

**CLASS OF 2021**

**MS BUSINESS ANALYTICS**

# **HANDBOOK**

**2020-2021 ACADEMIC YEAR**



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## INTRODUCTION

This Handbook describes the policies and procedures for MS in Business Analytics (MSBA) students. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies and procedures.

### Important Contacts

<i>Program Leadership</i>			
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Name	Title	Phone	Email
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### Important Dates

All students who are entering this program are expected to be on campus, or be able to virtually attend LAUNCH starting Wednesday, August 26<sup>th</sup>.

## PROGRAM GRID

Students will be admitted for early September, Fall semester start, and will complete four modules of foundational work. In the Spring semester, students will build on the foundational fall modules, learning more advanced data analysis techniques. In the Spring semester, students will focus on the application of the tools and techniques they have learned to business problems in a variety of functional contexts.

Semester	Course Number	Course Title	Credits	
<b>Launch</b>			<b>0</b>	
Fall	BA755	Describing, Analyzing, and Using Data	4	
	BA765	Introduction to Programming for Data Science	4	
	BA775	Business Analytics Toolbox	4	
	BA780	Introduction to Data Analytics	3	
Spring	BA810	Supervised Machine Learning	3	
	BA820	Unsupervised and Unstructured Machine Learning	3	
	BA830	Business Experimentation and Causal Methods	3	
	BA865	Advanced Analytics Topics 1 (Advanced Machine Learning 1)	3	
	BA888*	Capstone Project	1.5	
	ES710**	Teaming	0.5	
	ES720**	Management Communication	0.5	
Early Summer	BA840	Data Ethics: Analytics in Social Context	3	
Summer	BA888*	CapstoneProject	1.5	
	ES710**	Teaming	0.5	
	ES720**	Management Communication	0.5	
	BA890***	Analytics Practicum	1 (P/F)	
	<i>Electives (Choose 3 below for 9 credit hours)</i>			
	BA860	Marketing Analytics	3	
	BA870	Financial and Accounting Analytics	3	
	BA875	Operations and Supply Chain Analytics	3	
	BA880	People Analytics	3	
BA885	Advanced Analytics Topics 2 (Advanced Machine Learning 2)	3		

Schedule last updated 06/26/2020 - the PDC reserves the right to make scheduling changes – if so, any changes will be communicated to students.

Program total credits: 45

### Notes:

(\*) BA888 is a capstone analytics project where teams work on a real-life project through the last two semesters of the program

(\*\*) Class sessions for ES710 and ES720 may be offered throughout the year (the class schedule will be communicated at the start of the year)

(\*\*\*) BA890 Analytics practicum is a pass/fail course that can be fulfilled either via an individual research project, or, with approval from the faculty director, via a part-time or full-time internship that concludes with a reflection paper

## MSBA Launch

All students are required to attend this orientation program. Students will be automatically registered.

## Career Workshops

Workshops are scheduled over the duration of the MSBA Program. Workshops cover a wide range of career-related topics, including resume and cover letter preparation, networking, employment search, interviewing skills, salary negotiation, etc.

# ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Academic Advising

The Questrom School of Business is committed to providing academic advising to all MSBA students to complete degree requirements successfully and to achieve the maximum benefit from the MSBA program.

## Grading System

Most credit courses at Questrom are graded on a letter scale according to the following criteria:

Level	Grade	Honors Points/Credits
Superior Performance	A	4.0
	A-	3.7
	B+	3.3
	B	3.0
	B-	2.7
	C+	2.3
	C	2.0
Lowest Grade Acceptable for Credit	C-	1.7
Failing Grade	F	0.0

### *Continuing: "J"*

Registration in the same or continuing course is necessary to complete requirements.

### *Incomplete: "I"*

A grade of "I" indicates that course requirements, such as a final exam or written course work, have not been completed by the end of the semester. An "I" grade is given at the instructor's discretion. The student must arrange with the instructor to complete the remaining requirements no later than the end of the following semester by completing an incomplete contract with the instructor. When the work is completed, the instructor will determine the final grade. Students who receive an "I" in a required course cannot continue in the program unless the "I" is resolved before the start of the next semester or the student has received written approval from the Faculty Director.

