

BILL AND VIEVE GORE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS PROGRAMS

PROJECT-BASED MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (PMBA)

Faculty

- Dax Jacobson, Interim Dean
- Richard Chapman, PMBA Program Director
- William Shiflett, Director, MBA & Graduate Business Operations
- AJ Kerns, Student Support Specialist

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[Admission to the Project-Based Master of Business Administration Program](#)

The Project-Based MBA program is specifically designed for graduate students who require greater flexibility in course scheduling and program design, and offers demonstrated learning through real-world business application projects instead of traditional courses. Students are individually coached by full-time faculty members with real world business experience and academic qualifications to help students develop increased professional abilities and mastery of critical business competencies. The MBA program is:

- **Competency-based:** A student completes a total of five project sequences designed and sequenced specifically to measure student learning and accomplishment. Students will base projects on real-world problems and contextualize analysis to the student's firm or entrepreneurial venture. Each project sequence can be completed within one semester, meaning students can complete the program in five semesters (approximately 20 months).
- **Individual and team-based:** Students complete most projects individually to demonstrate mastery of associated business and professional competencies. Some projects are team-based to assist students in mastering leadership competencies, such as managing projects, leading and working in teams, and coaching.
- **Low-Residency:** A student attends a one-day residency for each of the five project sequences. Student combine their professional experience and ability with learning experiences and resources delivered online to master program competencies. Projects are then completed around a student's personal and professional schedule, making degree completion more flexible and convenient.
- **Faculty-Coached:** a student worked directly with a full-time faculty member individually for project guidance and performance coaching. Faculty members evaluate completed student projects to determine if the project sufficiently demonstrated competencies.

Students completing all program and college requirements earn a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree from Westminster College.

Program Goals

A student completes the MBA program by demonstrating mastery of the following program goals and related competencies:

- **Communication.** Effectively communicate business concepts and analysis orally and in writing to organizational stakeholders.
- **Ethics and social responsibility.** Evaluate various ethical perspectives and use an ethical and legal framework for decision-making and social responsibility.
- **Critical, analytical and reflective thinking.** Analyze and solve complex managerial and organizational problems incorporating reflective thinking on the implications of the outcomes of those decisions.
- **Leadership and teamwork.** Lead and influence individuals and teams to achieve organizational objectives.
- **Organizational performance.** Analyze and use accounting, financial, and operational information to measure and influence organizational performance.
- **Understanding markets.** Identify and evaluate markets for the organization's goods and services, articulate and influence the activities that make up the value chain for those goods and services, and use appropriate methodologies for ensuring product/service quality and speed to market.
- **Strategic and global thinking.** Design a strategic planning process, formulate a strategy, and implement a strategy to achieve sustainable competitive advantage for a firm.

Degree Requirements

The Projects

The program consists of five project sequences, comprised of a series of applied business projects, all of which must be completed through Westminster College. Each of the project sequences consists of several project assignments and an integrative project. The projects are to be completed in the order specified. A student completes all projects to demonstrate mastery of the program learning goals and competencies. Before starting a project sequence, a student meets with his or her Project Coach to assess which learning experiences should be used to help the student complete the assigned projects, given the student's prior life and/or professional experience. The student is given access to a set of rubrics, which explain how the project will be evaluated upon its completion. A student can use the rubric to self-assess the project before submission. When a project sequence is successfully completed, the student can begin the next project sequence.

Faculty Coaching

To help students in the program, full-time faculty members (Coaches) are specifically assigned to assist in learning and in project assessment. Students and faculty interact regularly on an individual basis to facilitate learning and mastery of competencies. Each project sequence has a faculty coach who assists the student in learning experiences and in project completion and evaluation. Each student also has access to the student support staff to assist with registration, billing, financial aid, project submission, technology systems, and any other questions about the program. A student is encouraged to utilize these resources whenever needed throughout the duration of the program.

Grading/Assessment Systems

When a student has completed a project, work is submitted to the faculty Project Coach for evaluation according to the established project rubrics. A student is given one of three assessments for each of the competencies related to the project assignment and for the overall project evaluation: **Exceeds** project competencies, **Meets** of project competencies, or **Does Not Meet** on project competencies. In all cases, the student is given substantial feedback on project performance. In the case that an assessment of "Does Not Meet" is given, the student is allowed to use additional learning resources and coaching feedback in order to resubmit for additional evaluation. For grading equivalency and transcript reporting, an "Exceeds" is equivalent to a letter grade of "A" and "Meets" is equivalent to a letter grade of "B".

