

The Full-time MBA Program Round 3 Admissions Chat February 16, 2017

Chat with Berkeley-Haas

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Lizzy_Moderator: Welcome to the Berkeley MBA Admissions chat. My name is Lizzy Hazard, Admissions Marketing Specialist; I will be moderating the chat today. Joining us are Cindy Jennings Millette, Senior Associate Director of Admissions; Angela Fleekop, Associate Director of Admissions; Talin Abrahamian, Assistant Director of Admissions; Brooke Baranzano, Assistant Director of Admissions; Candace Gonzales-Tumey, Assistant Director of Admissions; Sandra Cruz-Lezama, Admissions Specialist; Gabrielle Calderon, Admissions Specialist; and Jamie Hayden, Assistant Director of Financial Aid. Please send us your questions!

Talin_Berkeley: Good morning! Looking forward to your questions.

Candace_Berkeley: Good Morning! I look forward to answering your questions today.

Sandra_Berkeley: Good Morning! I am Sandra Cruz-Lezama, an Admissions Specialist. I look forward to chatting with you all today.

Cindy_Berkeley: Good morning! My name is Cindy Jennings Millette, Senior Associate Director of Admissions. I look forward to answering your questions.

Gabrielle_Berkeley: Good Morning! I look forward to chatting with you all.

Brooke_Berkeley: Hello, chatters! I'm happy to help answer any questions you have today.

Angela_Berkeley: Good morning everyone! I welcome your questions.

Emma: Good morning, and thanks for hosting this chat. **Can you please speak to the implications of applying during round three? How does that influence one's chances of admission?**

Cindy_Berkeley: Hi Emma, Good question! Historically, we have admitted candidates in every single round including round 3. The advantage of applying earlier is simply that we have not made any other offers so we have more space in the class. Also, in regards to availability of some scholarships. However, if you are a strong candidate, and feel like you are ready to apply now, I encourage you to submit an application!

Rob L: For the letters of recommendation, are there certain guidelines or topics that need to be addressed about the candidate? How exactly are they supposed to be submitted?

Talin_Berkeley: Hi Rob. Yes, we have posted our guidelines online for your convenience: <http://mba.haas.berkeley.edu/admissions/index.html>. You also have access to the form that we ask your recommenders submit online.

Anastasia: Hello, I would like to ask about prior education. **In case I have already completed a Master's Degree in Management in the university outside the United States, would my application still be considered for the full-time MBA? Or I'd better look for another program?**

Gabrielle_Berkeley: Hello Anastasia! Applicants with a Master's Degree in Management are more than welcome to apply to the Full-time MBA program.

Marc: Hi all, this may or may not apply to any of the ambassadors... **for someone who would be travelling from east coast to west coast, how was the acclimation period on campus, in the classes, and in the community?**

Candace_Berkeley: Hi Marc! This question is best answered by one of our Student Region Representatives. You can find their contact information at <http://mba.haas.berkeley.edu/admissions/student-region-reps.html>. I am aware that we have many students from the east coast and they do acclimate very well and very quickly.

Guitarguru: Hi - thanks for taking out the time; I am a potential applicant for the class of 2020 (will apply in the fall of 2017); for admissions, **how much emphasis does Berkeley put on extracurricular activities for young professionals, and where are the opportunities to showcase this in the application?**

Cindy_Berkeley: Hi Guitarguru, Yes, we do take into account extracurricular activities and community involvement both in undergrad and currently. Of course we understand that you don't have as much time while you are working post-undergrad to devote to these outside activities so we certainly keep this in context. We suggest that you highlight those activities that you are most passionate about. Those activities, for which you have devoted the most time, may have had a leadership role. We have a question on our application that asks you to list extracurricular involvement. You also can discuss such experiences if they are relevant in your essays. Hope this helps!

