

Millikin University  
Student Learning in the MBA  
Dr. Liberatore, MBA Director

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## Goals

Millikin University's Master of Business Administration degree is designed as a unified curriculum rather than a collection of courses. This focused style of program is designed to prepare men and women for positions of leadership in today's complex business world. The curriculum is intentional with the objective of developing a business leader with broad generalist skills, a person who can analyze a business situation from different perspectives and then exercise the judgment required to create a solution.

Certainly the Millikin MBA graduate is schooled in finance, in marketing, in operations- in the traditional functional areas of business. But the answers to business dilemmas rarely lie in only one discipline. The successful solutions lie in the intersection of the disciplines or functions within business. Millikin teaches how to see those intersections, how to frame quantitative and qualitative questions, and how to articulate comprehensive answers to complex problems

We expect MBA candidates will work hard and gain an integrated knowledge of business disciplines that they can use in their jobs to create results and advance their organizations and careers.

MBA candidates will;

- gain an understanding of the changing global business and economic system;
- consider and clarify their ethical responsibilities as a business leader;
- gain a solid understanding of basic business disciplines;
- demonstrate the ability to apply business theory and concepts to practical business situations; that is, MBA candidates should be able to see the integration of business disciplines and knowledge and be able to diagnosis and prescribe;
- demonstrate the ability to communicate facts and ideas in written and verbal formats using professional presentation skills; and
- be able to work in a team environment and demonstrate planning and organizing skills.

In concert with Millikin University goals, the MBA program strives to prepare students

- for professional success through rigorous courses, high level presentations and exposure to accomplished business executives;

- to be sensitive to and willing to exercise democratic citizenship in a global environment through ethics training and exposure to global issues and international study; and
- to lead a personal life of meaning and value by providing workshops on balancing their lives as business leaders with their duty to their families, communities and employees.

A successful graduate, of whom we have had many, leaves the program with a deeper understanding of business matters, sensitivity to their role as a leader, and a drive to advance their careers or business. Many of our graduates move on rapidly to higher levels of organizational responsibility in domestic and international assignments.

### **Snapshot of the Program**

The MBA program is designed to be both flexible and personal. Class sizes remain selectively small in a typical range of 28 to 32 students. The MBA classroom was specifically designed to provide a professional learning environment. The classroom is in conference tables to accommodate the team structure of the program. The technology is state of the art with teleconferencing capabilities. Lectures are video recorded for latter access and review by students.

Ideal candidates for this MBA program are highly motivated professionals who seek leadership positions in an organization or aspire to run their own organization. Both academic and professional successes are important criteria for selection into the program. Likewise, diversity of perspectives is essential for student learning and an important component to a student's application.

#### Quality of Students

The quality of students varies from year to year depending on the applicant pool. However, one constant thus far in the program has been a high percentage of engineers in the program. These students tend to be well schooled, analytical and intellectually capable. They tend to add a generally higher level of academic capability than the general college population and tend to have undergraduate degrees from first-rate engineering schools.

The students are solid. They come with an undergraduate GPA above 3.0. Years worked – at greater than 4 – are understated since the maximum number of years ascribed to any applicant is 10 or greater. The average age of the class has been holding rather steady at 32 with a range from approximately 23 to 50. The diversity of age ranges and work experiences strengthens the program. One area of concern is the recent drop in GMAT Scores. However, at present, there does not appear to be a significant relationship between GMAT score and performance in the MBA. And the scores for the current applicants are averaging closer to our historical experience above 500.

<b>Class Year</b>	<b>% Engineering Degrees</b>	<b>% Business Degrees</b>	<b>GMAT Score</b>	<b>Undergrad GPA</b>	<b>MBA GPA</b>	<b>Years Worked</b>
2001	29.60%	44.40%	529	3.32	3.59	4.17
2002	27.10%	30.40%	503	3.06	3.57	5
2003	32.10%	35.70%	510	3.4	3.53	4.5
2004	35.50%	19.40%	522	3.23	3.66	4.11
2005	15.40%	42.30%	504	3.04	3.47	4.65
2006	48.10%	29.60%	500	3.33		5.35
2007	28.60%	42.90%	446	3.27		4.56

### Faculty Expertise

The faculty is a highly capable group with extensive experience that breathes life into the coursework. The vast majority of the class work is not textbook based. Rather it is based on personal notes, cases, exercises and examples, a body of work that requires a much higher level of commitment and involvement on the part of the faculty. Faculty has been recruited to meet the needs of the program from neighboring institutions including the University of Illinois campuses in Champaign and Springfield and Western Illinois University.

