



Understanding and Succeeding in a Changing MBA Market

Adult Learner Recruitment &
Strategic Research



Education's Trusted Partner to Help Schools and Students Thrive



Your Imperatives Determine Ours

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY

Prepare Your Institution for the Future

Executive guidance rooted in research to support your strategic priorities

MARKETING AND ENROLLMENT

Achieve Your Enrollment and Growth Goals

Tailored partnerships powered by a recruitment ecosystem with unrivaled reach to enroll your future classes

STUDENT SUCCESS

Build a Student-Centric Campus

Technology trusted by 850 schools to retain, graduate, and empower more students

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Advance DEI on Campus and in Your Community

Technology, research, and bold initiatives to strengthen your DEI strategy and eliminate equity gaps

DATA AND ANALYTICS

Embrace Digital Transformation

Data and analytics solutions built for higher education to guide decisions and accelerate innovation

We partner with **2,500+** institutions to accelerate progress and enable lasting change.

95%+ of our partners return to us year after year because of results we achieve, together.

Today's Presenter



Savon Sampson

Senior Director, Strategic Research

EAB



“Future of the MBA” Fuels Endless Chatter

*Employers only care
about skills, not once-
prestigious degrees*

*Students will flood to
one-year, narrow
programs to gain skills
and back into the
workforce*

*Students will flood to
micro-credentials and
not even commit to a
degree*

*The MBA is on the
decline and schools
should invest elsewhere*

Realities of Today’s MBA Market

- ▶ Employers continue to value and reward the MBA
- ▶ Shorter and specialized master’s remain small
- ▶ Non-degree alternatives serve distinct needs, not a replacement

Poll

How would you describe your MBA?

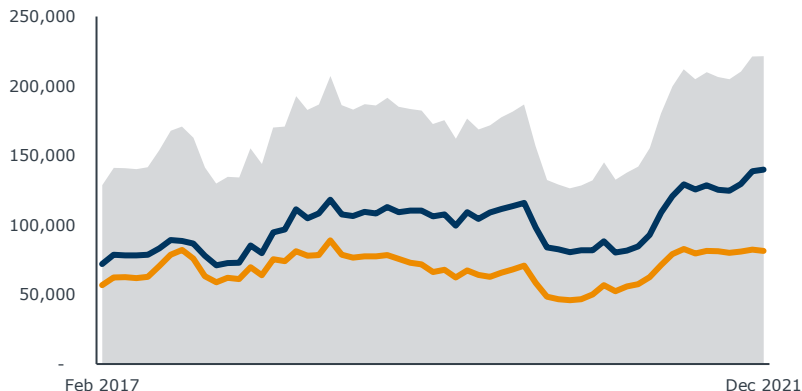
- Long-standing and growing
- Long-standing and declining
- New and growing
- New and hasn't taken off
- I don't have an MBA



Employers Continue to Value and Reward the MBA

Many Job Opportunities Explicitly Calling for MBA and More Jobs Request Graduate-Level Business Degrees

Job Postings Nationwide, February 2017-December 2021



- All job postings relevant to an MBA graduate
- Job postings that specifically prefer or require an MBA
- Job postings require business skills and a master's degree, but do not mention an MBA

+ \$28,000

MBA salary premium over all master's level salaries

\$85,000

Median MBA base starting salary

98%

Nearly all MBA programs pass ROI benchmarks

1) Median salary is from graduates of AACSB-accredited schools.
2) ROI defined as students who earn more annually two years post-graduation than the federal loan debt they accrued. Based on College Scorecard data.

