

# Professional MBA Program Course Abstracts

**KATZ** UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH  
JOSEPH M. KATZ  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
OF BUSINESS

# PROFESSIONAL MBA PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND COURSE ABSTRACTS

## FALL 2017 SEMESTER

For quick reference, click on any subject area to jump to a particular section within this document.  
 Course schedules – including times, days, room locations, etc. – can be noted on the StudentNet  
[‘Class Schedule’](#) section.

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## PROFESSIONAL MBA PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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### Degree Requirements

Upon formal admission to the Professional MBA program, a student must fulfill the following requirements in order to receive the MBA degree:

- A minimum of 51 credits of approved graduate-level coursework according to program of study
  - Dual- and joint-degree programs will have other, program-specific minimum credit completion requirements (see [‘Part-Time Programs’](#) for more information regarding dual- and joint-degree programs)
- Completion of program-specific core required courses
- A minimum cumulative quality point average (QPA) of 3.0

### Required Core MBA Courses

All core courses are offered each semester of a given academic year, Fall-Spring-Summer. Balancing quantitatively-based courses with courses that are more conceptual and focus on case study assignments is a recommended course sequencing strategy.

Additional core required courses may be required for dual- and joint-degree MBA programs. For more information, you can reference the [‘Academics’](#) section on StudentNet.

- BACC 2401 Financial Accounting (3 credits)
- BECN 2401 Economic Analysis (3 credits)
- BQOM 2401 Statistical Analysis (3 credits)
- BOAH 2409 Organizational Behavior (1.5 credits)
- BFIN 2409 Financial Management 1 (1.5 credits)
- BMKT 2409 Marketing Management (1.5 credits)
- BMIS 2409 Information Systems (1.5 credits) – *Dual-degree MBA/MS-MIS students exempted*
- BQOM 2421 Decision Technologies (1.5 credits)
- BSPP 2409 Strategic Management (1.5 credits)
- BSEO 2401 Business Ethics & Social Performance (1.5 credits)
- BIND 2444 Competitive Management Simulation (3 credits) – Capstone course designed to be taken upon completion of all other core required courses

**Total core course credits: 22.5**

**Elective credits available: 28.5\***

\*Conditional on participation in “pure” Professional MBA (non-dual-degree) program. Joint- and dual-degree programs will likely have other requirements and elective credit availability.



# ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION

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## *Q: “When can I register for classes?”*

Prior to orientation, your academic advisor will register you for your first semester courses based on your responses from the course enrollment survey. After your first semester in the program, you will self-enroll in courses. More detailed information on self-enrollment will be provided to you at a later date.

## *Q: “What happens if I register for 9 or more credits?”*

### **Professional MBA students taking a full-time course load**

Per the University Registrar, if you are a Professional graduate student enrolled for 9+ units in the fall and spring terms,

you are considered a full-time student and are assessed the [then-current graduate "flat" tuition rate and university fees](#).

- *Professional MBA students will not be charged the \$1,500 Full-Time Professional Development fee.* Rather, students can expect to pay the \$150 Professional Development fee standard for the Professional MBA program.
- Under this flat tuition rate, students can register up to 15 credits of coursework for the term without the need to pay for additional tuition.
  - This option is worth considering if you have the flexibility and availability to take on a full-time course load, and wish to expedite your graduation date.

If you are a graduate student enrolled for 8.5 or fewer credits during the fall and spring semesters, you are considered part-time and are billed on a [per-credit basis](#).

Students can expect to be billed on a per-credit basis in the summer term.

## *Q: “How will dropping courses from my schedule impact my financial aid?”*

### **Half-Time Status**

Among other requirements, in order to be eligible for [financial aid consideration](#) you must meet a critical academic requirement: The student must be enrolled at least “half-time” in a degree or certificate program at the University of Pittsburgh. Per the university, half-time enrollment is defined as a minimum of 4.5 credits per term for graduate students.

If you receive financial aid, please be sure that you will be able to maintain half-time status if/when you drop a course or courses from your schedule.

## *Q: “I’m new to the program. What core required courses should I take to get started?”*

### **New Professional MBA Students – First-Year of Study Recommendations**

If you are new to the Professional MBA program, and have questions about what courses to take to get started, please reference the [Professional MBA Program Overview – First-Year Recommendations](#) document. This document will provide students with a list of courses that should be strongly considered in the first year of study, or the first three (3) academic terms in the program.

