

## **Preface**

### ***MS in Business Analytics Student Handbook***

Dear Student,

Welcome to the MSBA (Master of Science in Business Analytics) program at Isenberg. We are glad to have you as part of the Isenberg MSBA diverse and inclusive community and are committed to supporting you throughout your academic journey.

The Isenberg MSBA program is rigorous and AACSB-accredited, with a strong emphasis on experiential, collaborative learning. Whether you study on campus in Amherst or Newton, or online, we offer the same quality curriculum, accomplished faculty, and uniquely supportive culture.

Isenberg MSBA students have access to all resources provided on our Amherst campus, including dedicated academic advisors and career coaches. As you review this handbook, we encourage you to reach out to your assigned advisor with any questions or concerns. We are here to assist you and ensure a smooth and successful academic experience.

Thank you for choosing the Isenberg MSBA program. We look forward to supporting you and hope this handbook serves as a valuable resource to guide you along the way.

Sincerely,

Isenberg Graduate Programs Team

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# Isenberg School of Management

## *MS in Business Analytics Student Handbook*

### **Purpose of this handbook**

The primary purpose of this handbook is to provide Isenberg graduate students in the M.S. Business Analytics (MSBA) program at the University of Massachusetts with the information necessary to navigate their time as graduate students in the department. This manual specifies the requirements for obtaining the MSBA degree and other essential information. Program and degree requirements comprise a suite of steps, milestones, and deadlines. Some of these are internal requirements governed by the Isenberg Graduate Programs Department policies while others are University requirements governed by policies of the University's Graduate School. Please use this manual, which provides department-specific information, in conjunction with the Graduate School Bulletin and the [Graduate Students Handbook](#) issued by the Graduate School and Graduate Dean's Office, and available online at the Graduate School Webpage. All students are expected to be familiar with departmental, program, and University graduate degree requirements. Responsibility for meeting degree requirements rests with the student, and not with the Graduate School or Isenberg Graduate Programs staff.

### **Program Contact Information**

Nikunj Kapadia, Associate Dean of Graduate Programs, [nkapadia@isenberg.umass.edu](mailto:nkapadia@isenberg.umass.edu)  
 Jeanne Bagdon, Executive Director of Specialty Master's Programs, [jbagdon@isenberg.umass.edu](mailto:jbagdon@isenberg.umass.edu)  
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 Katie Ahlman, International Programs Advisor, International Programs Office, [kahlman@umass.edu](mailto:kahlman@umass.edu)

### **Academic Advising Resources**

All active MSBA students are assigned an Academic Advisor. Your advisor is listed on your Student Center page in SPIRE under Primary Advisor. You may also access advisors via the [MSBA Advising Resources page](#). Your advisor will work with you throughout your time in the program and is your primary point of contact for navigating the university and its resources.

### **Role of Academic Advisor**

Your advisor can help you with the following:

- Remind you of upcoming dates and other important information
- Confirm degree progress when requested

- Answer questions via email and phone, virtual, or in-person appointments
- Assist with registration & course selection
- Review transfer credit and waiver requests
- Work with the Graduate School to facilitate degree completion

## **Role of Career Coach**

Your executive career coach will help you with all aspects of your career development, from researching a career path, to resume building, to evaluating an offer and decision making. Students may attend specialized workshops and receive support in business communication via the [Iconnect Virtual Career Center](#).

## **Student Responsibilities**

As a graduate student, you are responsible for the following actions:

- Make sure to check your UMass email and Canvas daily to stay on top of coursework announcements, important events or issues that may arise. UMass has a single email policy and all communications from faculty and the department will go to your UMass email only.
- Regularly review the MSBA Advising Resource Page for links to important documents and resources and to keep track of important announcements.
- Keep track of the important semester dates and Add/Drop deadlines on the Academic Calendar.
- Review registration details when posted and enroll promptly in classes when registration opens.
- Reach out to faculty and/or academic advisor for help with coursework or program related questions.
- Check SPIRE account often to pay Bursar bills and to resolve any Holds & To-Do items in your student center.
- Work with your academic advisor to ensure you are meeting your degree requirements successfully. Submit Degree Eligibility Form in your final semester to initiate degree clearance.
- Utilize career resources and make appointments with MSBA career coaches to discuss career search plans and opportunities.
- International students must remain in compliance with their F-1 student status enrollment requirements.

