

MBA ACADEMIC POLICIES

Graduate Business Administration Academic Policies

Admission

Students applying for admission to the MBA program are required to complete the graduate admission application available on the MCLA MBA website. The program requires an undergraduate degree in business or related field in order to waive the pre-requisite courses required to complete the MBA program. Transfer credits are accepted up to a maximum of six (6) credit hours for core or elective courses with grades of B or better and must be no more than five years old, taken at an accredited institution. Currently, the MBA program is a part-time, six (6) credits per semester program totaling 30 credits and does not meet the nine (9) credits per semester required for full-time status for international students.

To Apply:

Candidates may apply by completing the graduate application available through the MCLA MBA website. In addition to the application, the following items are required:

- Official college transcript
- Personal statement
- Three professional letters of recommendation
- Resume or curricula vitae (CV)
- Application fee

Before acceptance to the program, candidates may be required to complete an interview with the MBA Program Director or program designee. Meeting the minimum standards does not guarantee admission into the MBA program. Accepted students may defer enrollment for up to one year. After one year, students must reapply for admission.

See more:

- Waiver Policy
- Transfer of Graduate Credit Policy

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism

A college is a community of students and faculty interested in the search for knowledge and understanding. Essential to that search is a commitment to honesty and integrity. Honesty on the part of every college student has and always shall be an integral part of the plan of higher education at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. Acts of dishonesty conflict with the work and purpose of the entire College and are not merely a private matter between student and instructor.

Violations of academic honesty include but are not limited to:

- plagiarism (as defined below)
- submitting the work of others as one's own
- communication during an examination
- using crib notes in an exam, except as allowed by the instructor
- obtaining prior knowledge of examination questions
- substitution of another student in an examination
- altering College academic records

- knowingly using false statements for academic benefit
- collaborating on material after being directed not to collaborate
- forging a signature of a College official or faculty member
- soliciting an official signature under false pretense

Plagiarism

The academic departments of the College have varying requirements for reporting the use of sources, but certain fundamental principles for the acknowledgment of sources apply to all fields and levels of work. The use of source materials of any kind and the preparation of essays or laboratory reports must be fully and properly acknowledged. In papers or laboratory reports, students are expected to acknowledge any expression or idea that is not their own. Students submitting papers are implying that the form and content of the essays or reports, in whole and in part, represent their own work, except where clear and specific reference is made to other sources. Even if there is no conscious intention to deceive, the failure to make appropriate acknowledgment may constitute plagiarism.

Any quotation - even of a phrase - must be placed in quotation marks and the precise source stated in a note or in the text; any material that is paraphrased or summarized and any ideas that are borrowed must be specifically acknowledged. A thorough reordering or rearrangement of an author's text does not release the student from these responsibilities. All sources that have been consulted in the preparation of the essay or report should be listed in the bibliography.

Upon an occurrence of alleged academic dishonesty instructors may exercise their discretion in imposing a sanction. Instructors may further file charges with the Academic Appeals Committee against students if they believe that additional sanctions would be appropriate. Instructors shall notify the Registrar in writing of any occurrence of academic dishonesty whenever they have imposed sanctions. Such notification shall include the student's name, course title, date of occurrence, type of dishonesty, sanction(s) being imposed, and any further action requested.

This notification shall be effected within fourteen (14) days after discovery of the incident. A copy of said notice shall be sent to the student involved, including the charges made against the student and the grounds, if proven, that would justify failure or other academic sanction. If the student involved wishes to appeal the sanction imposed by the instructor, the student must initiate an appeal within two weeks after receipt of this notification. The Academic Appeals Committee shall consider as a basis for a hearing that:

1. the student claims not to have been academically dishonest;
2. the student claims the instructor imposed an inappropriate sanction;
3. the nature of the offense merits further action.

In academic dishonesty cases the Committee may receive requests for hearings from students, from individual faculty and staff members, and from the Registrar. The Graduate Education Council reserves the right not to hear any appeal in any case where data are not sufficient, the necessary steps have not been followed, and/or when the Council jurisdiction is not clear.

Further information regarding instructor and student rights and responsibilities and appropriate procedures to be followed in applying this policy may be obtained from the Office of Graduate and Continuing Education or the Registrar.

Academic Standing

MBA students must maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average (GPA) in degree course work with no course grade lower than "C" at all times. If a student's GPA falls below the required 3.0 minimum after completion of a minimum of 9 credits of MBA course work, the student will be placed on probation. After a student has been placed on probation, the student has one semester to raise his or her grade point average to 3.0. If the GPA is not raised (to 3.0 or above), the student will be dismissed from the MBA program for academic insufficiency. A suspended MBA student is eligible to petition for readmission after one calendar year.

Attendance

Class attendance is taken very seriously, and students may be penalized for unexcused absences within the grading process. Students are expected to attend classes regularly, since this is a necessary means of learning and of attaining the educational objectives of the College. Since course design and objective vary, attendance policies are set forth in each instructor's course syllabus.

Completion Timeframe

Students are expected to complete the degree within five years after they begin their first 600-level course. In extraordinary circumstances, a time extension may be granted through approval of the MBA Program Director. Students must contact the MBA Program Director to initiate a one time-extension appeal. Although the five-year time limit should be observed, no loss of credit will result.

Course Drop/Withdrawal

If a student must drop from a course for extenuating circumstances (such as family situation, military service, or extremely urgent work-related issues), they must initiate a course drop, available from the Registrar website, within seven academic days of the start of the course. After the add/drop period (as specified on the Registrar's website), the student will receive a grade of "W" and will be financially responsible for the course. After two thirds of the course is complete, students are not able to withdraw from the course and will receive a grade for the course.