Please know that the elective courses cited within the document are recommendations to consider; it is not necessarily required to complete said courses within the first year of study. However, given the availability to do so, students may wish to enroll in those classes to explore that discipline/area of study.

*Q: “I have ample knowledge and/or experience regarding material that is covered in a core course. Is it possible to be exempt from taking a core course?”*

### **Course Exemptions**

Exemption from any MBA core required course involves either successfully passing an exemption exam or by consent of Katz faculty. Regarding the former, successfully passing an examination exam *will not* reduce the number of total credits required for graduation but will grant the student the opportunity to take additional elective courses of his/her choice across any desired discipline. Regarding the latter, exemption via Katz faculty approval typically involves a graduate-level educational equivalent course from an accredited institution. Please contact your academic advisor for more information regarding the course exemption process.

*Q: “What are “blended” courses?”*

### **Blended Courses**

The Professional MBA program is in the process of rolling out courses in a blended format, which means that about 25% of the course will require you to come to campus for regular classes, while the balance 75% will be delivered online in synchronous and asynchronous formats (roughly 50/50, though the ratio would vary somewhat across courses). In synchronous classes, you and the rest of the class will be interacting with your professor in real time online. For asynchronous sessions, you work on the material on your own. You will thus be able to choose between the traditional (100% on-campus) format or the blended option for your courses, as the blended courses are developed and then offered.

Without compromising on quality, blended courses offer the significant benefit of convenience – you don’t have to come to Oakland for classes every week. With the online content, you can cover the material on your time and at your pace (asynchronous), and anywhere (for synchronous sessions, you will need a high speed internet connection). Of course, you will be in regular touch with your instructor online.

# KATZ SEMESTER SYSTEM AND ACADEMIC RECOMMENDATIONS

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## Full-semester and Half-semester Courses

Katz is unique in that it is one of the few schools across the university that offers multiple course offerings throughout a given semester. Specifically, we offer four types of classes: first-half courses, second-half courses, full-semester courses, and immersion-format courses. Half-semester courses are commonly offered as 1.5 credits each while full-semester courses are most commonly offered as 3 credits.

To use the spring semester as an example, we offer Spring 1 courses (first half of the semester, 1.5/class), Spring 2 courses (latter half of the semester, 1.5 credits/class), full-term courses (the traditional semester-long course as 3-credits), and immersion-style classes (courses typically offered over a weekend). To demonstrate scheduling flexibility with various types of offerings, a half-semester course permits one to schedule a Monday night class during the Spring 1 session, for example, and then enroll in a *different* Monday night course for the Spring 2 session.

## Fall 2/Spring 2 Course Adds and Drops

After the add/drop period concludes at the beginning of each semester (noted in the [academic calendar](#) available on StudentNet), the Registrar deactivates the ability to add or drop courses online via [my.pitt.edu](http://my.pitt.edu) for all university students. As a favor to Katz, the Registrar has kindly agreed to permit Katz students to add or drop Fall 2 or Spring 2 courses during the first week of late session classes. Students and their advisors must complete necessary paperwork in order for the Registrar to process the request.

Although you may contact your adviser in advance with late session add/drop requests, please keep in mind that the Registrar will only process these requests during the first week of late session classes. Processing may require a few days' time to have schedules officially updated online. If your advisor approves the add/drop request, consider the change(s) made and attend/do not attend the course(s) in question, respectively.

Essentially, if/when you decide to add or drop a Fall 2 or Spring 2 course, please contact your advisor for assistance. Students should be able to add or drop summer classes online during two distinct Summer 1 and Summer 2 add/drop periods without the aid of an advisor.

# IMPORTANT DISCLAIMERS

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## **Course Syllabi**

Please be advised that course syllabi cited within this document have been provided to give students a realistic preview of *anticipated* learning objectives. Cited syllabi may come from previous course offerings and past semesters. Course format, content and deliverables, and instructor expectations are subject to change.



# FALL 2017 COURSE ABSTRACTS

## Accounting

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### **BACC 2401: FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING – MBA CORE REQUIRED COURSE**

*Credits:* 3

*Offerings:* Full Semester – 100% on Campus

*Description:*

This course enables students to understand the basic financial accounting model, as well as the structure and substance of a firm's financial reports from a user's point of view. This includes what is (and what is not) included in financial statements, how and when events affect the statements, and what users can infer from these reports. When they finish the course, students should be able to examine a set of financial statements and effectively analyze the firm's financial position, profitability and cash generating ability.

