

School of Business

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Mission

The School of Business at the University of Southern Maine prepares and inspires current and future leaders, and stimulates economic growth by providing quality learning opportunities, valuable research and professional service, all in partnership with the business community.

Program Description

The School of Business is a community of educators and professionals dedicated to the development of the people and the economy of Maine. Our foremost responsibility is to encourage students and to help them learn. The School of Business graduate programs are designed for part-time, working professionals; the programs also accommodate those students wishing to pursue full-time study.

The master of business administration program is designed for students who wish to advance their careers and contribute to their companies. Partnering with the business community, the program emphasizes the skills needed to inform and guide organizational change. Students in the program develop cross-functional business solutions to “real world” problems, and cultivate a broad critical perspective, interpersonal skills, and the analytical tools of management. The program also emphasizes an appreciation of the international and ethical contexts of professional practice. Students are encouraged to apply to the program regardless of their undergraduate academic specialization.

The master of science in accounting program is designed to prepare students to meet the challenges of the rapidly changing accounting profession. The M.S.A. program is suitable for individuals currently working in the profession, and for those desiring to start or return to a career in accounting. The program is appropriate for students from a variety of educational backgrounds from liberal arts to engineering, as well as business and accounting. The M.S.A. program will provide students with a strong conceptual and applied understanding of accounting that integrates technical accounting knowledge with ethical professional judgment.

Accreditation

The School of Business is accredited by the AACSB International—the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. AACSB International assures quality and promotes excellence and continuous improvement in undergraduate and graduate education for business administration and accounting.

Admission

At the University of Southern Maine, several factors are evaluated in determining a candidate’s admissibility to the M.B.A. or M.S.A. program. Included in the assessment of a candidate’s potential to perform satisfactorily in the M.B.A. or M.S.A. program are the undergraduate grade point average (GPA), the rigor of the undergraduate’s field of study, the reputation of the institution awarding the baccalaureate degree, academic performance in any previous graduate coursework taken, demonstrated potential for successful completion of the program, qualities likely to enhance the educational environment at USM, demonstrated leadership, the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) score, three letters of recommendation, and a candidate’s record of successful business or professional experience. Although the admissions committee has no affirmative duty to seek this information, it will consider other information about the applicant including (1) professional knowledge of faculty members, administrators, and staff at USM, (2) information within the files at USM, and (3) publicly available information about the applicant. To be admitted either fully, conditionally, or as special or transient student, students must have no evidence of past conduct incompatible with the educational environment at USM. This is defined as conduct which, if it occurred at USM, would have a detrimental effect on (1) the ability of fellow students to learn, (2) the ability of

instructors to teach effectively, or (3) the ability of administrators and staff to engage in their normal professional activities. Examples of such conduct include, without limitation: commission of a crime, other than a minor traffic offense; commission of an intentional act resulting in physical or psychological injury or threat thereof; intentional misrepresentation; and violation by the applicant of a code of conduct at any educational institution, employer, military organization, or professional association. An applicant who has engaged in such conduct *may*, at the discretion of the admissions committee, be admitted based upon its judgment (e.g., because of the passage of time) that there is little likelihood that the conduct will recur in the future.

In addition to receiving strong recommendations, fully admitted students must have a formula score of 1,100 or higher and absence of evidence of past conduct that is incompatible with the educational environment at USM. (The formula is $(\text{GPA} \times 200) + \text{GMAT}$. The GPA will be computed twice—overall GPA and GPA with the first 60 credits removed. The higher of the two scores will be used in the calculation). For the purposes of computing this score, all undergraduate-level coursework, including courses taken after receipt of the bachelor's degree, is counted. Fully admitted students should have a minimum GMAT score of 500. Applicants whose formula score falls below 1,100 or whose GMAT is lower than 500, but who show evidence of exceptional (a) performance in outside activities, (b) evidence of creativity and leadership, or (c) accomplishment in business and who show absence of evidence of past conduct that is incompatible with the educational environment at USM, *may* be granted full admission.

