April 2014

Dear MBA students:

Changes are afoot with the Marist MBA program! The current enhancements to the program in our on-going effort to bring you the best education experience aim to:

- Increase instructor-student and student-student engagement within the 500-level (Foundation) courses,
- Create a common experience for students entering the MBA program,
- Introduce Business Analytics into the curriculum, and,
- Facilitate flexibility and movement through the program without compromising the integrity of the program.

Please read this letter carefully and completely to learn about the modifications to the curriculum which are slated to begin in the fall. In addition, this letter provides reminders of opportunities to enhance your education with courses in Integrated Marketing Communications and Business Analytics, instructions for registering for your summer and fall courses, and details on how to obtain information and contact your faculty advisor.

**CURRICULUM CHANGES**

Five types of changes are being introduced to the MBA curriculum beginning this coming fall. They are:

1) **Mode of delivery & grading changes to MBA Foundation courses:**
   - MBA 515 Economics
   - MBA 525 Marketing
   - MBA 535 Statistics
   - MBA 545 Accounting
   - MBA 555 Management
   - MBA 575 Finance

All six of the above 500-level (Foundation) courses will adopt an instructor-led format, as is the case with all other courses in the program. Four of the 500-level courses – MBA 515, 525, 535, 545 – will remain eight weeks and delivered using a fully online format. Each will be offered once a semester (NOT once a round) at minimum including the summer. The other two courses – MBA 555 and 575 – will be incorporated into MBA 601 and 602 respectively (see details below).

Beginning fall 2014, grades in all 500-level courses will be based on the standard MBA grading scale, not the minimum of a “B” as is the case currently.
2) **Common 1st Course Experience:**
MBA 601, *The 21st Century Manager* (formerly *The Virtual Manager*) has been renamed to better reflect the new intent and focus of this management-oriented course. It will be the first course students take upon admittance in the fall and spring semesters regardless of any 500-level requirements. We expect that a common course experience will provide students with important knowledge and skills that they will need throughout the program, and help to foster a sense of community among those joining the program at the same time.

3) **Business Analytics:**
As the use of Big Data has become increasingly prevalent in organizations, the Marist MBA program is beginning to do more to provide students with an understanding of how analytics can be used in business decision-making. We want students to learn the managerial implications of using business analytics tools such as knowing what questions to ask, what to look for in a data set and how to apply data to informing business processes and outcomes.

Beginning in fall 2014, students will see the infusion of business analytics primarily in two courses, MBA 601 and 602. The revised course description for each course follows:

**MBA 601 The 21st Century Manager:** This course examines the theory and practice of management and leadership in emerging organizational settings, which includes virtual and distance environments, and the evolving role of Big Data and Analytics play in managerial processes and decision-making. Traditional and modern theories of management, as well as practical application of these theories in the workplace, are explored. The course will also assist students in examining his/her leadership style and assists in the development of a plan to improve skills in desired areas and environments.

**MBA 602 Financial Analysis for Business Decisions:** The focus of this course is on valuation and value creation. It brings business ethics to the attention of students, and employs data analytics. It consists of two inter-related components: financial statements and asset valuation. It starts with a general discussion of financial environment. It continues with the study of financial statements, comprehensive analysis of financial statements, and techniques of financial forecasting. It builds on the discussion of the determination of interest rates and the relationship between risk and return, the discounted cash flow method of asset valuation, which is then applied to the valuation of financial assets (stocks and bonds) and the valuation of real assets (capital budgeting). It ends with a discussion of exchange rate determination and parity conditions in international finance.

We are investigating other ways of introducing students to the managerial implications of business analytics within the MBA program. Stay tuned for further developments. For those of you interested in the technical side of Business Analytics, see information about the Advanced Certificate in Business Analytics below in the “Other Opportunities” section.

4) **Management & Finance Foundations and the Redesign of MBA 601 and 602**
Two of the required courses that also serve as prerequisite courses to many of the other courses in the program – MBA 601, *The 21st Century Manager*, and MBA 602, *Financial Analysis for Business Decisions* – are being revamped both in terms of content and delivery format. In terms of content, both courses will see attention devoted to business analytics, as discussed above. In
addition, both will incorporate materials from their respective 500-level (Foundation) course. Specifically, MBA 555, Management Foundations content will be incorporated into the newly designed MBA 601, The 21st Century Manager, and MBA 575, Finance Foundations material will be included into MBA 602, Financial Analysis for Business Decisions. As a result of adding new material to both of these courses, they will change from being 8 week courses to 15 weeks in length beginning in fall 2014. For those of you required to complete MBA 555, Management Foundations or MBA 575, Finance Foundations, please register for MBA 601 and 602 instead.