Specialized Master's Market Remains Small

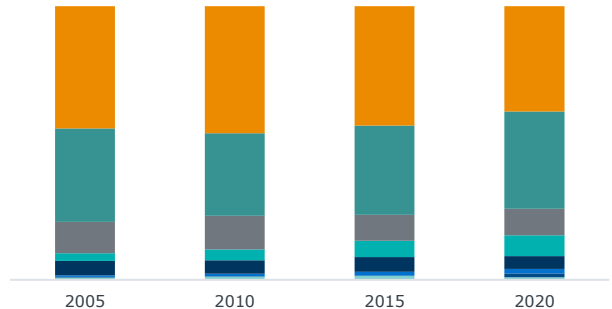
MBA Eclipses Conferrals in the Most Popular Business Fields

Degree Completions Nationwide, 2020



MBA Losing Share; Health Care Admin. Has Most Notable Gains

Degree Completions Nationwide, 2005 to 2020



- MBA (-6.250%)
- Other business (+1.383%)
- Educational administration (-1.627%)
- Health care administration (+4.749%)
- Public administration (-0.631%)
- Sport and fitness administration (+1.096%)
- Computer/IT administration (+1.141%)
- Security and protective services administration (+0.140%)
- Food services administration (-.001%)

Non-degree Alternatives Aren't a Replacement



8

Traditional Master's

- Prestigious through exclusivity, difficulty to access, and expense
- Time-consuming across years
- In-person networking a value-driver

Business Education Landscape

Alternative Credentials

- Few barriers to entry, low cost
- Relatively quick completion
- Often self-paced / flex schedule
- Unfamiliar to hiring managers

MBA Innovation Offers Greatest Potential to Serve Students



Universally recognized credential



Immediate applicability and comprehensive education for the long-term



Accessible to today's working professionals

Aligning to Today's MBA Student

Today's MBA Student



Balances part-time education alongside personal and professional responsibilities



Expects flexibility and is significantly experienced in virtual education or work



Seeks faster goal attainment by applying skills and earning credentials quickly



Aims to personalize their education to achieve their individual goals



Encounters significant choice in advanced or alternative business education

▶ Admissions

Don't keep qualified and ready students out of your program

▶ Speed

Don't delay students' achievement and career advancement

▶ Flexibility

Don't prevent working professionals from learning alongside living

▶ Content

Don't limit your program's relevance to students' careers

Adult Learners Are Highly Pragmatic

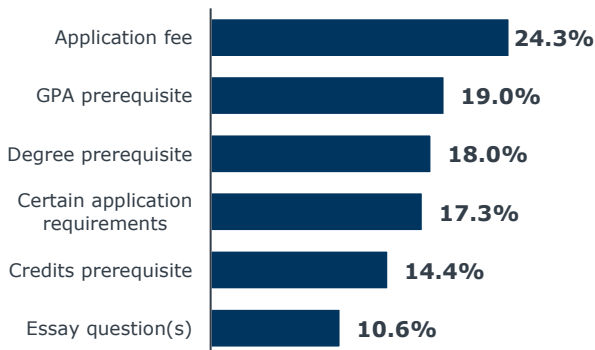


40.9% Applied to two or fewer schools

69.3% Said an application or admissions requirement deterred them from applying



"Which application and admissions requirements (if any) influenced your decision not to apply to a specific school or program?"



Admissions Requirements

4 Key Principles

Accuracy

Do you have enough to make a good decision in most cases?

Speed

Can you respond very quickly to most candidates?

Clarity

Can you communicate your admissions criteria easily?

Access

Have you eliminated unnecessary hurdles?

Poll

What do you require from applicants?

Please select all that apply

- Official transcripts
- Unofficial transcripts
- GMAT/GRE
- Personal statement or essay(s)
- Resume
- Professional letters of recommendation



Minimize and Clarify Admission Requirements



Explicit Flexibility in Limited MBA Admission Requirements at Tennessee Tech

Qualification Type	Points Earned
Work Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1 year of professional work experience: 33 years: 45+ years: 5
Academic Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Graduate degree: 4Terminal degree: 5
Undergraduate GPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2.50-2.99 GPA: 33.00-4.00 GPA: automatic admission
GRE/GMAT Score	<ul style="list-style-type: none">400-499: 3500-599: 5600+ : 7
Applicants may also receive up to 2 points for strength of resume or statement of purpose.	
Total Number of Points Needed for Admission	10



