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A Revised MBA

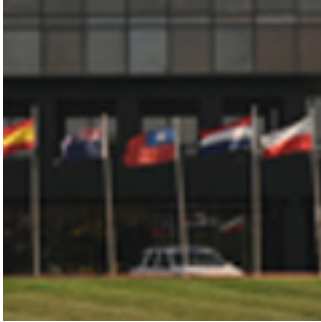
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A Revised MBA

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The financial crisis of 2008 didn't cause the University of Dayton to revise its Master of Business Administration program, but that financial upheaval certainly shaped the first major revision of the program in 15 years.

Against the backdrop of the economic downturn, the realities faced by students and employers had a significant impact on the new design that goes into effect for the fall semester, said Matthew Shank, dean of the School of Business Administration.

"We heard loud and clear from students that they wanted added value — more convenience, greater affordability and sharper leadership skills to give them the best possible edge in a tight job market," Shank said.

"Employers wanted graduates who had real-world experience in addition to a theoretical base. They want employees who can hit the ground running."

MBA program director Janice Glynn said the revisions respond to students' needs for convenience, substantial flexibility and more affordability while continuing the program's emphasis of hands-on learning.

"Most MBA students are working students with busy lives and demanding schedules," Glynn said. "We designed the program so they can tailor the best fit of classes and courses for those busy schedules."

"There is so much flexibility — the core classes are now offered at more times and in a more compressed time interval," she said.

Although he earned his MBA last year, former student Jason Farmer was happy to give his input into program revision.

"It's definitely going to benefit students," Farmer said. "There is so much more flexibility."

That means a quicker path to the capstone courses in which students apply their classroom knowledge in the real world by working as consultants to businesses in the region, he said.

"The capstone experience is really the thing that makes the University's MBA program so distinctive and so valuable," Farmer said. "Some students invest more than 160 hours just on that project because it's such a valuable and practical learning experience."

The revision rolls out for fall semester 2011 with an added bonus: most MBA classes are moving to a first-rate corporate environment in the 1700 South Patterson Building, formerly the world headquarters for the NCR Corp.

Key changes to the MBA program:

Flexibility and affordability: Aspects of some required classes have been changed to add more contact with practicing business people. Core classes have been cut from 16 to 8 weeks and prerequisite courses have been streamlined, increasing flexibility and reducing cost. More online courses are being offered.

Job-ready graduates: The new curriculum brings working executives into the classroom to teach side-by-side with tenured faculty, and continues an emphasis on real-world class projects that partner with local companies. Business executives will have a larger classroom role in incorporating real-life scenarios and projects. The new cybersecurity concentration addresses growing public and private sector demand, both locally and nationally, for cyber-savvy managers.

Convenience: The riverfront location of the 1700 South Patterson Building is easily accessible to interstates and major thoroughfares. Ample, convenient parking is seen as a significant plus by working students.

The University of Dayton's MBA program is the largest in the Dayton area, serving more than 425 part-time and full-time students.

For five consecutive years, the MBA program has been listed as an outstanding business school, according to The Princeton Review. It's listed in the 2011 edition of The Best 300 Business Schools, published by Random House and The Princeton Review.

For more information, contact the MBA office by phone at 937-229-3733 or e-mail at mba@udayton.edu.