- Jseib:** Thanks for the chat. **Do you have any tips for round 3 applicants to help their application stand out from the pack?**
- Angela_Berkeley:** My best advice to you is to be your authentic self! Have a friend read your application to determine if it represents who you are and tells your story well. Make sure your professional and extracurricular experience is presented clearly and concisely.
- Gordon:** **What sets Berkeley's MBA program apart from others? A specific specialty/focus, etc.?**
- Brooke_Berkeley:** Hello, Gordon! In my opinion, there are many things that set Haas apart from other MBA programs. What comes to mind for me is our small class size, our location in the Bay Area close to disruptive companies and a start-up ecosystem, and the ability of our students to take advantage of up to three classes at other UC Berkeley schools to contribute to their overall MBA. I'd encourage you to peruse our website for other differentiating factors too.
- Guitarguru:** Hi - during my undergrad, while I was an international student in the US, my grades in the final semester were sub-par because of a family emergency back home; **does Berkeley give me the chance to explain this academic exception in the application?**
- Brooke_Berkeley:** Hello! Good question. Yes, you will have the ability to explain this lapse in grades in the optional essay portion of your application.
- Alec P:** **What advice can you give on perfecting the resume for MBA admissions? Are there any differences from a standard professional resume? What is the ideal length?**
- Brooke_Berkeley:** Hello, Alec! The best length is one page, and business school resumes tend to highlight impact made at a company as well as your professional functions.
- Lvquoc1:** Hello, thank you for arranging this chat. **I'm wondering whether applying in Round 3 is advisable?**
- Angela_Berkeley:** Thanks for your question. We realize that there are many factors at play that determine what round you apply in, so I would advise you to apply as soon as you feel the information in your application is comprehensive and complete.

Emma: Hi Cindy, thank you for your response. **I'm hoping you'd be willing to drill down a little more: perhaps provide a percentage or a percentage-range? It would be helpful to know if, in past years, 1% of the class has come from Round 3 applicants, or 25%.** Thanks in advance for any additional details you can provide.

Cindy_Berkeley: Hi Emma, It varies year-to-year depending upon the pool. Historically our Round 3 application pool is by far the smallest of all of our 3 rounds. So it is a relatively small percentage of admits from Round 3.

Lvquoc1: **For the essay questions, is it advisable exceed the word limit by <10%?**

Candace_Berkeley: Hi Lvquoc1. We recommend that you stay within the word limit that we request. Please know that we read many applications and if everyone exceeded the word limit that would slow down the process. We want to get to know you and your goals but we also want to be able to get applicants interviewed in a timely manner. A few words over is fine, but I would not recommend 10%.

Evelyn: In terms of taking elective classes in other graduate schools on campus, **I understand the first year is rigorous in terms of completing foundational management courses to prepare for internships, so would that happen in the second year? Also, would you say that Haas's curriculum is more qualitative in nature compared to other MBA programs? Are there resources and support for students from a non-STEM background?** Thank you.

Cindy_Berkeley: Hi Evelyn, Yes you can take elective classes in other graduate programs on campus as a Haas student. The first semester is mostly core classes, but your second year is made up of all electives so that would be the ideal time to take one of these classes.

Cindy_Berkeley: In answer to your question about the qualitative nature of our program compared to other MBA programs, I would say we are right on target with other peer schools. Most MBA programs do have a quantitative aspect to the program as well. I would say that we admit both poets and quants. We do offer resources to assist students, but much of the support actually comes from your fellow classmates. During the first year, students are put into study teams with a huge diversity of backgrounds in industry, function, etc.

Amit: **Can you take up to 3 classes at other UCB schools per year or total?**

Candace_Berkeley: Hi Amit! You may take up to 6 units (units vary by class) at other programs to be counted toward your MBA. You may take any number of units that you wish throughout your tenure that won't be. In other words only 6 units will be counted toward your MBA any other classes taken would not be counted toward the MBA.

Guitarguru: A follow up on one of my Financial Aid questions: **if I am an international student, are my chances of receiving aid greater in Round 1 than in Round 2?** I'm guessing Round 3 has the smallest chance of getting aid.

Jamie_Berkeley: We always advise to apply as soon as you have access to the application. Funds are limited and most scholarships/fellowships may be closed by the 3rd review date

Rob L: **I recently started a new job within the past year. Is it absolutely necessary that one of the letters of recommendation come from a current employer (with such a short work history)?**

Brooke_Berkeley: Hello, Rob. We understand that not everyone will choose to use a current supervisor for a letter of recommendation. If you don't choose to use this current supervisor, then you'll have room to explain why in one of our questions that asks you to shed light on why you couldn't have a current supervisor write one.