Please note that MBA 601 in summer 2014 remains an 8-week course. Students needing MBA 555 should NOT take this course and instead wait until the fall semester.

5) Revised prerequisites system:
To maximize program flexibility and movement through the program, without jeopardizing the integrity of the curriculum, we are introducing a new prerequisite system. Please see the enclosed program listing which identifies all courses in the MBA program, any pre-requisites required and the typical semester/round they are offered.

This change in system means that the curriculum map many of you have is not pertinent. We are scheduling courses, however, following the map, at least in the short term, so that those of you in progress will not experience any hardships in completing the program as we had originally stipulated. Please note that while we avoid making unscheduled changes, they sometimes occur especially in the case of insufficient enrollment for a course.

With this new approach, it becomes VERY IMPORTANT for you to lay out your course plan to degree completion ahead of time to complete any necessary course prerequisites and to make sure that the course you need in any given semester/round is offered when you need it.

We suggest:
- That incoming students who do not need any 500-level courses, to enroll in MBA 601 and 602 in the fall semester.
- For incoming students who are required to complete 500-level course(s), enroll in MBA 601 and one to two 500-level courses in the fall.
- For returning students in the process of completing their 500-level (Foundation) courses, register for MBA 601 in the fall and one to two of your remaining 500-level courses (not Management or Finance).
- For returning students who have completed their 500-level (Foundation) courses, follow the curriculum map you were given at the time of admittance to the program or design a plan that meets your needs (see the program listing).

We recognize that additional advising may be necessary during this transition. Please do not hesitate to contact your academic advisor, Professor John Finnigan (John.Finnigan@Marist.edu) or contact the office by emailing us at Gradmgt@Marist.edu.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES
For new students (a reminder to current ones), the MBA program has agreements with three other disciplines – Public Administration, Integrated Marketing Communications, and Information Systems with their Advanced Certificate in Business Analytics – that permit
students to take elective courses in their program and apply them to your MBA. Please read further for additional information.

**Public Administration.** Two courses from the master’s degree program in Public Administration are approved elective courses in the MBA program. They are: MPA 500, *Introduction to Public Administration* and MPA 521, *Management in Nonprofit Organizations*. Both are 8-week courses. MPA 500 is offered round 1 in the fall and spring semesters, MPA 521 is offered in round 2 both semesters. Neither are offered in the summer.

**Integrated Marketing Communications.** Marketing courses, as part of the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) program, are open to MBA students. Up to 2 IMC courses may be applied to your MBA degree as elective courses. In all cases, MBA 525, *Marketing Foundations*, is a prerequisite course (unless you were waived from this requirement at the time of admissions).

Please see the MBA Course Offerings (enclosed) for what IMC courses are available to you in the summer and fall semesters. For further information about these courses, follow this link and click on “Course Descriptions” and “Sample Sequences”:

http://www.marist.edu/admission/graduate/integratedmarketingcommunication/curriculum.html

*Sometimes students waived from Marketing Foundations encounter difficulty when trying to register for IMC courses. Email Gradmgt@Marist.edu if this happens to you.*

**Business Analytics Certificate: MBA + 2.** If you are looking for more technical expertise in Business Analytics, (the MBA program focuses on the managerial implications of Business Analytics), consider the Advanced Certificate in Business Analytics offered by the School of Computer Sciences and Mathematics. An MBA student can earn the Advanced Certificate in Business Analytics by completing the MBA program plus two additional courses.

This certificate consists of 4 courses:

- MSIS 537, Data Management I
- MSIS 545, Introduction to Data Analysis and Computational Statistics
- MSIS 637, Decision Support Systems (comparable to MBA 604)
- MSIS 645, Data Mining and Predictive Analytics

To earn your MBA and Advanced Certificate in Business Analytics:

- Take MBA 604, *Management Methods for Business Decision-Making* as per the MBA Curriculum map. This course is comparable to MSIS 637 and so MSIS 637 will be waived upon the satisfactory completion of MBA 604.

- Take MSIS 537, *Data Management I* when offered by the Information Systems program (generally fall semester). This course is already a pre-approved elective to the MBA program.
• Take the remaining 2 MSIS courses – MSIS 545 and 645. **These courses will NOT count toward the MBA degree.**

  - MSIS 537 and 545 are scheduled for fall 2014.
  - MSIS 645, *Data Mining & Predictive Analytics* will be offered in spring 2015.

Please note that no business analytics courses are offered in the summer.