## Summary of Faculty Experience & Credentials

Faculty	University	Degree	Yrs Teach	Grad Exp	Pub/Pres	Boards	Significant Work Exp	Full-time Millikin Faculty
Pettus	U of Illinois	Ph.D.	16	Y	25		Y	Y
Liberatore	U of Conn	Ph.D.	22	Y	33	3	Y	Y
Wehrle	Yale U	Ph.D.	15	Y	17		Y	N
Adell	Boston U	Ph.D.	36				Y	N
Whitford	Georgia State U	Ph.D.	30	Y	27	2	Y	N
Brown	U of Miss	Ph.D.	20	Y	15	1	Y	Y
Gentry	Indiana U	D.B.A	41	Y	101	3		N
Knod	U of Nebraska	Ph.D.	32	Y	53			N
Dahl	U of Missouri-St. Louis	Ph.D.	16	Y	12	1		Y
Munoz	U of San Jose	Ph.D.	5		37	8	Y	Y
Gibson		J.D.					Y	N

### Course Design and Delivery

One unique aspect of the course design process has been that the MBA graduate faculty reviewed each course. Thus, a team provided advice and consent on the content and coordination of material. In addition, the faculty paired-up in each unit coordinates material, schedules and work as much as possible.

The faculty are seasoned practitioners with good reputations, as verified by the end of unit student evaluations. In addition, a three-week survey is administered in each course to seek input and guidance for the class on the appropriateness and direction of the course. This customer feedback allows for corrections and minimizes conflicts and disappointments.

## Executive Lecturer Series

The MBA program seeks to bring into our education process the experience, insights and lessons of outstanding business executives. Speakers are regularly integrated into courses, some of whom are listed here.

### Speakers

- Charles L. Curry, BA, MBA, CPA, retired in 2005 as the CFO of *Tate & Lyle, N.A.*
- Robert A. Disbrow, BA, MBA, CPA, is a partner in the public accounting firm of *Sleeper, Disbrow, Morrison, Tarro & Lively, LLC.*
- John S. Cobb, BA, JD, is a partner in the law firm of *Samuels, Miller, Schroeder, Jackson & Sly, LLP.*
- Joe King recently retired as CEO of *Molex*, Incorporated a global electronics company. He recently became Director of Global Operations for *Molex.*
- Lynn McPheeters, BA and CPA, attended Southern Illinois University. He recently retired as the CFO of *Caterpillar*, after 40 years of service.
- Margo Loebel, BA Wellesley College, MBA University of Chicago, is Group Vice President of Finance for *Archer Daniels Midland, Company.* She has extensive experience overseas with both *General Motors* and *Nike.*
- Joe Terrill, BA, MBA from the University of Illinois, is President of *Terrill and Associates*, a St. Louis Investment Firm.
- Dale B. Smith, Chief Executive Officer of *Mueller Group.*
- John Rogers, *Midwest US/China Association.*

## Program Evolution

A number of changes have been made to improve the program since its inception in 2000.

Year	Major Changes
2001	First year
2002	Revised finance course
2003	Changed review format to simulation Added new finance professor
2004	Added finance and dropped e-business course Changed Boot Camp exit test to ETS Added ETS MBA exit exam Changed practicum content to focus on management skills Added Executive Lecturer Series – expand speakers Raised tuition to accommodate foreign study
2005	Added International Study – WHU Germany Hired a second finance faculty
2006	Re-form teams after each unit Initiate International Lecture Series Peter Witt - WHU

## **Learning in the MBA Program**

To accomplish stated goals, the MBA program

- delivers an extensive course on globalization;
- takes students abroad to study at a well respected graduate business schools;
- delivers a thoughtful and self-reflecting course on ethics;
- has a deliberate curriculum designed to move each cohort of students through core business disciplines;
- uses cases extensively to develop, demonstrate and test analytical and reasoning skills;
- requires class presentations, oral exams and capstone presentations in corporate reports and business plans; and
- organizes students in teams that are reformed with different members after each 10 week unit.