CPD: **Do you have any advice on multiple GMAT attempts?** I am considering a 5th attempt. I already have a 700, but would like to bump it up some more.

Brooke_Berkeley: Hello! From what I know about multiple GMAT attempts, test takers tend to burn out, or level off their scores, at around attempt 5. Of course this is different for everyone. In terms of reading applications, we really will just consider your top most score, and we hope you use your time to prepare your application wisely.

Alec P: **Would it be appropriate to use the optional essay to explain the reasoning for changing jobs a handful of times since completing undergrad?**

Talin_Berkeley: Hi Alec. Yes, you may use it to address that.

Tiff: Hi there, **is it ok to have a peer write your letter of rec as long as they managed you at one point in time and know your work well?**

Talin_Berkeley: Yes, it's fine to use a peer for one of the recommenders if they managed you.

Guitarguru: **Are you comfortable revealing how you weight different criteria in the application (e.g., GMAT 10%, professional experience 50%, undergrad grades 20%, etc.)?**

Angela_Berkeley: We take a very holistic approach to application review and do not weigh any one part of your application over another.

Ivquoc1: **Is it possible to waive some core courses and focus on more electives?**

Candace_Berkeley: Yes it is! From our program office “Waiving a core course does not reduce the number of units needed to graduate. You must take additional elective course(s) to complete the 51-unit graduation requirement.” For more information see <http://haas.berkeley.edu/MBA/academics/waiver-guidelines.html>. Please know that there are some core courses that cannot be waived including Ethics and Leadership Communication.

Jenny: Hi, I wanted to inquire about how the Haas program is differentiated from other top 10 programs. **Are there certain requirements for the Haas MBA that make it stand apart?**

Cindy_Berkeley: Hi Jenny I think the differentiation comes from our location, our culture, and the access to the larger University of California, Berkeley. As far as requirements for admission compared to other programs that stand apart? I think the most relevant is that we do assess for culture fit; and ask applicants to consider our Defining Principles when answering our essay questions. You can read more about the Defining Principles here: <http://mba.haas.berkeley.edu/community/culture.html>

Evelyn: **Is there any chance you can provide a Range of Middle 80% for the GRE?**

Brooke_Berkeley: Hello, Evelyn, Unfortunately we do not publish that information publicly, since the majority of our admitted students come in with GMAT scores.

Rob L: **If I am planning to take the GMAT again, should I submit my application now with my current score or wait till my final scores come in and then submit my application with the new scores?**

Gabrielle_Berkeley: Hello Rob! Just to be clear, we only accept GMAT and GRE scores that are taken on or before the application deadline. If you take the exam after April 6th, we will not accept your score. Your application will not be reviewed until after the application deadline so you are more than welcome to submit your application with your final GMAT score.

Veena: Thank you for hosting this chat! I have a question regarding the full-time versus part-time program. **Do the statistics on average scores vary for the incoming class for both programs? Or would you consider them the same?**

Cindy_Berkeley: Hi Veena, When you look at the profiles in regards to statistics (average scores) there is some differentiation between the two programs. However, statistics are only one part of the entire application process! Additionally, I would be sure to look at the averages noted in the 80% range (for there is a range in these scores!) I think what is most important when considering which program to apply for is your needs in an MBA degree program. Are you interested in quitting your job and immersing yourself in a FT MBA program? Or are you interested in going to school PT and continuing working FT. Hope this helps.

Gordon: **Does Haas make a conscious effort to bring in students with diverse professional/academic backgrounds?**

Cindy_Berkeley: Hi Gordon. Most definitely! This is something that is very important to us in the admissions process for much of the learning in the MBA program is from your fellow students. Your fellow students come from a variety of different backgrounds, industries, functions. Around 40% are international. The classroom can only be innovative and engaging with students from a variety of different professional and academic backgrounds.

Guitarguru: **What's the average aid package (merit and need based grants and scholarships) for an international (non-US citizen) admit? I'm specifically talking about Indian citizens if that helps you giving a more specific answer.**

Jamie_Berkeley: Hello! Approximately 50% of entering Full-Time MBA students receive a scholarship. For the class entering fall of 2015, the average award was \$30,00 for the first year.

