

Lerner Graduate Certificate in Business Fundamentals Policy Statement
November 9, 2023

PART I. PROGRAM HISTORY AND PURPOSE

A. Statement of purpose and expectation of graduate study in the program.

The Lerner College Graduate Certificate in Business Fundamentals is designed to help working professionals and others gain advanced knowledge and skills in business. This certificate program is intended for individuals who wish to develop new or hone existing skills to keep pace with the changing business landscape so they may advance or redirect their careers. The goal of the certificate is to allow students, with the assistance of an academic advisor, to choose four (3 credit) courses out of an array of business fundamental courses that would be most beneficial to their professional endeavors. This Lerner certificate program should primarily appeal to:

- Individuals with an existing graduate degree or pursuing another graduate degree who desire an overview of core business disciplines of greatest relevance to them;
- Individuals with an undergraduate degree who would benefit from additional core business knowledge to advance their careers or shift their career trajectory;
- Individuals who are uncertain if they want an MBA or another graduate business degree. Students can enroll in the Certificate in Business Fundamentals program to get an understanding of the level of instruction and workload in the MBA program. Students can apply to the MBA program while pursuing their certificate program, and if admitted, can use credits earned to accelerate their degree completion.

B. Date of permanent status (or current status)

The proposed Certificate in Business Fundamentals would be new to the Lerner College and University.

C. Degrees offered (include brief description of concentrations, fields, etc.)

Graduate Certificate in Business Fundamentals consists of 12 credits of graduate coursework. The certificate is available to online and on-campus students.

D. Term when first students may enroll

Students can enroll into the certificate program in Summer 2024.

E. Factors that identify the student demand for the program (market research results)

This program would not require any additional courses to be created or resources to be used. Athletic advisors at the University of Delaware, current undergraduate students, and potential applicants to the MBA program have inquired about a business basics certificate that could be completed in a short time frame to help achieve career objectives. Given that core courses are offered multiple times a year in multiple formats, this program is expected to see demand from current and prospective University of Delaware students. The program will also allow students to experience MBA coursework prior to committing to an MBA program.

As of October 2023, 234 undergraduate students were enrolled in a business administration minor at the University of Delaware. The minor at the undergraduate level includes very introductory level business courses. Additionally, 23 students were enrolled in a business essentials certificate. This shows general interest (of non-business focused students) in learning more about core business disciplines.

Other Universities offer similar programs including:

- Widener (<https://www.widener.edu/academics/graduate-studies/business-fundamentals-certificate>)

- Suffolk University (<https://suffolk.smartcatalogiq.com/current/catalog/sawyer-business-school-graduate-programs/business-administration/graduate-certificate-in-business-essentials/>)
- Rowan University (<https://global.rowan.edu/programs/business-certificate-of-graduate-study.html>)
- American University (<https://kogod.american.edu/programs-admissions/certificates/graduate-business-fundamentals>)
- George Mason University (<https://business.gmu.edu/programs/graduate-certificate-programs/graduate-certificate-business-fundamentals>)

F. Identify the College and Department/School in which the program will reside.

The program will reside in the Lerner College of Business & Economics.

PART II. ADMISSION

A. Admission Requirements

The requirements for applicants are as follows:

1. A transcript showing awarding of a bachelor's degree from a four-year accredited U.S. college or university. Current undergraduate students need to show intent to complete undergraduate degree prior to enrolling in graduate level coursework, and all undergraduate coursework must be completed before starting the first graduate course.
2. One letter of recommendation from an employer or a faculty member attesting to the candidate's ability to succeed in a business graduate certificate program;
3. Current resume; and
4. Personal statement of how a business fundamentals certificate can assist the candidate in professional practice or voluntary endeavors. Additionally, candidates should answer the following prompt: "What are the specific attributes of this certificate program at UD that lead you to believe that this program is appropriate to help you achieve your professional objectives?"
5. GMAT or GRE scores are optional. If the GRE or GMAT is not submitted, it is required that you must provide other evidence of quantitative ability such as good grades in statistics or advanced math courses or work experience using analytical or quantitative methods. Any scores submitted voluntarily by an applicant will be evaluated holistically but will not be used to determine admission.
6. Application fee: a \$75 application due when you submit your online application

An interview may be required. Relevant work experience may also be taken into consideration.

Students currently in the MBA program can only apply for the certificate if they choose to not complete the MBA program. To receive the business fundamentals certificate, students must complete 12 credits (4 courses) of required course options as outlined in Part III.

Students who have completed the certificate prior to admission to the MBA program may apply the 12 credits toward the required credits for the MBA degree but will need to apply for admission and be accepted to the MBA program using standard criteria for MBA program admissions.

B. Prior degree requirements

The Lerner College Graduate Certificates are available to applicants possessing an earned Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. The candidates for admission need not have majored in any specific

undergraduate field; however, students interested in pursuing the Lerner College Graduate Certificate in Business Fundamentals are assumed to possess basic skills in written and oral communication, intermediate level mathematics (normally one year at the college level) and basic computer technology (word processing, spreadsheets, e-mail, and internet).

C. Application deadlines

Admissions decisions are made on a rolling basis throughout the year. Students may start in any of the five 7-week online semesters or in one of the on-campus semesters. The deadlines are the same as the on-campus and online MBA programs.

D. Special competencies needed (i.e., specific courses or experience).

Only what is listed above in B. Prior degree requirements: Must have completed an undergraduate degree.

E. Admission categories (explain other than regular such as provisional).

N/A

F. Other documents required (i.e., letters of recommendation, essays, portfolios, interviews, writing assessments, etc.).