If work is not completed and a final grade is not submitted within one **full** academic semester of when the "I" was issued, the "I" will be converted into an "F" grade. In extenuating circumstances, a student may petition for an extension of the time limit to complete the work. The instructor who gave the "I" grade must endorse the written petition, which must then be submitted to the academic advisor.

Students with incomplete grades in required courses are not eligible to be inducted into Beta Gamma Sigma, the national business honor society.

An "I" grade has no honor points; therefore, it is not calculated into the cumulative GPA (CGPA). When the professor reassigns the grade once the student completes the work, or when the Master's & PhD Career Assistant Registrar converts the "I" to an "F" following the procedures outlined above, the grade for the course is then included in the calculation of the GPA. **Students with one or more "I" grades on their transcripts are not permitted to graduate**

#### ***Withdrawal: "W"***

A grade of "W" in a course indicates that the course was dropped after the semester deadline to drop a class without a "W." A student who withdraws from a course forfeits the right to complete the course in that semester and to receive a grade. Due to course pre-requisites and the sequenced nature of the program students who receive a "W" in a required course cannot continue in the program until the course is completed successfully or the student has received written approval from the Executive Director to move forward. Students may not graduate until all required courses are completed successfully. Students are charged full tuition for "W" grades.

#### ***Failure: "F"***

A grade of "F" indicates failure to pass. A student who earns a grade of "F" in a required course must repeat that course with a passing grade. In general, an F may lead to withdrawal from the program; see the section "Academic withdrawal" for specifics.

If that same course is repeated, both the "F" and the subsequent grade remain on the student's permanent record, and both grades are included in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average (CGPA). Students may not graduate until the required number of courses are completed successfully.

### **Retaking Courses**

Business analytics students cannot retake a course that has been successfully completed in order to improve their grade performance and/or CGPA. Students cannot audit a class first and then retake it for credit. Courses in which a grade of "F" or "W" has been received can be retaken, because "F" and "W" grades cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements.

### **Grading Guidelines**

The Business Analytics Program follows the following voluntary guideline:

- In each graded course, at most 50% of the final student grades will be A or A-.

### **Policy on Grade Grievances for Graduate Students in Questrom School of Business**

Grading is the prerogative of the faculty and is based upon a student's performance against a clearly articulated set of assignments, expectations, and standards.

Arbitrary grades are defined as those:

- assigned to a student on some basis other than performance in the course; or,
- assigned to a student by resorting to unreasonable standards different from those which were applied to other students in that course or section of the course; or,
- assigned to a student on the basis of criteria that are a substantial, unreasonable, and unannounced departure from the instructor's previously articulated standards.

Issues that do not meet one or more of these criteria of arbitrariness are not appropriate bases for a grade appeal under this policy. Only final course grades may be formally appealed. Grades that are the result of academic misconduct are not appealable. All grievances must be made in a timely manner within six weeks of the official posting of the grade.

Before filing a formal appeal, a student is urged to resolve any grievance informally by meeting with the instructor responsible for the grading of the course to discuss the student's concerns. The student is responsible for bringing

copies of all relevant information to the meeting (i.e., course syllabus, assignment sheet, graded work). The student should be prepared to show evidence of arbitrary grading.

The instructor is expected to discuss the student's concerns and to explain the basis for determining the grade. If the student and the instructor are unable to arrive at a mutually agreeable solution, the student may file a formal appeal with the Faculty Director. The written appeal must detail the basis for the allegation of arbitrary grading and present adequate evidence that supports the allegation. The Faculty Director, in consultation with department chairs as needed, will seek to resolve the matter. If the student wishes to appeal the decision of the Faculty Director, s/he may do so to the Senior Associate Dean of Graduate Programs, who will render a final decision.

### **Taking Courses as Pass/Fail**

Students enrolled in the MSBA Program are not eligible to take courses as "pass/fail", with the exception of BA890, and are subject to grading policies as defined by each individual instructor.

### **Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA)**

All graduate-level MSBA courses taken at Boston University are included in the computation of the cumulative grade point average (CGPA). Grades are computed on a 4.00 scale. Coursework taken outside Questrom and not counting towards the MSBA degree will not be calculated into the student's CGPA.

