

Boosting Student Preparedness with Business Fundamentals

Learn how The University of Texas at Austin's McCombs School of Business, adopted Business Fundamentals to equip students with critical business concepts before starting their Working Professional MBA program.

The school partnered with Business Fundamentals to bolster incoming students' readiness for the demands of balancing employment with intensive graduate studies.

The challenge

Balancing a schedule that includes full-time employment along with academic studies is a daunting task, one that many incoming students may not fully anticipate. Texas McCombs understands these challenges well. Ensuring that incoming Working Professional MBA students are adequately prepared for the rigorous academic workload and the substantial time investment required for success in the program was a prevailing challenge.

Previous prep programs used by the school did not meet these demands, as they lacked the necessary rigor and students did not always take it seriously. Emily Le, Senior MBA Recruiting & Admissions Officer, recognized the necessity for a program that introduced essential business concepts aligned with the rigorous curriculum at the school. The goal was to ensure that incoming students flourished as they entered the program.

"Getting the basic build blocks in accounting, finance, and statistics, is so important to really be able to develop the higher skills needed during the program," says Emily.

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"We're able to see the breakdown of which areas they struggled in the most, how much time they spent, their overall score, [...] and we can follow-up with them to make sure they feel prepared."

Emily Le

Senior MBA Recruiting & Admissions Officer at University of Texas Austin
McCombs School of Business

The solution

Texas McCombs switched to GMAC Business Fundamentals as a preparation tool for their Working Professional Programs, including their Evening MBA – Austin, Executive MBA – Austin, Weekend MBA at Houston, and Weekend MBA at Dallas/Fort Worth.

McCombs School of Business purchases all 3 courses (Accounting, Statistics, and Finance) for their students and provides these to their students at no cost.

Texas McCombs leverages Business Fundamentals in different ways, believing all students can help prepare before their classes start.

- For admitted students who are academically strong, she encourages them to complete Business Fundamentals as a refresher that will get them in the school mentality.
- For admitted students whose quantitative background might not be as strong, she strongly encourages them to complete this to prepare for the rigors of business school.
- For students who she wants to admit, but they have been waitlisted for quantitative concerns, she requires them to complete Business Fundamentals as a condition of admission.

Students are recommended to complete the courses before classes begin at a time that is most convenient for them.

The outcome

The introduction of Business Fundamentals has led to noticeable improvements in student preparedness and confidence. Students submit completion reports to the Texas McCombs MBA Admissions team, allowing them to analyze their performance across different topics and provide additional support if needed to ensure they feel prepared before their program begins. The feedback from the students has been positive, affirming the effectiveness of the program in boosting their confidence and mastery of fundamental business concepts.

“We know it has been really good for the students’ self-confidence going into the classroom.”, notes Emily.

In summary, the strategic implementation of Business Fundamentals at Texas McCombs has proven essential in equipping students with the necessary skills and confidence to thrive in their MBA programs. This initiative helped prepare students for the academic challenges ahead.

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“I started out with Statistics, Finance, and Accounting right out of the gate in my MBA program and [the Business Fundamentals courses] gave me such a head start. It really helped me to at least understand a lot of those terms and from there I was able to translate that into what we were doing in the classes. So, I was actually very much active participant in those not just sitting back.”

Michael

Current Full-time MBA Student, The University of Texas, Texas McCombs