Applied Learning Resources

Applied learning projects are utilized to help the student master the knowledge related to specific competencies and learning goals as they relate to specific project assignments. All of the learning resources associated with applied projects can be accessed from the course management website. Learning resources augment a student's knowledge and can be engaged on an as-needed basis by the student. A student is strongly encouraged to consult with his or her Project Coach as they are working on project assignments to determine which sets of learning resources are most useful, given the student's background and experience. All learning resources can be accessed by all students, even if a student is completing a later project, in order to revisit and review specific topics and knowledge.

Academic Progress

A student can complete the requirements of the MBA program within five semesters. A student who, for whatever reason, does not enroll for two consecutive semesters, must request reinstatement in the program, and will be subject to the tuition charges currently in effect. While students may manage their time during the semester to meet their personal and professional commitments, each project sequence must be completed within a semester. If the project sequence is not completed or satisfactory progress requirements are not met, student may jeopardize their financial aid eligibility for subsequent semesters. Staying in constant contact with the student support staff and project coach helps to avoid potential financial aid and matriculation issues. If a student, because of personal and professional life commitments, needs to take a semester off, they can do so by communicating with the student support staff. If students take two full semesters off without communicating with the student support staff, they may be withdrawn from the program and require readmission to be reinstated back into the MBA program.

Academic Suspension

A student who, for whatever reason, is unable to demonstrate mastery of the competencies of a particular project sequence after two full attempts will be asked to meet with the project coach. The project coach will work with the student to develop a realistic plan to identify those barriers that inhibit the student's successful performance. This plan will then be engaged and the student will be given one additional attempt at completion. If the student is still unable to complete the project, the student may be suspended from the MBA program. A student who is suspended from the program may reapply for admission after two semesters. A personal interview will be required before readmission is allowed, and if readmitted, the student will be able to reenter the program at the current year's tuition rate. The student will work with his or her project coach to develop a specific progress plan. As long as the student fulfills the terms of the performance plan, the student will be allowed to complete the remaining program requirements.

Academic Standards

Faculty members in the Bill and Vieve Gore School of Business have developed the following academic standards to support the mission and goals of the MBA program. The goals are presented here to help the student understand their responsibilities as a student in the program:

- A student should always be familiar with project requirements and assignment guidelines. The student should take every opportunity to consult with his or her Project Coach and the Student Support Staff to receive clarification when needed.
- Collaboration is encouraged to enhance depth of learning; all submitted work, however, must be the original work of the student.
- A student should always be respectful of faculty, staff, and other students in the program.
- The program is designed to be academically rigorous, intellectually challenging, and real-world application oriented as demonstrated by mastery of competencies and outcomes.
- Plagiarism is a serious offense in academic and business settings and a violation of the college's academic policy. A student who violates the academic honesty policy may be suspended from the program.

Graduation Requirements

A candidate for graduation must consult the student support staff at the beginning of project sequence three. The student support staff will assist the student in completing an application for graduation for the next graduation period, depending on the actual date of the application. To be eligible for graduation, a student must satisfy the following conditions:

- Complete 39 credit hours
- Complete each project sequence with a minimum evaluation of "Meets" on all project competencies
- Complete the Major Field Test in Business administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS)

For ETS information, click [here](#). Exceptions for completing the ETS may be considered by program chair when conditions make completion of the test impractical.

A student should consult with either the assigned project coach and/or student support staff regarding graduation requirements.

Program Requirements

Requirement Description	CH	Recommended Schedule
Sequence 1: Strategic Leadership	8	Semester 1
MBA PRJ1.1 Negotiations and Conflict Resolution 1		
MBA PRJ1.2 Salary Negotiation 1		
MBA PRJ1.3 Vendor Contracts and Negotiation 1		
MBA PRJ1.4 Creativity and Competitive Advantage 1		
MBA PRJ1.5 Internal Organization 1		
MBA PRJ1.6 External Environment 1		
MBA PRJ1.T Manage Teams to Improve Organizational Performance 1		