Divide the number of grade points earned in courses by the number of credits attempted (do not include "W" grades). The grades and credits of all repeated courses are calculated in the GPA. "I" and "W" grades are not given honor points and are not used in the calculation of grade point averages.

$$\begin{aligned} & (\text{Honor points for grade}) \times (\text{credits in course}) = \text{Honor Points in Course} \\ & (\text{Total honor points from all courses}) / (\text{Total credits attempted}) = \text{Cumulative GPA} \end{aligned}$$

### **Grade Verification**

Federal law prohibits staff members from giving grades over the phone. Students may receive their grades in one of the following ways:

1. Students may obtain an unofficial or official copy of their grades/transcript by logging on to the Boston University Student Link at [www.bu.edu/student-link](http://www.bu.edu/student-link), Click on Academics, then on Transcript Preview and Ordering;
2. Students may request a grade mailer in person at the Office of the University Registrar.

### **Academic Honors for MSBA students**

Honors will be awarded to graduates whose cumulative grade point average (CGPA) is 3.55 or higher. High honors will be awarded to graduates whose CGPA is 3.70 or higher.

### **Beta Gamma Sigma**

The highest achieving MSBA students are eligible for induction into the Beta Gamma Sigma International Honor Society. Selection for Beta Gamma Sigma is made on the basis of cumulative GPA, once students have completed their MSBA degree.

A student with an "I" grade in a required course is not eligible for Beta Gamma Sigma. The Beta Gamma Sigma ceremony is held in the spring semester, after the January graduation date. Attendance at the ceremony is optional and is not necessary in order to join Beta Gamma Sigma. Additional information on Beta Gamma Sigma can be obtained from the Master's & PhD Center.

## Academic Performance Review, Probation & Academic Withdrawal

Graduation requirements:

- Your GPA at the conclusion of the program must be 2.7 or above.
- Your GPA for courses taken within any individual semester must be 2.0 or above.
- Courses with a failing grade (F) do not count towards meeting graduation requirements

If at any point during the program you are failing any of the above requirements, the Program Office will contact you and notify that you are not satisfying these requirements.

Students are notified of their academic standing by the Master's & PhD Center via BU email, prior to the start of the subsequent semester. Students must then meet with an academic advisor within 48 hours of receipt of this notification to discuss their case. Students can write a Student Statement to the PDC to provide an explanation for poor academic performance. It is voluntary, although it is strongly encouraged, and is the sole opportunity for student input into PDC decisions. The Statement must be submitted within 72 hours of Master's & PhD Center notification of poor academic standing.

The PDC then reviews the student's case. It may confirm academic withdrawal or allow the student to continue in the program. Students allowed to continue receive a written notice from the PDC stipulating acceptable academic performance to remain in the program. The student who wishes to remain in the program will indicate that s/he understands and accepts these conditions.

After the final semester, all students must achieve a 2.70 or higher CGPA. Students are not permitted to take additional credits beyond the final semester in which they have completed their degree requirements in order to improve their CGPA or restart enrollment, nor can they withdraw and re-enroll.

Please be aware that your CGPA can also affect your eligibility for continuing financial aid including scholarships and loans. Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress (at least a 2.70 CGPA) in order to be eligible for continued Federal Stafford Loan funding and private educational loan funding.

## Academic Conduct

Students are required to adhere to the Questrom School of Business Academic Conduct Code while matriculated in the MSBA Program. Any student who fails to do so will be brought before the Academic Conduct Committee, as outlined in the Academic Conduct Code, for appropriate action. Students may be suspended or expelled from the university at the discretion of the Committee.



## COURSE INFORMATION

### Course Identification

On the Student Link, courses are identified with a combination of numbers and letters. For example:

QST BA840 A1    Data Ethics    Shore    3.0    HAR210

### *School or College*

The course number is preceded by a school or college designation. All graduate level courses at Questrom are represented by "QST."

### *Course Number*

BA denotes MSBA courses. A specific course is identified by a 3-digit number. Graduate-level courses have numbers in the 700s and 800s.

### Credits & Course Sequencing

Credits for MSBA courses vary. All Fall and Spring courses are required, as well as BA840 Data Ethics. Most of the Summer courses are electives. See the curriculum grid above for elective opportunities. Students may not register for additional academic courses without the written approval of the Faculty Director.