The cohort structure of the curriculum is designed for maximize interaction of participants and integration of course material. The MBA classes develop a strong work ethic and cooperative learning styles. In general, the MBA is designed for managers and leaders and not technicians. Course in statistics, economic theory and mathematical model building are foregone in favor of a curriculum designed to develop management and leadership talent. So, with a limited amount of curriculum space, courses were selected that focus more on the bigger picture of business, how systems fit together, how questions are formulated and how decisions are made. The curriculum starts with values and cultures and ends with leadership, management, strategy and planning. These bookends surround the basic business disciplines of marketing, accounting and finance.

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To accomplish this goal faculty rely heavily on case work as a means of strengthening analytical and reasoning skills and in developing the integration of material and knowledge. Presentation of results strengthens professional presentation skills.

### **Unit MB 501 Review & Development**

The program starts with business simulation model to develop business knowledge. Students are organized in teams and compete against teams across the US. Once a round of simulation is completed each team receives business reports including the financial statement of the firm. From this point students are taught the basics of financial statements, accounting concepts, marketing and production.

## **Unit 1: Setting a Strong Foundation**

- 1 - Personal Values & Business Ethics
- 2 - Globalization & US Business

The first two courses are designed to give students an appreciation of global business and cultures and to assess their value paradigms as leaders. Since all leadership decisions ultimately depend on one's beliefs and value system the MBA curriculum starts with values and ends with management and leadership.

## **Unit 2: Finance & Marketing**

- 1 - Corporate Finance**
- 2 - Marketing Analysis and Management**

"Leading Oneself" Practicum

Once a foundation in values and cultures is set, students move on to business disciplines. The first of two finance courses is presented in this unit. Since finance is one of the most important business languages and a key in business strategy, the MBA offers a two course sequence. This first course covers the basic concepts of finance and prepares students for the second finance course. The first practicum is delivered focusing on personal development and organization skills.

## **Unit 3: Understanding the Language of Business**

- 1 - Managerial Accounting
- 2 - Cases in Finance

"Organizational Structure and Problem Solving" Practicum

Continuing on the language of business, Unit 2 covers Accounting and the second course in Finance. Operating in any business organization requires an understanding of what is happening in the operation, a knowledge that is predicated on understanding the numeric language of business.

The second practicum builds on the first by looking at communication in organization and how teams operating in problem solving activities.

## **Unit 4: Leading People, Managing Processes**

- 1 - Leading Organizations**
- 2 - Production and Process Management**

"Delegation and Motivation" Practicum

Peter Drucker describes the majority of today's labor force as knowledge workers. Expanding levels of education, training, and income create a labor force much different from our industrial past. The emphasis on participation, balanced lives, and personal fulfillment elevates the role of leadership in organizations. Leading people and managing processes is a central theme of this unit. This work builds on the initial work in ethics and takes students back to the basics of the MBA – becoming better managers and leaders.

The third practicum builds carrying personal processes to the natural through delegation and

<b>Class Year</b>	<b>ETS Major Field Test in Business</b>	<b>ETS Major Field Test in MBA</b>
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on the first two by organization and team next step of sharing work motivation.

**Unit 5: Business  
1 - Business Policy &**

**Decisions**

**Simulation**

**2 - Business Plans**

**“Management Values” Practicum**

Do you know a good business decision when you see one? While the principles of good decision making are integral to the course throughout the MBA program, at this stage of development we step back from the individual areas of the business to examine how policies, strategies and decisions affect business performance. A more comprehensive view of business decisions, from the view of leaders, is the focus.