Requirement Description	CH	Recommended Schedule
MBA PRJ1.F Presentation & Defense Business Strategy 1		
Sequence 2: Consumers in the Market	8	Semester 2
MBA PRJ2.1 Data Analysis 1 MBA PRJ2.2 Pricing Strategy 1 MBA PRJ2.3 Product Portfolio 1 consent of instructor MBA PRJ2.4 Market Research 1 MBA PRJ2.5 Promotional Strategy 1 MBA PRJ2.6 Globalization 1 MBA PRJ2.T Manage Teams to Improve Communication 1 MBA PRJ2.F Develop a Marketing Plan 1		
Sequence 3: Enterprise Performance	8	Semester 3
MBA PRJ3.1 Developing Organizational Performance Measures and Outcomes 1 consent of instructor MBA PRJ3.2 Lead Process Improvement 1 MBA PRJ3.3 Financial Analysis and Reporting 1 MBA PRJ3.4 Evaluate Financial Performance 1 MBA PRJ3.5 Industry Comparative Analysis 1 MBA PRJ3.6 Developing a Financial Forecast 1 MBA PRJ3.T Manage Teams to Improve Organizational Performance 1 MBA PRJ3.F Develop a Financial Budget and Plan 1		
Sequence 4: Implementing Strategy	8	Semester 4
MBA PRJ4.1 Managing in a Global Environment 1 MBA PRJ4.2 Leadership Evaluation 1 MBA PRJ4.3 Ethics & Corporate Social Responsibility 1 MBA PRJ4.4 Corporate Structure 1 MBA PRJ4.5 Analysis of Business Level Strategy 1 MBA PRJ4.6 Personal Leadership Improvement 1 MBA PRJ4.T Strategy Implementation 1 MBA PRJ4.F Developing an Operating Plan 1		
Sequence 5: Business Planning	7	Semester 5
MBA PRJ5.1 Industry and Company Analysis 1 MBA PRJ5.2 Customer Analysis and Marketing Plan 1 MBA PRJ5.3 Competitor Analysis & Strategic Response 1 MBA PRJ5.4 Company Operations Plan 1 MBA PRJ5.5 Firm Financial Analysis and Plan 1 MBA PRJ5.6 International Context Trip 1 MBA PRJ5.F Final Business Plan Creation, Publication, & Presentation 1		

Requirement Description	CH	Recommended Schedule
Major Field Test in Business administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS)		
Total Hours for the Project-Based Master of Business Administration Program (PMBA)	39	

Accelerated Project-Based MBA (BBA to PMBA)

Students who complete the Project-Based BBA program are pre-admitted to the Project-Based Master of Business Administration (PMBA) program offered by the Bill and Vieve Gore School of Business. Students can complete the MBA program in four to five semesters (20 months) and 30 semester credits. Please contact the Program Chair for further information.

Graduation Requirements

A candidate for graduation must consult the student support staff at the beginning of project sequence three. The student support staff will assist the student in completing an application for graduation for the next graduation period, depending on the actual date of the application. To be eligible for graduation, a student must satisfy the following conditions:

- Complete 30 credit hours.
- Complete each project sequence with a minimum evaluation of "Meets" on all project competencies.
- Complete the Major Field Test in Business administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS).

For ETS information, click [here](#). Exceptions for completing the ETS may be considered by program chair when conditions make completion of the test impractical.

A student should consult with either the assigned project coach and/or student support staff regarding graduation requirements.

Program Requirements:

Requirement Description	CH	Recommended Schedule
Sequence 1: Strategic Leadership	8	Semester 1
MBA PRJ1.1 Negotiations and Conflict Resolution 1 MBA PRJ1.2 Salary Negotiation 1 MBA PRJ1.3 Vendor Contracts and Negotiation (1) 1 MBA PRJ1.4 Creativity and Competitive Advantage 1 MBA PRJ1.5 Internal Organization 1 MBA PRJ1.6 External Environment 1 MBA PRJ1.T Manage Teams to Improve Organizational Performance 1 MBA PRJ1.F Presentation & Defense Business Strategy 1		
Sequence 2: Consumers in the Market	7	Semester 2
MBA PRJ2.1 Data Analysis 1 MBA PRJ2.2 Pricing Strategy 1 MBA PRJ2.3 Product Portfolio 1 consent of instructor MBA PRJ2.4 Market Research 1 MBA PRJ2.5 Promotional Strategy 1 MBA PRJ2.6 Globalization 1 MBA PRJ2.T Manage Teams to Improve Communication 1		
Sequence 3: Enterprise Performance	7	Semester 3
MBA PRJ3.1 Developing Organizational Performance Measures and Outcomes 1 consent of instructor MBA PRJ3.2 Lead Process Improvement 1 MBA PRJ3.3 Financial Analysis and Reporting 1		