### Pre-assignments

Professors teaching certain courses may require pre-work, which are to be completed before the class meets for the first time.

### Evaluation of Instructors & Courses

During the last two weeks of each semester, students are asked to anonymously evaluate each course and instructor using an online evaluation form. The professor is not in the classroom when the evaluations are administered.

Evaluations are compiled after the instructors submit final grades and results are not made available to the instructor until after grades are posted. Copies of the summaries are available for student use at the front desk of the Master's & PhD Center.

### Attendance Policy

Attendance is a critical part of graduate education and absences may adversely affect a student's grade. Students should refer to their course syllabi for all required course dates.

### Full-time Status

Individuals who register for 12 or more credits are considered full-time students by the University and are charged a flat full-time tuition rate during the academic year, which covers 12 to 18 credits. International students also need to make sure they maintain their full-time student status and should consult with the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) if they have any questions (<http://www.bu.edu/isso/>).

### Working during the Program

Working during the MSBA program is strongly discouraged. The MSBA curriculum is very demanding. Students are expected to be completely committed to the program.

For further questions regarding work, please contact an academic advisor.

## REGISTRATION

The academic advisor will automatically register MSBA students for their required courses. Students may not take additional academic courses outside of the MSBA curriculum at any point without approval of the Faculty Director. Students can check registration and update compliance status using the Student Link website (<http://www.bu.edu/studentlink>). Contact your advisor for assistance if you have questions.

## LEAVES OF ABSENCE/WITHDRAWALS

Students needing to take a leave of absence must meet with the Assistant Director and complete the Leave of Absence Form. Students are eligible for a Leave of Absence until a course grade is received for that semester. If a student is unable to meet with the Assistant Director, s/he can mail or fax a signed and dated request to the Master's & PhD Center for the Leave of Absence to the Master's & PhD Center, which will be effective on the date that the Master's & PhD Center receives the form. If a student has submitted the Leave of Absence form or a signed request for a Leave of Absence prior to the start of a semester for which he or she had previously been registered, the charges for that semester will be canceled. If the semester has already started, the student may be entitled to a partial refund.

Refunds are subject to the Boston University Tuition Refund Policy: <https://www.bu.edu/reg/calendars/refund/>

Students on a Leave of Absence are encouraged to notify the Assistant Director four weeks prior to resuming their studies in a given semester. Likewise, students should notify the Assistant Director if they decide not to return to the Program. A Leave of Absence does not extend the timeframe for making up outstanding work related to an incomplete grade. A leave of absence may not extend beyond four semesters and does not extend the three-year time limit for degree completion (as noted below). If students do not return within that timeframe they will be permanently withdrawn from the program.

### Leave of Absence for Medical Reasons

University policy requires that a student "seeking to re-enroll after a medical leave must demonstrate to the University that the student's health permits the successful completion of studies." The Medical Review procedure outlines the information students must provide to the University prior to re-enrolling and the timeline for submitting the required documentation.

### Voluntary Withdrawal

A student who wishes to withdraw from the MSBA Program must meet with an academic advisor to complete the Withdrawal/Leave of Absence Form. If a student is unable to meet with an advisor, s/he can mail or fax a signed and dated request for withdrawal to the Master's & PhD Center, which will be effective on the date that the Master's & PhD Center receives the form. If a student has submitted the Withdrawal/Leave of Absence form or signed request for withdrawal prior to the start of a semester for which s/he had previously registered, the charges for that semester will be canceled. If the semester has already started, the student may be entitled to a partial refund.

### Withdrawal for Non-Payment

Students who have not settled their student accounts by the fifth week of classes each semester will have a hold placed on their accounts and may be withdrawn for non-payment by the Comptroller's Office. Students who wish to settle their accounts in order to be officially registered must do so through Student Accounting Services ([www.bu.edu/comp/saweb](http://www.bu.edu/comp/saweb)).

### Withdrawal for Inappropriate Student Behavior Including Academic Misconduct

While matriculated in the Program, all students are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior. Any student who exhibits behavior that violates the rights of others and/or the standards of academic life will be brought before the Questrom School of Business's Academic Conduct Committee, as outlined in Boston University Policies.

### **Transfer of Credit**

Students cannot transfer credit towards the MSBA degree and credit requirements unless an exception has been explicitly approved and communicated in writing, by the faculty director and PDC.