All requirements outlined in Part I, Section A.

G. Must include University statement: Admission to the graduate program is competitive. Those who meet stated requirements are not guaranteed admission, nor are those who fail to meet all of those requirements necessarily precluded from admission if they offer other appropriate strengths.

This will be added to the catalog description.

PART III. ACADEMIC (Present all information separately for each degree)

A. Degree Requirements

- 1. List course requirements according to categories such as core requirements, concentration options, electives, research credits and dissertation credit requirements. List number of credits in each category and include total credits required for degree.**

The Certificate in Business Fundamentals is 12 credits. All courses are 3 credits. To be awarded a certificate, the student's overall GPA must be a 3.0. The specific courses available for the students to choose their 12 credits from are listed below. Some of the courses have prerequisite requirements:

ACCT600 – Financial Reporting and Analysis

BUAD620 – Fundamentals of Analytics

BUAD631 – Operations Management and Management Science

BUAD640 - Ethical Issues in Domestic and Global Business Environments

BUAD670 – Managing People, Teams, and Organizations

BUAD680 – Marketing Management

ECON603 – Economic Analysis for Business Policy

FINC650 – Financial Management

Other graduate business courses may be approved by an advisor as applicable to ensure the business fundamentals certificate allows students to achieve their career goals.

- 2. Give non-registered requirements in detail; includes residency requirements, qualifying examinations (number and format), portfolios, seminars, English proficiency, language requirements, teaching experience, internships, etc.**

N/A

- 3. Give procedure for petitions for variance in degree requirements (e.g., course substitution policies, completion deadlines, etc.).**

Same as MBA

- 4. Define any grade minimums in courses that are different from University policy.**

None

- 5. Identify any courses, which may not be used towards the degree (i.e., independent study, pre-candidacy study).**

N/A

- 6. Identify expectations of facility of expression in English (oral and written) as part of the degree requirement.**

Same as for the MBA degree. Students are expected to have good oral and written communication skills.

B. Committees for exams, thesis, or dissertations

N/A

Academic advising will be handled by the MBA advisors in consultation with Lerner faculty as appropriate.

C. Timetable and definition of satisfactory progress towards the degree

- 1. Academic load (full & part-time) expectations. Define normal progress. Define departmental review procedures for evaluating normal progress and evaluation of performance.**

Certificates can normally be completed within 2 (7-week) semesters if students enroll in 2 (3-credit courses) per semester, but students may take up to three years to complete. The Graduate and MBA staff will monitor all certificate students.

- 2. Grade requirements (general and specific). Include any special departmental expectations such as minimum grades in specific courses, limits on special problem courses, etc.**

Overall GPA must be a 3.0 to earn a certificate. Several courses include prerequisite courses.

- 3. Thesis/dissertation progress timetable guidelines.**

N/A

- 4. Thesis/dissertation defense guidelines.**

N/A

5. Forms required.

Standard AAD form provided by the graduate office.

6. Identify consequence for failure to make satisfactory progress.

The graduate certificate academic advisor will give the student written notification if they are not making satisfactory academic progress at the standard expected (cumulative GPA of 3.0). The written notice will include specific areas of improvement that will be required. The student will be given one semester or one additional course during which to demonstrate adequate improvement. Students should meet with their primary academic adviser as soon as possible after receiving such notification, so that the problem and the possible means of addressing the problem can be discussed. If the student fails to make adequate improvement, a recommendation to dismiss the student from the program will be by vote of the faculty who teach in the Business Fundamentals Certificate program and will be conveyed to the Graduate Office for action (see Graduate Student Probation and Dismissal Policy in the University Catalogue). Recommendations for dismissal are made by the Senior Associate Dean of the MBA and Graduate Programs Office to the University of Delaware Graduate College.

7. Protocol for grievance procedure if student has been recommended for termination for failure to make satisfactory progress.

The Business Fundamentals Certificate will use the standard grievance procedure provided by the graduate office.

PART IV. ASSESSMENT PLAN

Evaluation Plan

The overall effectiveness and success of the certificate program will be evaluated using the following measures):

- Student course evaluations based on University and College templates;
- Comparison of student career data pre- and post-program;
- Plan to enroll in additional graduate education;
- Successful completion rates of at least 75% (including continued education in a graduate program);
- Attainment of future graduate work, as applicable.

Assessment Plan

At the conclusion of the coursework,

- MBA and Graduate Office will examine a student's success in courses selected including their competency in achieving program educational goals via course assignments and assessments
- Students will complete a self-assessment survey to measure the extent to which they believe the knowledge and skill-sets developed will better prepare them for success in their career and future graduate education.

Part V. Program Educational Goals

Program Education Goals for the Business Fundamentals Certificate are as follows:

- Understand the concepts, theory, tools and practices of different functions of an organization;
- Apply and integrate functional areas of business to improve strategic decision making;
- Demonstrate analysis and information literacy skills as well as communication skills to synthesize complex business ideas;
- Showcase ability to solve problems and make decisions in both domestic and global contexts.

PART VI. FINANCIAL AID

A. Financial Awards

N/A

PART VII. DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS

A. General student responsibilities

1. Up-to-date addresses, etc.

Students are required to communicate via university email and keep us up-to-date regarding their telephone and US mail address.

2. Laboratories and research equipment.

N/A

3. Hazardous Chemical Information Act.

N/A

4. Vehicles.

N/A

5. Keys, offices, mail, telephone, copy machine, computer terminals, etc.

N/A

B. Student government and organizations (both student and professional).

N/A

C. Travel for professional meetings or presentations

N/A