How to Choose the Right MBA PROGRAM
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Significant ROI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>A Multitude of Options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>What to Look for in an MBA Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Clarkson’s MBA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Eighty-seven percent of business school alumni say their degree provided opportunities for faster career advancement. Seventy-nine percent say their degree increased their earning power."

— 2021 Alumni Perspectives Survey Graduate Management Admission Council
Introduction

If you’re considering an MBA, you’re in good company. An MBA has long been one of the most popular graduate degrees in the U.S. Since 2010, the MBA has been the number one choice of students who continue their education beyond a bachelor’s degree. Even more important, the vast majority of graduates of MBA programs credit the degree with advancing their careers and boosting their incomes.

Much of the MBA’s value lies in the skills and perspectives a degree program provides. Strong MBA programs combine the fundamentals with an emphasis on strategic thinking, teamwork, flexibility and leadership. That combination can pay dividends—in personal and financial fulfillment—throughout your career.

MBA students come from a variety of disciplines and professional backgrounds. Some have bachelor’s degrees in business administration, and others haven’t taken a single business class. Some enroll in an MBA program immediately after earning an undergraduate degree. Others work full- or part-time and are looking to advance professionally, change careers or launch their own businesses.

Almost without exception, they view the MBA as an investment in their future. In many cases, that investment starts paying dividends soon after the program is completed—with job offers at significantly higher salaries than those paid to graduates who do not have an MBA.

According to the 2021 Alumni Perspectives Survey report, published by the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC):

- 70 percent of alumni view their graduate management education as an excellent to outstanding value.
- 88 percent say their degree is professionally rewarding, 72 percent say it is personally rewarding, and 70 percent say it is financially rewarding.
- 77 percent strongly agree that their education prepared them for leadership positions, 69 percent say it prepared them for their career, and 79 percent say it increased their earning power.
- 87 percent say they received a positive return on investment and would still pursue a business management degree.
The ROI I received from the Clarkson MBA exceeded my expectations. A one-year investment in myself led to significantly higher earnings and expanded career opportunities. The classes and professors have sharpened my decision-making and analytical capabilities.

— Aiden Frank ’18, MBA’19
Business Intelligence and Data Analytics undergrad
Now works as an integration sales specialist at IBM

At IBM, Frank expected to use the problem-solving, presentation and management skills that were emphasized in his MBA program—and that has been the case. He was pleasantly surprised to discover other ways to apply his education as well.

"I was able to sharpen my public speaking ability tremendously due to the MBA, and I use those skills at work on a daily basis," he says. "But having an MBA opens additional doors that wouldn't be available to me without one."

Aiden Frank '18, MBA '19, integration sales specialist at IBM, is a case in point. He enrolled in Clarkson University's accelerated full-time MBA program after earning a Bachelor of Science in Business Intelligence and Data Analytics, also from Clarkson. Frank was recruited by IBM shortly after graduation.

“The ROI I received from the Clarkson MBA exceeded my expectations. A one-year investment in myself led to significantly higher earnings and expanded career opportunities. The classes and professors have sharpened my decision-making and analytical capabilities.”
Today’s MBA students have more options than ever before. Like Frank, students can attend a full-time, residential program and earn an MBA in as little as nine months. Or, students can work full time and choose from a variety of part-time options:

- On-site evening or weekend-only programs.
- Online courses available anytime, anywhere.
- Hybrid on-site/online programs which combine the convenience of online classes with opportunities for in-person interaction with faculty and peers.

Many programs also offer certificate and dual-degree options for students who are interested in adding a specialization in areas such as environmental management, global supply chain management or healthcare management.

Joshua LaFave, director of graduate business programs at Clarkson University’s Reh School of Business, emphasizes that program decisions are personal ones, based on each student’s goals, circumstances and preferences.

“We never push students to choose one type of program over another,” he says. “It’s very much a process of self-discovery.”

Timing and life circumstances are important factors to consider. For example, are you a new graduate who can more easily adjust to a year of full-time, accelerated coursework? If you’ve already begun your career, can you afford to take a year off to pursue an MBA full time? Given your existing commitments, can you handle the rigor and workload of an MBA program, whether full- or part-time?

I have a level of responsibility and success that I would not have expected just six years after completing grad school.”