Qualified Student A

- 5 years of professional work experience
- 2.65 undergrad GPA
- Strong resume



Qualified Student B

- 2.95 undergrad GPA
- 595 GMAT score
- Strong statement of purpose



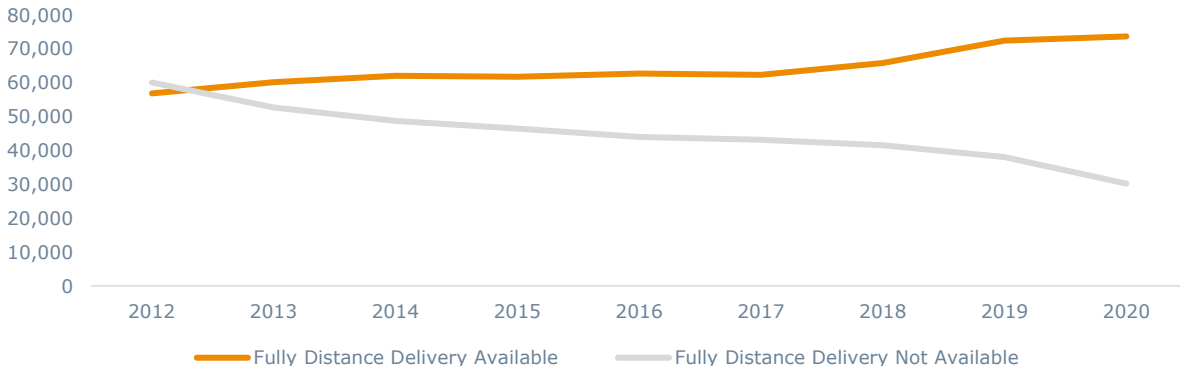
Provisionally Admitted Student C

- 2.80 undergrad GPA
- 490 GMAT score

Offer Online, Asynchronous Education



Conferrals of MBA and Similar Degrees Growing Online



69%

Online learning offers the flexibility I need to continue my education.

49%

Taking online classes at my own pace (e.g., on-demand classes) is my preferred method of learning.



“COVID 19 made me more willing to complete online school and pushed me to enroll in an online MBA.”

Winter 2020 Adult Learner Survey, Free Response on Impact of COVID-19

1) Nationwide Master’s Degree Conferrals in “Business Administration and Management, General”

2) Current or prospective business graduate students, Winter 2020 Survey

Not Waiting to Accomplish Their Goals

Fastest Advertised Under 12 Months, Intolerable Beyond Two Years

Top 3 Motivations to Pursue Education

- To advance my career (56%)
- To increase my earning potential (41%)
- To learn new information/skills (33%)

“

“Because of the time commitment and cost, [traditional two-year MBA] programs are only accessible and attractive to a very small subset of the working population.”

Designing Programs for the Millennial Workforce (EAB, 2015)

”