## **Academic Requirements**

The MSBA program requires completion of 31-32 credits; 19 core credits, and 12-13 elective credits depending on the track you choose. The Business Foundations Track, 13 credits, covers fundamental business content including accounting, finance, marketing, and leadership/organizational behavior. The Data Analytics track, 12 credits, takes a deeper dive into data science and targeted analytics content. Tracks do not appear on the transcript or diploma. Students who choose to add the optional Advanced Analytics focus must take an additional 9 credits of electives, bringing the total to 40-41 credits. The additional focus area will appear on the transcript only. Students should review the [Degree](#)

[Requirements Checklist](#) for reference.

Students can complete the MSBA program in-person at UMass Amherst or at the Mt. Ida campus in Newton, or fully online. If a student wants to change their subplan, you must get approval from your academic advisor. Switching subplans may not be guaranteed due to scheduling variations.

Course transfer/waivers:

Graduate courses taken within three years of admission into the program where a B or better grade was earned, not used to satisfy another degree, are eligible for transfer. Other criteria apply. Students can transfer up to 6 credits from another accredited university toward their Isenberg MSBA. Courses and their respective credits that transfer will reduce the number of credits required to complete the MSBA degree. Students may also waive up to 6 credits of the core curriculum. Waivers do not reduce the number of credits; they simply allow students to replace a core class with an elective. Students will work with their academic advisor for courses to be considered for transfers or waivers. Isenberg undergraduate students who have taken comparable OIM (Operations and Information Management) courses may be eligible for additional waivers. Please discuss with your academic advisor for further approval.

## Dual Degree

Students must officially apply to the Online [MBA/MS in Business Analytics](#) Dual Degree program option. Once accepted, students will work with their academic advisor to fulfill the degree requirements for both programs and complete the required 62 credits. Upon successful completion, two distinct degrees will be awarded: Master of Business Administration and Master of Science in Business Analytics. Students will submit two separate degree eligibility forms in their last semester. Students have an opportunity to apply for the dual degree option until they reach the final semester of their MSBA program and meet the application deadlines. The online option is not applicable to international students on an F-1 Visa. The On-Campus MBA/MSBA Dual program requires concurrent enrollment. Students must meet the admissions requirements for both programs.

## International Students

International students in the MSBA program are responsible for completing the check-in form when arriving to campus. This is sent to your UMass email from the International Programs Office (IPO), so make sure to complete the form as soon as you receive it. International students are responsible for maintaining the [F-1 Visa enrollment guidelines](#) outlined on the International Programs Office (IPO) website. Failure to comply with these guidelines will jeopardize your F1 status.

- Full-time status for graduate students is defined as a minimum of 9 credits per term (Fall and Spring).
- Only one (1) online class per term (Fall and Spring) can be used to count towards the minimum number of credits needed for full-time enrollment. (*ex. If you are taking 9 credits, 6 credits, must be in-person.*)

- Students in their final semester can be less than full-time as long as they meet in-person requirements. If you only need 1 course to complete your program of study, the course **must** be in-person.

CPT is an optional part of the MSBA program. The internship must be an integral part of the program and must be approved by Career Services, Academic Advisor, and the IPO. Students who wish to pursue CPT must have met the following criteria to be eligible to participate:

- Completed two full semesters in F-1 immigration status **or**
- Meet the MS in Business Analytics (MSBA) Field Experience requirements: Complete one academic semester in the United States successfully completing 2 of the following analytics courses (601, 602 or 609).
- After or during internship experience, apply industry experience in an analytics project-based course (655, 656 or 657).
- Good Academic Standing
- Satisfactory Progress toward degree

The Isenberg MSBA on-campus program is a STEM designated program. The STEM OPT (Optional Practical Training) classification allows students to extend their time in the U.S (United States). to gain practical work experience, and the CPT (Curricular Practical Training) requirements allow them to accept paid internships.

Further instructions and criteria on CPT and OPT can be found here:

[CPT for MSBA Students](#)

[OPT for International Students](#)

All Visa and immigration related matters should be directed to the IPO. Please review all communications from your academic advisor and International Programs advisor to ensure compliance.