Conditional Admission Applicants whose formula score is between 950 and 1,100 but who show evidence of very good (a) performance in outside activities, (b) evidence of creativity and leadership, or (c) accomplishment in business and who show absence of evidence of past conduct that is incompatible with the educational environment at USM, *may* be granted conditional admission. Applicants who would normally be granted full admission but about whom the Admissions Committee has questions regarding some aspect of the applicant's background (e.g., weak recommendations, low grades in key undergraduate courses) *may* be granted conditional admission. Applicants whose formula score is below 950 but whose GMAT score is 500 or greater and who show evidence of *exceptional* (a) performance in outside activities, or (b) evidence of creativity and leadership, or (c) accomplishment in business and who show absence of evidence of past conduct that is incompatible with the educational environment at USM *may* be granted conditional admission.

Only a limited number of applicants will be admitted with conditional admission status in any one academic year. Applications received *by* the recommended admissions deadlines which fall into the conditional acceptance category will be put on a waiting list and will be considered shortly after the admission deadline. Applications received *after* the recommended admissions deadlines which fall into the conditional category will be put on a waiting list and considered during the next admission cycle. Applicants admitted conditionally will be required to complete a specified set of courses (either foundation, regular or both). Successful completion of the conditions will result in full admission to the program. Failure to complete the required conditions will result in dismissal from the program, unless there are extenuating circumstances. Under exceptional circumstances, a conditionally admitted student who fails to meet one or more condition(s) and is dismissed from the M.B.A. or M.S.A. program may be invited by the director to reapply for regular admission.

Decisions about which courses conditionally admitted students must take will be made by the Admissions Committee, in consultation with appropriate faculty members. In some circumstances, conditionally admitted students may be counseled to take undergraduate equivalents either in lieu of or in addition to foundation courses.

Transient Students Students must send a written request to enroll in a course, including the rationale for taking the particular course. Students must submit transcripts from (a) all undergraduate institutions attended and (b) the graduate program in which she or he is enrolled. Students must have necessary prerequisites for the desired course. Students must submit a GMAT score. This requirement is waived for students in good standing enrolled in programs at AACSB accredited schools. Students whose programs use GRE, LSAT, MCAT or MAT (Miller Analogies Test) scores may submit those. Note: MAT scores are acceptable *only* for special students or non-matriculated student purposes, and may never be used as a substitute for the GMAT in the regular admission process.

Pursuant to USM policy, special students, like regular students, are expected to provide the program with a score from a standardized test. Students from programs that do not require any standardized test may be allowed to enroll, subject to *very* close scrutiny by the director. However, this will be done only in exceptional circumstances. Students in this situation may be asked to take the GMAT prior to being allowed to enroll, or may submit valid scores from other standardized tests they may have taken.

Students must arrange for the head of the home program to send a letter stating that the student is enrolled in good standing in the program, and also stating that the course will count toward earning the degree.

The program office will compute a formula score as in the case of regular applicants. Students following these procedures whose formula scores are 950 or higher, who have a “B” average in their home programs, and who show no evidence of past conduct that is incompatible with the educational environment at USM will be allowed by the director to enroll in courses, subject to permission of the instructor. All students in this group must sign a non-degree release.

Non-matriculated Students All students wishing to enroll in M.B.A. or M.S.A. courses on a non-matriculated basis must follow the application process described for full admission, including submission of a GMAT or other standardized test score. However, consistent with that process, people who hold terminal degrees will not have to submit a standardized test score. (Note that the LL.B. from outside the United States is not an acceptable terminal degree, a condition which may also exist for other non-U.S. degrees.) Holders of terminal degrees normally will be allowed to enroll in M.B.A. or M.S.A. courses with few restrictions, subject to permission of the instructor and having taken the appropriate prerequisites. Decisions on this type of study may be made by the director, alone or in consultation with the Admissions Committee.

Others seeking to enroll in M.B.A. or M.S.A. courses will not normally be allowed to do so. Exceptions may be made if these prospective enrollees provide evidence of exceptional (a) performance in outside activities, (b) creativity and leadership, or (c) accomplishment in business. Decisions will be made by vote of the Admissions Committee. All students in this group must sign a non-degree release.

Other USM Graduate Students Students matriculated in other graduate programs at the University of Southern Maine may enroll in School of Business graduate-level courses on a space-available basis providing that appropriate course prerequisites or other equivalents as approved by the director, have been satisfied. This privilege does not extend to graduate students *conditionally* admitted to other USM graduate programs. All students in this group must sign a non-degree release.