— Laura Lachell, UGC’11

Union Graduate College merged with Clarkson University in 2016.
Laura Lachell, UGC’11, program manager of key accounts for Plug Power in New York’s Capital Region, decided to pursue her MBA immediately after earning a Bachelor of Science in Marketing. “I knew that, to set myself apart, I needed more than a bachelor’s degree,” Lachell says. “I chose the MBA because it offered the most versatility. I was 21 years old and not sure what I wanted to do, so I didn’t want to limit myself to one industry.”

Lachell opted for an on-site evening program that enabled her to work days, form strong bonds with her MBA cohort and professors, and earn her MBA in one year. The program included a full-time internship, which culminated in a job offer.

Since then, Lachell’s career has steadily advanced, and she gives much of the credit to the core skills learned in her MBA classes. “Part of that skill set includes learning how to apply them to new industries,” she says. “I’ve switched companies and industries—and knowing how to transfer those core skills has been key.”

Lachell’s first job after earning her MBA was as a marketing associate for a national eye care company. In 2014, she joined Plug Power, a leader in the hydrogen and fuel cell industry. Since then, Lachell has been promoted twice.

“My MBA has opened so many doors and provided so many opportunities that I would not have had otherwise,” Lachell says. “I have a level of responsibility and success that I would not have expected just six years after completing grad school.”

What to Look for in an MBA Program

No two MBA programs are exactly alike, but the strong ones have important traits in common. Consider the following when comparing programs:

**AACSB accreditation.** This voluntary, internationally recognized designation is widely regarded as the gold standard of business school accreditations. Because AACSB-accredited programs must demonstrate their commitment to high-quality curriculum, faculty, research, innovation and engagement, this distinction offers an assurance of quality.

**Rigorous, relevant curriculum.** Strong MBA programs challenge students on multiple levels. Students will be expected to push themselves—to think differently and strategically, problem-solve as part of a team, hone public-speaking and presentation skills and develop as leaders.

“A good program develops the entire person,” LaFave says. “It prepares you to navigate unfamiliar terrain and adapt in an ever-changing global economy. It teaches you how and when to lead—and when to be a team player who steps back and lets someone else take the lead.”
Exceptional, engaged faculty. MBA students benefit enormously from qualified faculty who can draw on their own business experience and are committed to developing the next generation of business leaders.

Networking opportunities. Successful programs create opportunities to introduce students to alumni and potential employers. 90% of Clarkson students find employment at one of our career fairs or through our online systems prior to graduation, with 97% employed within 3 months.

Job placement and salary statistics. MBA programs should willingly share information on job placement rates and graduates’ average starting salaries. At Clarkson, for example, the average starting salary is $70,000 per year. Of the 2021 MBA class, 97 percent had secured jobs within 3 months of graduation.

Affordability. An MBA can be an expensive investment. Many programs offer opportunities to keep costs down. Examples include merit-based scholarships awarded for academic achievement or GMAT scores and articulation agreements between colleges to facilitate transfer credits and waivers, thereby reducing tuition.

Clarkson’s MBA

Clarkson University offers a variety of MBA and certificate options to meet the needs of today’s students and working professionals.

- An accelerated, full-time, residential MBA program on-site at the Potsdam, New York, campus. Classes begin in August. A student can earn their MBA in as little as nine months, depending on their business background.

- Dual-degree options:
  - MBA / Applied Data Science
  - MBA / Environmental Policy

- An online MBA program that offers courses anywhere, as well as on-site evening classes at the Capital Region Campus in Schenectady, New York. Students can complete the program full time or part time. They also have the option of attending all classes on-site or taking all courses online. Students can complete the program in as little as 18 to 24 months or on an extended schedule, if they prefer.

- Advanced certificates in:
  - Business Fundamentals (online, hybrid, on-site: Capital Region)
  - Environmental Management (on-site: Potsdam)
  - Global Supply Chain Management (online, on-site: Potsdam)
  - Healthcare Management (hybrid, onsite: Capital Region)
  - Innovation and New Venture Management (on-site: Potsdam)
Clarkson’s MBA programs are accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International).

For more information:

Reh Graduate Business Office
busgrad@clarkson.edu
315-268-5982

“Long-term, MBA graduates earn an average of $50,000 more per year than those with only a bachelor’s degree. 92% of MBA employers expect demand to rise or stay the same in the next five years.”

— GMAC Corporate Recruiters Survey, 2021