## **Accelerated 4+1**

For UMass Amherst students, the 4+1 option can be accelerated and up to 12 graduate credits (4 courses) can be taken while students complete their undergraduate degree. Up to 6 credits (2 courses) may be allowed to double-count for both the undergraduate degree and the graduate degree based on undergraduate advisor approval. Double counting is not always guaranteed.

Undergraduate students who wish to accelerate their 4+1 program, should apply to the MSBA in their junior year or early in their senior year.

MSBA Courses available to accelerated undergraduates:

SCH-MGMT 601 Data Management using Spreadsheets

SCH-MGMT 602 Database Management for Analytics

SCH-MGMT 609 Business Applications with Python

SCH-MGMT 656 Project Management

SCH-MGMT 660 Marketing Strategy

SCH-MGMT 680 Leadership & Organizational Behavior

## **Academic Progress/Standing**

**Good Standing:**

A graduate student must have a 3.0 cumulative GPA in their degree program to be in good academic standing. The University will not clear students for graduation if their cumulative GPA is below 3.0.

**Graduate Academic Warning:**

A student will be placed on Academic Warning if their cumulative GPA falls below 3.0. Academic advisors will contact any student that receives a GPA below 3.0 at the end of any semester to discuss plans to successfully get back on track.

**Graduate Academic Hold:**

A student will be placed on Academic Hold if their GPA falls further below the GPA from the semester of Academic Warning. Students placed on Academic Hold will have an enrollment hold on Spire and must meet with their academic advisor before enrolling in classes.

**Graduate Academic Hold (continued):**

The student is making progress to increase their GPA but remains under 3.0. An enrollment hold will remain on Spire, and the student must meet with their academic advisor to ensure continued progress.

**Graduate Academic Dismissal:**

A student who does not make progress towards good standing is subject to academic dismissal.

**Grading Policies for MS Business Analytics**

Students should familiarize themselves with the University/Program grading policies:

- All grades in the MS Business Analytics program are graduate letter grades.
- Pass / Fail grades are not permitted for any course in the program with the exception of 518 Career & Professional Development Workshop and some 1-credit elective options.
- INC grades will convert to incomplete fail grades after 1 year if not resolved. \*
- Grades of C and higher earn credit towards your degree requirements.
- A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher is required to graduate. No exceptions will be made.

*\*Students who receive an INC grade must work with the instructor to outline and confirm the deliverables and due dates for all outstanding work. Incomplete/Fail grade counts as an F toward overall GPA. Program GPA includes all courses on the Degree Eligibility Form.*

**Enrollment Requirements**

It is the student's responsibility to follow the [academic calendar](#) for important semester dates. These include:

- Registration
- Add/Drop
- Preview week and semester start

Degree-seeking graduate students are required to maintain [continuous enrollment](#) by registering every

fall and spring semester until their degree is awarded.

If you are not registering for any courses or credits in a fall or spring semester and you are not filing for your degree, you must enroll in the Continuous Enrollment course, also known as Program Fee. You can enroll in the Continuous Enrollment course in SPIRE prior to the end of add/drop each fall and spring semester. The Class Number for Continuous Enrollment is found in the Schedule of Classes under GRADSCH 999.

- An incomplete course from a previous semester does not maintain your enrollment.
- First semester students are not eligible for Continuous Enrollment.
- The current cost for Continuous Enrollment/Program Fee is \$285.00 (in addition to the registration fee) which will be billed by the Bursar's Office. This fee is subject to change by the University.

## **Statute of Limitations**

The Statute of Limitations (SOL) is the period within which all degree requirements must be completed. For all MSBA students, the SOL is automatically set for 4 years in SPIRE. However, the traditional full-time program is structured as a one-year, three semester program. International students must follow the full-time [F-1 Visa enrollment guidelines](#).

A graduate student may be granted additional time to complete their degree program by the Graduate Dean provided the student's Graduate Program Director makes such a recommendation and provided satisfactory and reasonable progress is being made.