[Access course syllabus](#) – Most recent syllabus posted for providing context. Course structure, scope, and requirements are subject to change.

#### **Special considerations:**

- Prerequisite for core required course BSPP 2409 Strategic Management
- Although the Business Math workshop is not required, it is highly recommended for students registered for this course.
- The workshop is scheduled to be held on **Aug. 21<sup>st</sup> (Mon.) and Aug. 22<sup>nd</sup> (Tues.); 5:30-8:30pm; Room 104 Mervis Hall**

## Economics

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### **BECN 2401: ECONOMIC ANALYSIS FOR MANAGERIAL DECISIONS: FIRMS AND MARKETS – MBA CORE REQUIRED COURSE**

*Credits:* 3

*Offerings:* Full Semester – 100% on Campus and Blended Course Options Available

*Prerequisite(s):* None. Students are strongly encouraged to attend the Business Math workshop in preparation for the class. Please see the 'Special considerations' section.

*Description:*

This course develops an understanding of how a market-based economic system reconciles the separate needs of consumers and producers, and provides an economic framework for managerial decisions. Additionally, the course provides tools of analysis and concepts that are used in the MBA program's functional fields. Centering on the basic concept of the business firm, it integrates the analysis of market demand with that of production and costs in the context of a variety of domestic and global market structures. Topics include: pricing, output and quality decisions; the impact of productivity improvements on costs; quality-cost tradeoffs; transaction costs as a determinant of the boundaries of the firm; market imperfection and the role of regulation.

[Access course syllabus](#) – Most recent syllabus posted for providing context. Course structure, scope, and requirements are subject to change.

#### **Special considerations:**

- Students enrolled in the blended course section will be required to meet on campus on the following dates and times:
  - Aug 30, 6:20-9:20pm
  - Sept. 20, 6:20-9:20pm
  - Dec 11, 6:20-9:20pm

- Although the Business Math workshop is not required, it is highly recommended for students registered for this course. The workshop is scheduled to be held on **Aug. 21<sup>st</sup> (Mon.) and Aug. 22<sup>nd</sup> (Tues.); 5:30-8:30pm; Room 104 Mervis Hall**

## *Information Systems and Technology Management*

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### **BMIS 2409: INFORMATION SYSTEMS – CORE REQUIRED COURSE**

*Credits:* 1.5

*Offerings:* Fall 2 - Blended Course

*Prerequisite(s):* None

*Description:*

How does information technology enable the business? How does it provide business value? This course provides an overview of information technology and its application in a business. By simultaneously examining business cases and the capabilities of relevant technologies, students will develop an understanding of how information technology supports and enables business strategies, innovation, and improved business capabilities and processes.

[Access course syllabus](#)—*Most recent syllabus posted for providing context. Course structure, scope, and requirements are subject to change.*

#### ***Special considerations:***

- Students will be required to meet on campus on the following dates and times:
  - Oct 26, 6:20-9:20pm
  - Dec 14, 6:20-9:20pm
- Prerequisite for certain BMIS information systems elective courses

## *Marketing*

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### **BMKT 2409: MARKETING MANAGEMENT – MBA CORE REQUIRED COURSE**

*Credits:* 1.5

*Offerings:* Fall 1 – 100% on Campus

*Prerequisite(s):* None

*Description:*

This course examines the role of marketing in creating value for the firm. It helps students answer the central question of marketing strategy—what value to provide and to whom—using the tools of segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP) of brands. The course shows how central aspects of marketing mix programs—product, place, pricing, and promotion—all follow from an effective STP program, and how marketing support functions such as marketing research, advertising, and new product development can support effective marketing decisions. Emerging trends in digital marketing, competition and globalization are examined. The course emphasizes experience-based learning to develop the necessary marketing knowledge and skills among students.

# Organizational Behavior and Human Resources Management

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## **BOAH 2409: ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR: LEADERSHIP & GROUP EFFECTIVENESS – MBA CORE REQUIRED COURSE**

*Credits:* 1.5

*Offerings:* Fall 1- 100% on Campus / Fall 2- Blended Course

*Prerequisite(s):* None

*Description:*

The effective management of people is a critical component of organizational competitiveness. This course addresses problems and issues concerning leadership, interpersonal effectiveness, and challenges for managers in the 21st century. The student is prepared to manage himself or herself and others in a rapidly-changing global environment. Topics covered include leadership, teamwork, power, politics, and influence.