Requirement Description	CH	Recommended Schedule
MBA PRJ3.4 Evaluate Financial Performance 1 MBA PRJ3.5 Industry Comparative Analysis 1 MBA PRJ3.6 Developing a Financial Forecast 1 MBA PRJ3.T Manage Teams to Improve Organizational Performance 1		
Sequence 4: Implementing Strategy	7	Semester 4
MBA PRJ4.1 Managing in a Global Environment 1 MBA PRJ4.2 Leadership Evaluation 1 MBA PRJ4.3 Ethics & Corporate Social Responsibility 1 MBA PRJ4.4 Corporate Structure 1 MBA PRJ4.5 Analysis of Business Level Strategy 1 MBA PRJ4.6 Personal Leadership Improvement 1 MBA PRJ4.T Strategy Implementation 1		
Sequence 5: Business Planning	1	Semester 4
MBA PRJ5.6 International Context Trip 1 Major Field Test in Business administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS)		
Total Hours for the Project-Based MBA (BBA to PMBA)	30	

*Students who have completed the Project-Based BBA at Westminster only need to complete 30 hours in the Project-Based MBA.

Accelerated Project-Based MBA (Leadership Certificate to PMBA)

Students who have completed the executive Leadership Certificate program offered through Westminster College can enroll in the accelerated Project-Based MBA program and complete the program in five-semester and 30 semester credits. The Leadership Certificate program is developed around 10 two-day courses focused on essential leadership and business skills. Each leadership session is centered on a three-stage process: pre-work, practice in real-world activities and then application in the workplace. The leadership certificate series utilizes a project-based project model with an assigned faculty coach to work with each participant and is available to consult with participants in real time. Only Students who have successfully completed all 10 courses of the certificate program are eligible for an accelerated PMBA.

Graduation Requirements

A candidate for graduation must consult the student support staff at the beginning of project sequence three. The student support staff will assist the student in completing an application for graduation for the next graduation period, depending on the actual date of the application. To be eligible for graduation, a student must satisfy the following conditions:

- Complete 30 credit hours.
- Complete each project sequence with a minimum evaluation of "Meets" on all project competencies.
- Complete the Major Field Test in Business administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS).

For ETS information, click [here](#). Exceptions for completing the ETS may be considered by program chair when conditions make completion of the test impractical.

A student should consult with either the assigned project coach and/or student support staff regarding graduation requirements.

Program Requirements

Requirement Description	CH	Recommended Schedule
Sequence 1: Strategic Leadership	2	Semester 1
MBA PRJ1.2 Salary Negotiation 1 MBA PRJ1.6 External Environment 1		
Sequence 2: Consumers in the Market	7	Semester 1
MBA PRJ2.1 Data Analysis 1		

Requirement Description	CH	Recommended Schedule
MBA PRJ2.2 Pricing Strategy 1 MBA PRJ2.3 Product Portfolio 1 consent of instructor MBA PRJ2.4 Market Research 1 MBA PRJ2.5 Promotional Strategy 1 MBA PRJ2.6 Globalization 1 MBA PRJ2.F Develop a Marketing Plan 1		
Sequence 3: Enterprise Performance	6	Semester 2
MBA PRJ3.3 Financial Analysis and Reporting 1 MBA PRJ3.4 Evaluate Financial Performance 1 MBA PRJ3.5 Industry Comparative Analysis 1 MBA PRJ3.6 Developing a Financial Forecast 1 MBA PRJ3.T Manage Teams to Improve Organizational Performance 1 MBA PRJ3.F Develop a Financial Budget and Plan 1		
Sequence 4: Implementing Strategy	8	Semester 3
MBA PRJ4.1 Managing in a Global Environment 1 MBA PRJ4.2 Leadership Evaluation 1 MBA PRJ4.3 Ethics & Corporate Social Responsibility 1 MBA PRJ4.4 Corporate Structure 1 MBA PRJ4.5 Analysis of Business Level Strategy 1 MBA PRJ4.6 Personal Leadership Improvement 1 MBA PRJ4.T Strategy Implementation 1 MBA PRJ4.F Developing an Operating Plan 1		
Sequence 5: Business Planning	7	Semester 4
MBA PRJ5.1 Industry and Company Analysis 1 MBA PRJ5.2 Customer Analysis and Marketing Plan 1 MBA PRJ5.3 Competitor Analysis & Strategic Response 1 MBA PRJ5.4 Company Operations Plan 1 MBA PRJ5.5 Firm Financial Analysis and Plan 1 MBA PRJ5.6 International Context Trip 1 Major Field Test in Business administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS)		
Total Hours for the Accelerated Project-Based MBA (Leadership Certificate to PMBA)	30	