### **Formal Complaints**

Any student dissatisfied with a policy or procedure in the MSBA Program may issue a formal complaint through a personal meeting, via email or written memo. The initial recipient may be a faculty director, faculty member, dean, or academic advisor. The initial complaint should then be referred to the Assistant Dean in the Master's & PhD Center within 48 hours. The Assistant Dean will immediately contact the complainant to hear the concerns first-hand and clarify details. The Assistant Dean will call a meeting with the appropriate parties with power for resolution. Within a week, an outcome should be reached and the student informed about resolution of concerns, if any are possible.

## **STUDENT RECORDS AND TRANSCRIPTS**

### **Official Student Records**

Official records of MSBA students are kept in Master's & PhD Center, where the electronic files are accessible only to the student, appropriate faculty, members of the respective Program Development Committee (PDC), and authorized members of the Questrom staff. Access to the student record by any individual, other than those previously mentioned, requires the written consent of the student.

### **Student Access to Student Records**

To inspect education records, a student must submit an Access Form identifying the records to be inspected to the appropriate University official. The form is available on the Master's & PhD Center website and should be submitted to the Associate Dean of Student Experience at the Questrom School of Business. The Form is also available in the Office of the University Registrar.

Requests to access records will receive a response within forty-five days of submission. A University official will arrange for access and will notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. The University may charge a fee for copies of requested education records

### **Official & Unofficial Transcripts**

Unofficial transcripts may be requested in person from the Transcript Office at the Office of the University Registrar, 881 Commonwealth Avenue, 2nd floor. They may also be obtained via the Student Link (<http://www.bu.edu/studentlink>).

Official transcripts, which bear the seal of the University, may be requested from the Transcript Office at the Office of the University Registrar, 881 Commonwealth Avenue, 2nd floor, for a minimal fee. Requests must be made in writing or in person; telephone requests will not be accepted. Transcripts may be mailed express delivery for an additional charge. Official transcripts may also be requested via the Student Link <http://www.bu.edu/studentlink>. Please call the Transcript Office (617-353-3616) for more information or view their website at: <http://www.bu.edu/reg/grades/index.html>

### **Diplomas**

The Diploma Office at the Office of the University Registrar prepares diplomas. Students use the Diploma and Graduation Information option on the Student Link ([www.bu.edu/studentlink](http://www.bu.edu/studentlink)) in order to confirm the name to appear on the diploma and how they wish to pick up their diploma. Students who do not plan to attend the May Questrom Commencement ceremony must indicate where they want their diploma sent or if they wish to pick it up at the Diploma Office. Diplomas are mailed approximately 8 weeks after graduation.

## GRADUATION AND DEGREE COMPLETION

### Degree Completion

To qualify for the MSBA degree, students must complete all required courses, as well as qualifying concentration and elective courses for a total of 45 credits. All credits must be completed at the Boston University Questrom School of Business. Note that 0-credit Curricular Practical Training (CPT) courses for international students cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements. Students must have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.70 and have no "I" grades or no "MG" grades in courses used for degree completion.

### Time Limit for Degree Completion

There is a time limit for completion of degree requirements of four years from the date the student matriculated in the MSBA Program. Leaves of absence do not extend the four-year time limit for completion. A student may petition for an extension of the time limit for a valid reason. A letter of petition must be submitted to the Assistant Dean MS and PhD Student Experience & Services. This letter must state the reason for the request, the proposed graduation date, and the specific plan of study, including a detailed map of specific courses and when they will be taken, to complete all degree requirements. Students who do not graduate within the four-year time limit must petition for extension of the time limit or face withdrawal from the program.

### Applying for Graduation

All students must file an online Application for Graduation with the Master's & PhD Center prior to the completion of their degree requirements. Applications must be completed by the date indicated on the Master's & PhD Center website (if needed, ask your academic advisor). Upon receipt of the graduation application, an academic advisor reviews the student's record to confirm anticipated completion of degree requirements.

The advisor will contact the student if there are any questions about his/her academic record or send the student an e-mail confirming tentative graduation status.

All graduates are invited to attend the Questrom Commencement ceremony taking place after your last semester. Information about the ceremony is provided in your final semester.