automatically becomes an F. Students are prohibited from enrolling in any course for which the current grade is “I”.
- AW indicates administrative withdrawal.
- WP indicates withdrawal from a course passing after the deadline for dropping course.
- WF Indicates withdrawal from a course failing after the deadline for dropping course.
(This grade is computed in the GPA as F.)
- P indicates a passing grade in courses taken on a pass-fail basis (does not count in computing GPA).

Appeals Process

Any action concerning the student’s status as a graduate student may be appealed to the Graduate Committee of the College of Business. All appeals will be reviewed when the CoB Graduate Committee can be convened or at one of the regularly scheduled meetings. Students will be notified in writing immediately after the meeting.

Scholarship

Satisfactory scholarship is a minimum GPA of 3.0 throughout your degree program.

Students on conditional admittance must be the minimum level of academic success as articulated in their conditional acceptance letter. All students must have a 3.0 GPA to graduate. If a student makes a D+ or lower in a required MBA or MPA designated course, the student will have to repeat the course or arrange a suitable substitute with the Graduate Director CoB. Students placed on academic probation must stay out for one semester and must bring their cumulative GPA up to the required 3.0 within their next 12 credits and maintain a cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 or better until all other degree requirements are completed. Permanent academic dismissal is the result of not meeting the above rules.

Application of credits and dismissal – Students who receive a grade of “C” in more that nine (9) hours of coursework will be dismissed from the program.

Students may not apply hours toward a degree for courses in which there is a grade of “D”; students who receive grades of “D” in more than six (6) hours of coursework will be dismissed from the program.

Students who receive grades of “F” in more than three (3) hours of coursework will be dismissed from the program.

Upon approval by the director, students may repeat only one course to improve a cumulative grade point average. Students whose cumulative grade point average (GPA) or whose program GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on probation. Students must attain a cumulative 3.0 GPA by the end of the following (probationary) semester or they may be dismissed from the program subject to review by a faculty committee and the program director.

Withdrawal Procedures

A student finding it necessary to withdraw from the university must begin the process with the dean of the College of Business who shall complete the withdrawal and refund authorization form. A non-degree student must also begin the process in the dean's office.

Graduate Assistantships

Graduate Assistantships are extremely competitive and are awarded based on qualifications, not need. In most cases, graduate assistantships are only awarded to regular admitted students and not conditional admit students.

Graduate Assistant Policies and Procedures

Graduate Assistants are required to:

1. Attend an orientation session scheduled at the beginning of Fall Semester,
2. Develop a work schedule with their assigned professor or "staff supervisor,"
3. Work twenty hours per week, and
4. Be enrolled full-time (12 semester hours in Fall and Spring) during the duration of the assistantship.

Graduate Assistants are monitored on a monthly basis. In the event a graduate assistant is not performing satisfactory work for his/her assigned professor(s), a warning is issued to the student. If the problem persists, the assistant in question would lose the assistantship for the following semester.

Graduate Assistants are also required to maintain a 3.0 GPA. If a student drops below a 3.0 GPA and is placed on probation, he/she would lose the assistantship for the following semester.

Graduate Assistantship Benefits

Students who are awarded graduate assistantships receive a full-tuition waiver and a monthly stipend to help with living expenses. Graduate assistants also gain valuable research experience.

Master of Business Administration

Objectives/Learning Outcomes

MBA graduates will demonstrate knowledge of information systems, accounting, marketing, economics, organizational behavior, finance, production, international and managerial issues and strategy.

MBA graduates will demonstrate leadership ability and team building skills.

MBA graduates will identify and manage ethical and multicultural issues.

MBA graduates will demonstrate both oral and written communication skills.

MBA graduates will demonstrate the ability to evaluate the business environment, then select and utilize the quantitative or decision-making technique that is appropriate for the given situation.

Course Prerequisites

Demonstrated capability in calculus, personal computer software, writing, and statistics are necessary for admission to the MBA program at Southern Miss. However, otherwise qualified applicants deficient in one of these areas can fulfill these requirements in concert with their graduate course work.