## **Re-Admission**

If a student has been discontinued from the program due to failure to enroll, re-admission is not guaranteed. Re-admission requests must be submitted to the student's assigned advisor at least two months prior to the re-entry semester start date. Readmit requests submitted late are not guaranteed to be processed for that semester. Upon re-admission, students will be charged a \$125 re-admission fee and a continuous enrollment fee of \$285 for each required semester not enrolled. This fee is capped at \$2000 and does not include any future continuous enrollment fees the student may incur.

The student is responsible for reviewing all re-admission fees. Any outstanding charges with the University must be cleared before being re-admitted. After confirming the re-admission fees and process, students will contact their academic advisor for the next steps.

Students who decline their offer of acceptance or who actively withdraw from the program and wish to return must reapply for the program subject to the admissions requirements at that time.

## **Graduation Requirements**

The University has three times a year when degrees are conferred; September, February, and May. A student that completes their degree requirements during the summer would have their degree conferred

in September. Students completing their degree requirements in fall or winter would have a confer date of February, and those who complete their degree requirements in spring have a confer date of May. There is only one graduation ceremony each year and that occurs in May. September and February graduates participate in the May events following their degree conferment.

To graduate from the Master of Science in Business Analytics program, you must fulfill all the following:

- Must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better.
- Must have completed all the courses outlined on the [Degree Requirements Checklist](#).
- A complete, signed and dated [Degree Eligibility Form](#) must be submitted to your Academic Advisor during your final semester in the program by the deadline. If you miss the deadline, you will be required to refile for graduation in the next semester. Note: this may require that you enroll in Continuous Enrollment for the following term.

## Academic Honesty

The MSBA program follows the [University's Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures](#):

The Academic Honesty Policy was established to ensure that the learning environment at the university is honest and fair. The policy is designed to provide faculty and students with options for handling incidents. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

- **Cheating** - intentional use or attempted use of trickery or deception in one's academic work
- **Fabrication** - intentional falsification and/or invention of any information or citation
- **Plagiarism** - knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own work
- **Facilitating dishonesty** - knowingly helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty

As a professional school, our alumni/ae are employed in positions in which they hold fiduciary responsibility, control of confidential data on customers and employees, and access to highly confidential information. As a result, employers must know that our students are not only academically qualified but have a level of integrity that they can bring with them into their organizations. Thus, our policy regarding cheating is stringent with the expectations of the role and standards of a business professional today.

## Email Use

The University allows each student to have an email account. The email system is to be used in a professional and respectful manner. Misuse of the email system will result in termination of access privileges. It should also be noted that the university uses a single email policy. All communications from Isenberg and the University of Massachusetts, Amherst will go only to your UMass email. It is the student's responsibility to closely monitor all communications sent from the Isenberg Graduate Programs Department, including academic advisors, faculty, and leadership team.

## Professional Code of Conduct

The standard of conduct expected of any MSBA student is the same as that of a professional in any organizational setting. We do not condone or accept actions that discriminate against other students; we will not tolerate harassment in any form of another individual. All students should review the University policy toward sexual harassment in the *Graduate Student Handbook*.

Each year, the Isenberg School MSBA Program strives to accept a diverse group of students. In this regard, students are encouraged to learn from and develop an appreciation of the diverse cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives of fellow students. This is a strength of the program that should be protected and cultivated.

Students who cannot follow the guidelines regarding discrimination and harassment or follow an acceptable standard of professional conduct and respect for others will be dismissed from the Isenberg School of Management.

Every student also has a responsibility to encourage the progress or employment opportunities of other individuals enrolled in the program. In this regard, students must recognize that their dealings with outside parties should reflect positively on the program for the benefit of all involved.

### **Office of Career Success MSBA Career Management Standards**

The Office of Career Success at the Isenberg School of Management has worked tirelessly to establish a relationship with prospective employers for graduates of the program. The maintenance of these relationships is of foremost concern to us and future students who attend the University. We need your help in continuing to foster the strength of these relationships. This goal can only be accomplished with your assistance. Make certain that every one of your interactions with external constituents reinforces the professionalism and quality of our program.

It is important to underscore that every communication you have with employers, alumni, faculty, peers, or other external constituencies reflect on you and the entire MSBA program. We expect the highest standards of professionalism to be reflected in these communications.