All MSIS courses are 15-weeks in duration and are offered fully online. For additional information, please see: [http://www.marist.edu/admission/graduate/business-analytics/](http://www.marist.edu/admission/graduate/business-analytics/).

If you are interested in pursuing the MBA + 2 option, please complete the 2 steps:

1) Apply for the Advanced Certificate in Business Analytics through Graduate Admissions. Go to: [http://www.marist.edu/admission/graduate/business-analytics/](http://www.marist.edu/admission/graduate/business-analytics/).

2) Send an email to gradmgt@marist.edu to let the MBA staff know your intentions regarding Business Analytics.

Finally, it is possible to take up to two courses in the Advanced Certificate program and apply these credits to your MBA degree and not complete the Certificate.

**COURSE REGISTRATION – SUMMER & FALL**

Follow 4 easy steps for an easy, accurate way to enroll in your summer and fall 2014 courses.

Step 1: Read the new and improved *Summer & Fall 2014 Registration Information Guide*. It provides important details including how to register, dates for dropping a course and making financial arrangements. **It is important to review this Guide before you register as this information reflects changes from previous editions.**

Step 2: Refer to the *Curriculum Map* which shows the best sequencing of courses for the Core and Concentration/Elective courses. It also details when courses are offered.

Step 3: See the *Course Offerings* to select the class(es) you wish to take for each round. **This handout is the ONLY place where all options are listed.** You will need the “Course Request Number” (CRN) from this handout when you register online.

Step 4: Register for your summer and fall courses online.

If, upon registering, you get the error message “student attribute restriction” you have registered for a section that is not open to you (e.g., a course exclusively for students in the MBA for Accountants program). Go back to Step 3, the Course Offerings, and get the correct CRN. If you still encounter difficulties, let us know by emailing Gradmgt@Marist.edu.
**KEY DATES**

- **April 28**<sup>th</sup> Enrollment for BOTH summer and fall classes opens at 9 a.m.
- **May 16**<sup>th</sup> Registration for the **summer** round ends at 5 p.m.
- **May 28**<sup>th</sup> Course payment for the **summer** session is due by 5 p.m.
- **June 2**<sup>nd</sup> Summer courses begin this week. The course iLearn sites may be available on May 30<sup>th</sup>.
- **August 22**<sup>nd</sup> Registration ends for the two **fall** rounds – both round 1 and round 2 – at 3 p.m. *Make sure that you registered for both round 1 and round 2 courses because this is the only time you can register for the fall semester.*
  
  *There is no Add/Drop period once the registration period closes.*
- **August 27**<sup>th</sup> Course payment for the two **fall** rounds – both round 1 and round 2 – is due by 5 p.m.
- **September 1**<sup>st</sup> Fall round 1 courses begin. The course iLearn sites may be available on August 29<sup>th</sup>.

**DECLARING A CONCENTRATION**

The Marist MBA enables you to customize your program of study to meet your interests and needs. Five of the ten 600 level courses needed to complete the MBA degree are elective in nature. These five courses may be taken as free electives, or “concentrated” in a particular area to provide more depth of study once MBA 601 and 602 have been completed satisfactorily.

The Marist MBA offers four concentrations: Ethical Leadership, Financial Management, Healthcare Administration and International Business. Please email Gradmgt@Marist.edu from your Marist email account if you wish to declare a concentration. Make sure to include your identification (CWID) number. Don’t forget that if you complete a concentration you will still need to take one additional elective course.

*Remember, a concentration will only show up on your transcript if you declare it.*

**FINDING OUT ABOUT PROGRAM INFORMATION & UPDATES**

All program information, including registration materials, are available:

- On the MBA iLearn site which includes an email informing you of the registration announcement
- On the web at [www.marist.edu/gradmba](http://www.marist.edu/gradmba). Click on the tab “MBA Current Semester Schedule”.
- In the registration packet we send by postal mail to the address of record we have for each student.
With these multiple methods of getting the word out, it is now up to you to know the opportunities, policies and procedures of the MBA program.

**QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS?**
The School of Management staff are eager to address your questions or concerns. Please email Gradmgt@Marist.edu if you need assistance with registration problems or any other administrative matters. _Always use your Marist email account when contacting us and include your College-Wide Identification Number (CWID); we will not respond otherwise since your Marist account is the only way we have of verifying that it is you with whom we are talking._

We hope you agree that the changes we are introducing to the MBA program represent important enhancements. Please share your feedback with us.

Best wishes,

Elizabeth M. Doherty, Ph.D.
Associate Dean, Director of MBA & MPA Programs & Professor of Management
School of Management

Attachments: Registration Guide
Summer & Fall course offerings
Program Listing