Preprogram Course and Proficiency Requirements

1. Business Calculus or Calculus 1

Proficiency in elementary calculus is required in many MBA courses, particularly in economics, finance, analytical decision-making (statistics), and operations management. All students are required to have a basic knowledge of differential calculus. An undergraduate calculus course is offered every semester at Southern

Miss (MAT 102) or an approved Community College course (Business Calculus) for those students who have not had the prerequisite course.

2. Computer Proficiency

Students are expected to be proficient in the use of the personal computer, especially word processing (Word), spreadsheet (Excel), and presentation software (PowerPoint).

3. Writing

Because writing skills are vital to success in business, all students must demonstrate proficiency in business writing. An evaluation of the candidate's personal essay is typically sufficient to demonstrate the necessary expertise. You will note an increased capacity for business-oriented writing once the program is finished.

4. Statistics

The ability to gather and analyze business information requires knowledge of basic statistics, e.g., hypothesis testing, confidence intervals, and regression. Most university undergraduate majors require a course in statistics and can use these courses to demonstrate proficiency with consent of the Graduate Director.

If a student does not have the required course they are allowed to take an undergraduate course concurrently in their graduate program.

Foundation Courses

Foundation courses satisfy business core requirements and should be taken prior to the advanced courses that are designated as 600 level courses. Business majors who have had these core courses at the undergraduate level may or may not have these courses waived.

Students who are required to take these courses are designated as 2 year students. Two year students can complete the MBA program within 48 credit hours.

MBA 500 Organizational Behavior. 3 hrs. A study of individual and group behavior in organizations, including motivation, leadership, and communication. See also MGT 500.

MBA 511 Accounting for decision Making. 3 hrs. Prerequisite: Computer literacy. A conceptual study of financial and managerial accounting principles designed to enable decision makers to properly use accounting information in making decisions.

MBA 520 Economic Analysis for Managers. 3 hrs. Prerequisites: Computer literacy, calculus. Micro-economic and macro-economic analysis as applied to managerial decision making. See Also ECO 520.

MBA 530 Operations Management. 3 hrs. An analysis of modern operations management in terms of efficiency, productivity, quality, and service to the customer.

MBA 550 Marketing Foundations. 3 hrs. An analysis of marketing functions, concepts, and practices in managerial decision making. See also MKT 550.

MBA 570 Managerial Finance. 3 hrs. Prerequisites: Computer literacy; MBA 511 or the equivalent. A study of financial analysis in managerial decision making. See also FIN 571.

Advanced Courses

All students are required to satisfy advanced course requirements. Thirty hours of advanced courses are required. Students who have satisfied the foundation courses and only require the 30 credit hours of advanced course work are designated as 1 year students.

MBA 600 Business and Society. 3 hrs. Prerequisites: Admission to MBA or MPA program. An examination of internal and external factors influencing decision making with an emphasis on ethics, civic responsibility, social responsiveness, and professional values.

MBA 605 Problems in Marketing Management. 3 hrs. Prerequisites: MBA 550 or the equivalent. Applications of analytical and communication skills in solving complex marketing problems. See also MKT 605.

MBA 610 Analytical Decision Making. 3 hrs. Application of quantitative methods to decision making.

MBA 640 Problems in Corporate Finance. 3 hrs. Prerequisite: MBA 570. Applications of financial theory to complex financial problems.

MBA 645 Communications Skills for Managers. 3 hrs. Prerequisite: Admission to MBA or MPA program. A course designed to develop communication skills as they relate to managerial effectiveness.

MBA 650 Technology in Modern Organizations. 3 hrs. Prerequisite: MBA 580. An examination of the theory and applications of formal models in managerial decision making.

MBA 660 Global Business Strategy. 3 hrs. Prerequisites: Admission to MBA program; Course must be taken during the last semester of the program. An analysis of strategic business planning and implementation from the perspective of top management.

Electives (9 Hours)

Emphasis Areas

The nine hours of electives allow students to select courses unique to their career needs and interests. Hours may be accepted from other graduate degree programs at Southern Miss with permission of the Graduate Director.