Advertised Time to Completion at Sample of Fastest-Growing MBA Programs



Program Length
Approx. 10 months



Southeastern Oklahoma
State University



Finish in as few
as 12 months

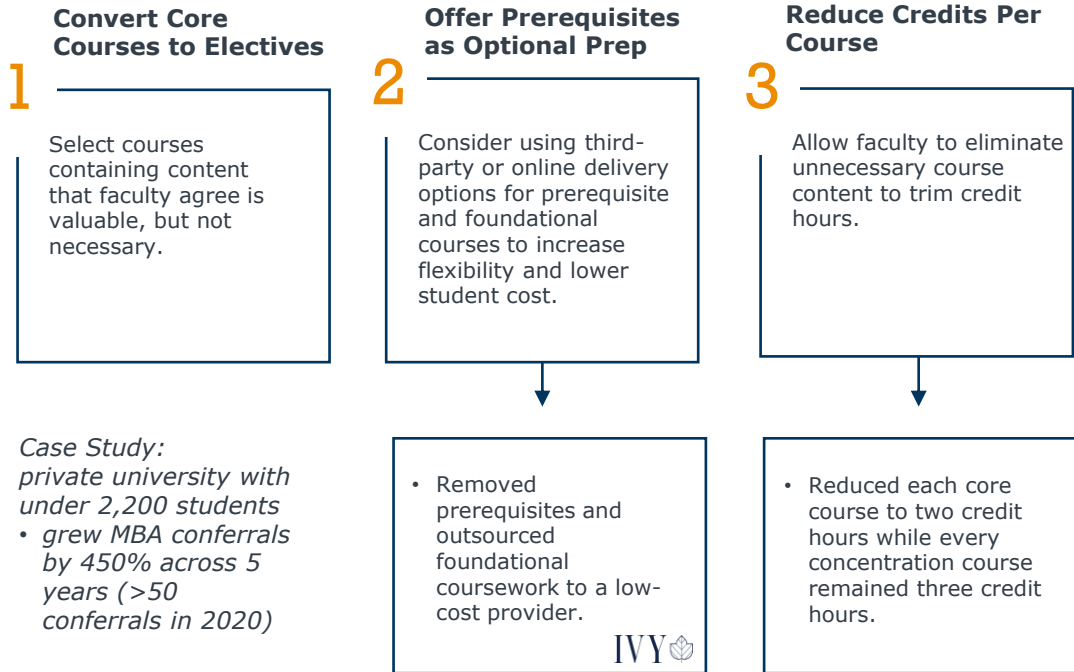


-in as few as 12 months.

Enable Completion Within 18 Months or Faster



Programs Reduce Credits to Shorten Time to Completion



Maximize Curriculum Personalization



Top 3 Motivations to Pursue Education

To Advance My
Career

What Career?

To Increase My
Earning Potential

In What Field?

To Learn New
Info/Skills

What Skills?

Sampling of MBA Graduate Occupations



Marketing Managers



Management Analysts



Financial Managers



Medical and Health Services
Managers



Computer and Information
Systems Managers

Top Skills Requested of MBA Graduates

1. Finance
3. Strategic Planning
5. Product Management
9. Data Analysis
19. Supply Chain

Increase Elective or Specialization Options



Creighton's 36-Credit MBA Curriculum Adapts to Student Background and Goals

Core | 4 courses | 12 credits

- Leadership and Organizational Behavior
- Business Policy and Managerial Action
- Survey of Business Intelligence and Analytics
- Business, Ethics, and Society

- ✗ *Undergrad. business education*
- ✗ *Relevant professional experience*

Functional Core
4 courses | 12 credits

- Financial Reporting for MBAs
- Managerial Finance
- Economic Analysis for Managers
- Marketing Management

- ✗ *Undergrad. business education*
- ✓ *Relevant professional experience*

Relevant professional experience can substitute for any functional core course; students then take additional concentration or elective coursework.

- ✓ *Undergrad. business education*

Remaining 12-24 credits for Electives and Optional Concentration

Concentration | 3 courses | 9 credits

Accounting · Business Intelligence and Analytics · Finance ·
Financial Psychology and Behavior Finance · Leadership · Personal Financial Planning ·

International Audience's Needs Differ Dramatically

Prioritize Alignment with Visa and Extended OPT Requirements

Dos

Require in-person, on-campus class attendance



Increase STEM content and classify within a STEM CIP code



Consider flexibility in English language proficiency evaluation (e.g., IELTS, Duolingo)



Don'ts



Worry about shortened time to completion



Underestimate the appeal of AACSB accreditation



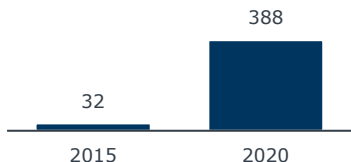
A Look at UH-D's Fast-Growing MBA

UHD University of Houston-Downtown, [MBA](#)



+1,113% Growth

MBA Conferrals



12+ Months to Completion

33-39 total credits

- 1 year full-time with 2-year and 3-year part-time paths available

A+

Inclusive Admissions

Qualified applicants have:

- Official bachelor's degree transcript + Resume + Personal statement + GMAT + 2 letters of rec.
 - Can enter as "soft start MBA" without GMAT and letters of rec.
 - Waive GMAT if 3.5 GPA, advanced degree, alt. exam



Flexible Education

- Asynchronous, online; hybrid; or in-person delivery
- Accelerated 8-week courses
- 3 start dates per year