Admitted students whose educational background is lacking the foundation courses listed under Program Requirements will have to complete satisfactorily each of these courses or their equivalents as stipulated in their letter of admission.

Application Material

In addition to the materials described in the Admissions chapter, applicants for these programs must submit:

1. A completed application. In the required essay applicants should, in addition to stating their reasons for wanting an M.B.A. or M.S.A., make sure to touch on the following points, as applicable:
 - a. Performance in outside activities
 - b. Evidence of creativity and leadership
 - c. Record of accomplishment in business
2. Official scores from the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT). (Note: Candidates with terminal degrees normally are not required to take the GMAT. Note that the LL.B. from outside the United States is not an acceptable terminal degree, a condition which may also exist for other non-U.S. degrees.)
3. Three letters of recommendation.
4. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of at least 550 on the paper-based TOEFL, 213 on the computer-based TOEFL, or 79 on the Internet-based TOEFL (iBT) for students whose native language is not English.
5. A résumé that includes post-baccalaureate, full-time work experience including military experience.

Application materials may be obtained online or from the USM Office of Graduate Admissions. All applications should be returned to the USM Office of Graduate Admissions. International applicants and applicants seeking financial assistance should complete applications by March 1.

Application Deadline

Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. Candidates are encouraged to complete applications by August 1 (for fall admission consideration) and December 1 (for spring admission consideration). Applicants wishing to be considered for merit scholarships in graduate programs beginning in September are encouraged to submit completed applications by early January.

Program Policies

In addition to the general policies described in the Academic Policies chapter, specific policies of these programs are as follows.

Deferred Admission An applicant admitted for full-time or part-time study must register for that semester for which he or she has been admitted. In certain circumstances, with a written request received prior to the start of the semester in which the student has been admitted, deferred admission will be granted to regularly admitted applicants upon the approval of the director. In the event that no written request is received, a student is considered to have withdrawn from the program.

Transfer Credit A student admitted to the M.B.A. or M.S.A. program may apply to have graduate credits transferred from other regionally accredited institutions of higher education. In order to apply, a student must have earned 9 graduate credit hours from the University of Southern Maine. A grade of B (3.00) or higher must be received in each course requested for transfer credit. To be accepted, the course also must be judged applicable to a student's program of study. A maximum of 9 semester hours of transfer credit may be accepted and applied toward the M.B.A. and a maximum of 6 semester hours of transfer credit may be accepted and applied toward the M.S.A. When possible, students should ascertain whether or not transfer credit will be granted by the School of Business before enrolling in a course at another institution.

Time Limit In order to be counted toward the M.B.A. or M.S.A. core and elective requirements, graduate coursework must be completed within six years of the date a student enrolls in his or her first 600-level course. Otherwise, coursework must be repeated.

Non-Degree Release Students taking courses on a non-matriculated basis must sign a release stating that they will not pursue an M.B.A. or M.S.A. from USM on the basis of accumulated non-matriculated courses, unless they gain admission through the formal admissions process described earlier.

Grade Policy Please see M.B.A. and M.S.A. program descriptions for specific grade policy details. The following policies pertain to both the M.B.A. and M.S.A. programs.

A student whose grade point average falls below 3.00 will be placed on probation. The student will have 12 semester hours in which to bring the grade point average back to at least a 3.00. Students who fail to do this may be dismissed by the director. Any student may appeal any dismissal decision in writing to the M.B.A. or M.S.A. Admissions Committee.

A student who has completed the program of study must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 to receive the M.B.A. or M.S.A. degree. If a student has completed all requisite courses with a cumulative grade point average below a 3.00, a maximum of six additional credits of 600-level courses may be attempted in order to raise the cumulative grade point average to at least a 3.00.

Readmission A regularly admitted student who is dismissed from the M.B.A. or M.S.A. program may not be readmitted. Under exceptional circumstances, a conditionally admitted student who fails to meet one or more conditions and is dismissed from the M.B.A. or M.S.A. program may be invited by the director to reapply for regular admission.

Special Policies In order to receive graduate credit toward the M.B.A. or M.S.A. degree, a student must be registered in a graduate course as a graduate student. Please refer to the transfer credit policy for possible use of prior graduate credit.