The practicum caps the sequence of practicums by focusing on what one believes as a manager since in many ways management is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

**International Experience**

Students study abroad as the final experience of the MBA program tying back to the ethics and cultures courses at the beginning of the program. The international experience at a top ranked business school centers on five days of in-class instruction and work.

**Assessment**

Testing for Disciplinary Knowledge and Understanding

The MBA program initiated nationally based testing of students with the class of 2004 (entering in January 2003). Two tests have been administered, both provided by the Educational Testing Service (ETS).

1. Students are tested at the completion of the MBA review session, a three week curriculum presented in January of each year prior to the commencement of MBA coursework. This is a mandatory session for all MBA candidates. The ETS Major Field Test in Business, which is given to graduating college seniors, is administered.
2. Students are again tested at the completion of the MBA program using the ETS Major Field Test in MBA.

2004		258.26
2005	166.50	253.38
2006	168.00	
2007	167.36	
<b>National Averages</b>		
	152.00	250.20

For the three years for which the Field Test in business has been administered, the Millikin MBA classes have scored more than a standard deviation above the national mean score. This data supports the experiences and belief of MBA faculty that incoming students are sufficiently versed in basic business knowledge and that the MBA review session is effective in creating a base level of business knowledge for all students.

In addition, the MBA classes have scored above the national mean in the MBA Field Test.

#### Assessing Mastery of Course Content

Case presentation, written and oral exams, and projects in each course are used to evaluate performance and to gauge the extent of knowledge gained. All course final examinations have a portion devoted to a comprehensive coverage of content learning.

#### Assessing Integration of Knowledge and Professional Presentation Skills

In addition to the extensive use of cases throughout the curriculum, two capstone courses - Business Planning and Strategic Management – serve to assess the integration of knowledge and to demonstrate presentation skills. The Business Planning Course requires teams of students to develop a comprehensive, in depth business plan for some specific business event, such as starting a new business, developing a new product line, acquiring new assets, a merger, etc. These plans are presented before the MBA class, MBA Faculty and invited judges who assess the presentations for content and professional delivery. This assessment evaluates the extent of imbedded business knowledge deriving from coursework, presentation skills and professional demeanor.

Teams in the Strategic Management course compete in a nationwide business simulation game that requires students to diagnose business conditions, create strategies and prescribe actions to outperform competitors. Students must draw on all their course work and analytical reasoning in the competition. In addition, each team is required to deliver a formal corporate report at conclusion of the course.

## Assessing the Success of Delivery

Each course is evaluated at its third of ten lectures to assess if the instructor is successfully meeting the objectives of the course and fulfilling the expectations of students. In addition, the class and instructor are evaluated at the completion of each course.

Summary of Student Evaluations for 2005

Faculty	SIR Scores
A	4.35
B	4.17
C	4.34
D	4.35
E	NA
F	4.24
G	4.48
H	3.30
I	4.28

These scores are an average of the 'Overall Evaluation' questions on the SIR questionnaire. The two questions averaged are

13. Overall, the instructor for this course was excellent.
14. Overall, this course was excellent.

The score values are:

3. Undecided
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

MBA students, in general, rank the instructors and courses above 4, that is they tend to agree or strongly agree that the instructor and course are excellent.

## **Improvement Plans**

Student course assessments are evaluated by the MBA faculty (including the Director). The faculty makes judgments about areas for improvement. In addition, the MBA Director conducts an exit interview with each graduating class to solicit recommendations. As a result of the assessments and exit interviews we have made a number of major changes in the program. Several faculty have been replaced due to poor student evaluations. The curriculum has been changed in response to student input. A course in e-Business was replaced with a second course in Finance. The review session was changed from discipline modules to business simulation and practicum were moved toward management skills.

Additional changes are being considered in response to exit interviews with graduating students. They include: move the accounting course to Unit 2, change accounting to capture more basic accounting concepts including income accounting, revise the Operations Management Course, hire another marketing professor to address Tabor staffing concerns, and expand the international experience to accommodate study in China.

Course assessments and exit interviews will continue to provide feedback to faculty on a continuous basis and be used for continuous improvement in the MBA program.