In addition to traditional emphases in areas like General Management, Marketing, and Finance, students may choose to mold their MBA degree to focus on New Product Development & Marketing, Public Health, Polymer Science, Sports Administration, and many other fields. MBA degrees are useful whether your career is in the public or the private sector; therefore we believe students should have the opportunity to learn more about their chosen area of concentration through elective course work.

Graduation Requirements

Students must complete course requirements with at least a 3.0 GPA for all graduate courses taken. In addition, all general requirements of the Office of Graduate Studies must be met; this includes a comprehensive examination which is part of MBA 660. Each student must see the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Programs to fill out the necessary paperwork before graduation. NOTE: This must be accomplished the semester before you are scheduled to graduate.

Master of Professional Accountancy

Objectives/MPA Learning Outcomes:

Students will demonstrate that they have acquired technical skills to qualify for employment in accounting.

Students will be able to identify relevant information and think critically in making decisions.

Students will be able to work effectively in a team environment.

Students will be able to demonstrate effective oral communication. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the functional areas of business (i.e., those from finance, accounting, statistics, management, marketing, etc.).

Course Prerequisites

Students with a variety of educational backgrounds may enter the MPA program. Students who have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university must either transfer or take the following courses:

Applied Calculus for Business (3 Hours)

Principals of Economics (Micro & Macro) (6 Hours)

Advanced Business Law (3 Hours)

Principals of Finance (3 Hours)

Managerial Statistics I & II (6 Hours)

Management for Organizations (3 Hours)

Legal Environment of Business (3 Hours)

Global Managerial Policy and Strategy (3 Hours)

Management Information Systems (3 Hours)

Principals of Marketing (3 Hours)

The following lower-division accounting courses are also required:

Principals of Accounting (3 Hours)

Accounting Processes & Systems (3 Hours)

Intermediate Accounting (6 Hours)
Advanced Accounting (3 Hours)
Auditing (3 Hours)
Cost Accounting (3 Hours)
Income Tax Accounting (3 Hours)
Government & Non-Profit Accounting (3 Hours)

Professional-Level Courses for MPA

ACC 605 Current Accounting Theory and Research. 3hrs. Prerequisite: 15 hours of accounting above accounting principles. A study of financial accounting literature and the use of databases to solve contemporary accounting problems.

ACC 610 Advanced Auditing. 3hrs. Prerequisite: 15 hours of accounting above accounting principles including ACC 409. A study of the professional practice of auditing and the role of theory, methodology, and technology.

ACC 620 Advanced Cost/Managerial Accounting. 3hrs. Prerequisite: ACC 320. A study of the theory associated with, and systems and procedures designed to develop and integrate accounting data for management.

ACC 630 Tax Seminar I. 3hrs. Prerequisite: ACC 330 or equivalent. Tax planning with emphasis on corporations, and tax administration and practice.

ACC 631 Tax Seminar II. 3hrs. Prerequisite: ACC 330 or equivalent. Tax planning and research with emphasis on exempt entities, trusts and estates, transfer taxes, and the ethical responsibility of tax practice.

ACC 660 Controllership. 3hrs. The interrelationship of the controller and modern information systems.

MBA 640 Problems in Corporate Finance. 3 hrs. Prerequisite: MBA 570. Applications of financial theory to complex financial problems.

MBA 645 Communications Skills for Managers. 3 hrs. Prerequisite: Admission to MBA or MPA program. A course designed to develop communication skills as they relate to managerial effectiveness.

MBA 6XX Any 600-level MBA course except MBA 660 & MBA 685

MBA 6XX Any 600-level MBA course except MBA 660 & MBA 685

A minimum of ten (10) courses must be taken at the graduate level with at least seven (7) courses numbered over 600 and at least three (3) MBA courses.

Graduation Requirements

Students must complete course requirements with at least a 3.0 GPA for all graduate courses taken. In addition, all general requirements of the Office of Graduate Studies must be met; this includes an oral comprehensive examination. Each student must see the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Services to fill out the necessary paperwork before graduation. NOTE: This must be accomplished the semester before you are scheduled to graduate.