Customizable Content

14-19 elective credits, 21 core credits

- Leveling courses for non-business undergrads
- 9 concentrations (e.g., finance, investment management)
- Graduate colloquium



\$20.1K Est. Total Cost

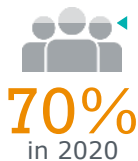
- \$469.50 per core credit in-state/ \$828.50 out-of-state
- \$637.50 per concentration credit in-state/ \$996.50 out-of-state

Students Ever More Comfortable with Independent Search



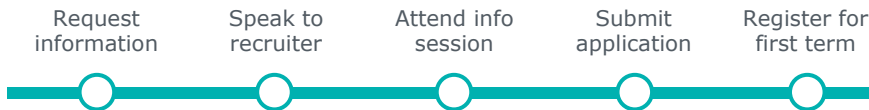
The Rise of the Stealth Prospect

Stealth the Norm

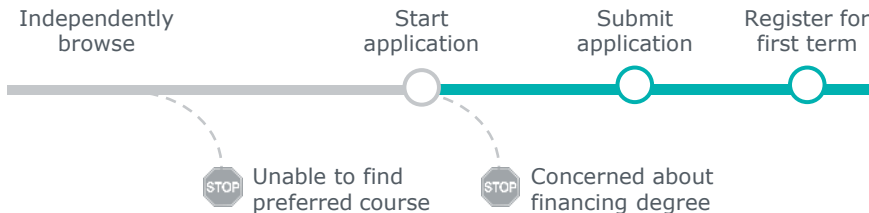


Stealth prospects as a percentage of total applicant pool

Traditional High-Touch Recruiting



Today's Stealth Prospects



Many silent prospects likely never apply



High volume of late inquiries may overwhelm staff



Difficult to forecast enrollments and plan instructional capacity

.Edu Is an Increasingly Important Recruitment Tool

21



Your Future Adult Learner Is On Your Website

56.8%

Of respondents use specific school websites when researching programs



And Your Website Can Make or Break Their Decision to Apply

89.9%

Of respondents said a well-designed website will improve their opinion of a school

84.9%

Of respondents said a poorly designed website will negatively affect their opinion of a school

Key Takeaways

- 1 Continue to invest in the MBA, which retains high appeal for students and schools
- 2 Limit requirements to those essential to appropriate admissions decisions, and remove requirements that often go unconsidered
- 3 Make admissions and program details readily available online and asynchronously—and ensure your program can be completed within 18 months—to best serve adult learners
- 4 Offer significant customization (e.g., specializations) within your MBA to enable students to align their education with their goals
- 5 Design MBAs very differently to serve international students (e.g., in-person classes, STEM content)



Interested in More?

I'd like to speak further about...

- 1 Identifying graduate, online, or adult education programs to launch or refresh
- 2 Finding and reaching right-fit prospects for our business programs
- 3 Developing sophisticated marketing campaigns to nurture students to enrollment
- 4 Setting a strategy to remain competitive in the graduate, adult, and/or online markets

Receive Today's Slides

Learn More

Assess Your Programs

1

Receive today's **presentation slides and recording**



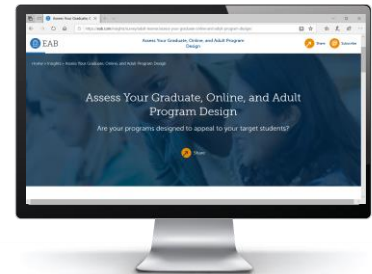
2

Register for our **upcoming webinar** on the principles of graduate enrollment management



3

Take our online **program design assessment**



4

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Subscribe to the Daily Briefing to receive EAB's latest and most relevant content each morning

EAB Adult Learner Recruitment

Serving as Central Conductor through Partnerships and Next-Generation Growth Strategies

STRATEGIZE 

**Strategy
Transformation**

+

**Unrivaled
Access**

+

**Marketing
Orchestration**

+

**Intelligent
Analytics**

170+ Partner Institutions

No Two Partnerships Alike

Q&A



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