The student has an option of taking an "I" incomplete if they have completed two-thirds or more of the coursework with a passing grade and may complete the specific course with the next MBA cohort or withdraw from the program. Any student who enrolled but did not attend a course and did not officially withdraw will receive an "F" in the specific course.

See more:

- Admission Policy
- Leave of Absence Policy
- Program Withdrawal Policy
- Registrar website

Course Load

The MBA program is a part-time, six (6) credits per semester program totaling 30 credits and does not meet the nine (9) credits per semester required for full-time status for international students. The program requires enrolling in two courses each semester including the summer semester to remain active.

See more:

- Leave of Absence Policy

Course Repeat

An MBA course may be repeated. If a grade lower than C is earned, the course must be repeated, when next available. The grade earned in a repeated course replaces the original grade in the student's quality point average even if the repeated grade is lower. The grade earned each time the student took the course remains on the student's transcript. The original course will be marked on the student's transcript as "E" excluded. The newest assigned grade will be marked on the student's transcript as "I" included. The originally attempted credit is not calculated in the quality point average. Students must complete a Repeat Course Form for each course they repeat at the time of registration. Repeating a course more than once may influence a student's financial aid.

Grade Appeal

In cases involving appeals of a course grade, a student has 21 days following the completion of the course to initiate an appeal relating to a grade earned in the most recently completed MBA course. The appeal begins with the Faculty member. If unable to be resolved, it then goes to the Program Director and then the Graduate Education Council. Students should contact the Registrar's office for appropriate paperwork. All appeals must follow this chain and the specified time frames as outlined.

Graduation Requirement Minimum GPA

Graduation with an MBA degree requires a minimum 3.0 overall GPA on all coursework applied to the degree. There are no circumstances under which a student with less than a 3.0 GPA can receive the degree. If a student earns a grade lower than "C" (including C-) in any MBA course, that course must be repeated when next available and a grade of at least "C" must be earned in order for the course to be applied to the degree requirements.

Incomplete

An incomplete grade is a temporary designation issued when the required course work is not completed by the end of the semester. An incomplete (I) may be awarded with the recommendation of the instructor only if a student (1) has a grade of C or better on work completed to date; (2) has completed at least two-thirds (2/3) of the course work; (3) has documented evidence of a valid reason for failure to complete the work required in a course (e.g., sickness, death in the family, or other extenuating circumstances); and (4) arranges with the instructor to finish the course work at a later date.

Students wishing to pursue an Incomplete grade must first discuss the option with the instructor. If the student and the instructor agree that an Incomplete is appropriate, then the instructor will initiate an Incomplete Contract that will be signed by both the student and the instructor. The Contract will specify the nature of the course work to be completed before the deadline agreed. Students assigned a grade of "I" will be allowed no more than six weeks into the next semester to complete the outstanding course requirements. If a student fails to complete the work as specified in the contract, the Incomplete grade (I) will be automatically converted to an F grade.

Leave of Absence

A student whose personal, work, or medical circumstances require a temporary interruption of graduate study may apply for a leave of absence for up to two semesters if they are in good academic standing and in good financial standing. Students are expected to discuss this decision with the MBA Program Director to determine appropriate steps to complete their degree program. Students who do not return after their leave of absence, or who do not enroll in a subsequent semester without

arranging a leave of absence, will be administratively withdrawn and will need to reapply for admission.

See more:

- Admission
- Withdrawal

Non-Degree Seeking (Non-Matriculated) Students

Students have the option of beginning their studies before formally applying to the MBA program as non-matriculated students. Non-matriculated students may start any semester during the year and can earn up to twelve (12) graduate credits at MCLA toward a graduate certificate or MBA degree. Non-matriculated students seeking admission in the MBA program must have an overall cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher after completing two courses. The student must apply formally and be accepted to the MBA program to become matriculated. Once matriculation is confirmed, any MCLA credits the student earned as a non-matriculated student will be combined with MCLA credits earned as a matriculated student, and all MCLA credits will be regarded as contributing to the required number of credits that must be earned from MCLA to complete the MBA program. The final approval for a non-matriculated student registration into an MBA course is subject to approval by the MBA Program Director. Students interested in applying as a non-matriculated students must have an undergraduate degree and may reach out to the MBA Program Director for more information.

See more:

- Admission Policy

Program Withdrawal

Students leaving the program must complete a Withdrawal from College form. Students who withdraw may reapply for admission. Students who do not register for classes and have not completed a Leave of Absence will be administratively withdrawn.

Readmission

Students who are admitted to and enroll in the MBA program, but who take a leave of absence, may be away from the program for up to one year without being required to reapply for admission. After one year, they must complete another application form and submit an updated resume. The application will be evaluated based on the current admission standards at the time of the request for readmission, and reentry to the program will be based on qualifications and space available in the current cohort.

Transfer of Graduate Credit

Transfer of graduate credits from another institution will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The decision criteria include currency, relevance to the MBA curriculum, and the quality (accreditation) of the institution at which the course was completed. Any potential transfer credit must have earned a grade of "B" or better. Requests for transfer credit (maximum of six credits) must be submitted to the Program Director.

Waiver

Waivers for up to five pre-requisite courses may be available to those students who have an undergraduate degree in business or related field from an accredited institution of higher education, who have taken equivalent coursework, or can demonstrate adequate knowledge of the subject. Students must be prepared to show documentation including a transcript of the grades received in those courses. Additional

documentation may be required. Waivers are given at the discretion of the MBA Program Director or designee.

See more:

- Admission