*Special considerations:*

- Students enrolled in the blended course section will be required to meet on campus on the following dates and times:
  - Oct 27, 6:00-9:00pm
  - Dec 15, 6:00-9:00pm

# Operations Management

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## **BQOM 2401: STATISTICAL ANALYSIS: UNCERTAINTY, PREDICTION, & QUALITY IMPROVEMENT – MBA CORE REQUIRED COURSE**

*Credits:* 3

*Offerings:* Full Semester- 100% on Campus

*Prerequisite(s):* None. Attendance of a mandatory statistics workshop is required as a part of this course. See 'Special considerations' section.

*Description:*

This course will provide students with a set of integrated statistical tools and methodologies useful in a managerial environment. The emphasis is on the use of real data for modeling and solving problems in the areas of marketing, finance, human resources and operations management. Topics covered include: data analysis and modeling, estimation, confidence intervals, hypothesis testing, simple and multiple regression, analysis and design of experiments and statistical quality control.

*Special considerations:*

- Attendance of the statistics workshop is required as a part of this course. **The required workshop will be held on August 23<sup>rd</sup> (Wed.) and August 24<sup>th</sup> (Thurs.); 5:30-8:30pm; Room 104 Mervis Hall**
- Registration for the workshop is not required as the course instructor will have a roster of registered students for the course.
- Although the Business Math workshop is not required, it is highly recommended for students registered for this course. The workshop is scheduled to be held on **August 21<sup>st</sup> (Mon.) and August 22<sup>nd</sup> (Tues.); 5:30-8:30pm; Room 104 Mervis Hall**
- Prerequisite for BQOM operations elective courses
- Prerequisite for *BFIN Financial Management 1* core required course
- Prerequisite for *BMKT 2031 Marketing Research*

# *Strategy, Environment, and Organizations*

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## **BSEO 2401: BUSINESS ETHICS AND SOCIAL PERFORMANCE – CORE REQUIRED COURSE**

*Credits:* 1.5

*Offerings:* Spring 1- Blended Course / Spring 2- 100% on Campus

*Prerequisite(s):* None

*Description:*

This course examines concepts, issues, and tools related to the management of ethics and social responsibility in business. Students learn how to recognize and respond to ethical problems, to understand their personal responsibilities as business managers, to evaluate various ethical frameworks, to apply a process of moral decision making to ethical problems, to grasp relationships between ethical behavior and organizational structure and processes, and to manage the ethical and social problems and opportunities arising from organizational, institutional, societal, and global dimensions of the business environment.

### ***Special considerations:***

- Students enrolled in the blended course section will be required to meet on campus on the following dates and times:
  - Aug 26, 9:00am-12:00pm
  - Oct 14, 9:00am-12:00pm

# Business Language Courses

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## VARYING LANGUAGE COURSES

*Credits:* 1.5

*Offering:* Full Semester

*Prerequisite(s):* **Students must contact Jacqueline Saslawski with language course interest**

*Description:*

The International Business Center (IBC) offers foreign language instruction to any small group of at least five (5) MBA students. The course is worth 1.5 credits, which can be applied to your total requirements for the MBA (maximum of three language credits total). Classes are offered for three hours per week over the entire semester.

*Languages that can be offered:*

- Professional Communication in Mandarin 1
- Brazilian Portuguese
- German 1
- Spanish 1

*Class times:*

- Classes are offered for three hours per week over the entire semester and are worth 1.5 elective credits. The day section will meet three times per week on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 11:00am-11:50am. The Saturday section will meet once per week on Saturday from 9:00am-12:00pm.

*Special considerations:*

- If you would like to study a language, there must be a commitment of at least five MBA students per course. If you are interested in studying a foreign language, please contact Jacqueline Saslawski, Managing Director, International Business Center at [jsaslawski@katz.pitt.edu](mailto:jsaslawski@katz.pitt.edu), 412-648-1559, or stop by at 224 Mervis Hall.

*Next term likely to be offered:*

- Language course offerings vary by term to accommodate student interest