John: Thank you for hosting this. **What major cities or regions of the country do most graduates end up working in?**

Cindy_Berkeley: Hi John. We have students relocate all over the world post MBA. Many graduates work in major cities where there tends to be a lot of opportunities for MBAs including the Bay Area, East Coast, etc. Again - we also have students in Asia, Latin America and Europe. You might be interested in reviewing our Employment Reports: http://www.haas.berkeley.edu/groups/careercenter/16_17_ReportSummary.pdf

Gordon: **Does Haas' curriculum focus on Cases (Case Studies) like some other MBA programs?**

Cindy_Berkeley: Hi Gordon, Yes. There are a variety of different learning methods in the classroom including case studies. It really depends on the class. Most courses have a combination of group projects, case studies, and lectures.

NB: Good morning! I'm a waitlisted candidate from Round 1 and I live and work in the East Bay. I attended the waitlist chat a while back but think that I would benefit from being able to ask a few questions in person. I am submitting supplemental materials for the 3/3 deadline. **Is it possible to drop into the Admissions Q&As that are being held regularly, and if so what time are those held? Or is it best just to meet 1-1 w/admissions staff at the office?**

Gabrielle_Berkeley: Hello! For specific questions about the waitlist, it would be best to come into our office for a one-on-one advising session with one of our Admissions Specialists. We are open from 9am - 4pm Monday-Friday in S430 for drop-in advising. We look forward to speaking with you in person!

Ron: **On average how many people do you accept into a class?**

Cindy_Berkeley: Hi Rob, This tends to vary year to year. As for the class size, we have capacity for 250 students but are expanding our class size slightly this year since we are opening up a new building. You can see our class profile here:
<http://mba.haas.berkeley.edu/admissions/class-profile.html>

Lizzy_Moderator: Hi Everyone! We have about 10 minutes left in the chat. Please send us your last questions!

Emma: **What types of students struggle at Haas? And who tends to do well?**

Cindy_Berkeley: Hi Emma, This is an interesting question. The majority of our students do amazingly well in the program. I think academically there are challenges and the coursework is rigorous but it is a very collaborative culture and students help each other out. This is how our students get through the struggles. The MBA program is also a transformational journey so students are going to have challenges and obstacles. The MBA provides a safe environment to take advantage of stretching yourself and exploring. I hope this helps!

Mick: **How can I contact students or alumni to learn more about the program?**

Talin_Berkeley: Feel free to reach out to our Haas Student Ambassadors:
<http://mba.haas.berkeley.edu/admissions/hsateam.html>. You can also view our alumni and connect with them here:
<http://mba.haas.berkeley.edu/community/alumni/profiles.html>.

Mick: Can I apply to both the Weekend/Evening program and Full-time MBA program during the same admission round?

Cindy_Berkeley: Hi Mick, No, I'm afraid that you can only have one open UC Berkeley application at a time.

Rob: While there is no minimum GMAT score required, what are the other factors would you consider should a candidate have a less than ideal GMAT score?

Brooke_Berkeley: Hello, Rob! We consider all parts of the application in a holistic process. We have at least two readers reading each application in full to judge the overall competitiveness of your professional and academic background beyond just your GMAT or GRE score.

Mdm: When is the deadline to take the GMAT for the part-time MBA and EMBA? Thanks.

Gabrielle_Berkeley: Hello! For the Full-time MBA program, all tests must be taken on or before the application deadline of April 6, 2017. If you have a question in regards to another MBA program at Haas, you will need to contact them. We are separate programs and have different deadlines.

Rob: Thank you all for your time, this was a big help!

Gabrielle_Berkeley: Of course! Thank you for being a part of our chat!

Lizzy_Moderator: Thanks again for joining us! Our chat is wrapping up and shutting down. We really appreciate your questions. Please check back on our website for a transcript of today's chat. Go Bears!

Jamie_Berkeley: Thank you for joining us today. Please feel free to submit your financial aid inquiries to our office directly at finaid@haas.berkeley.edu.

Talin_Berkeley: Thanks, everyone.

Brooke_Berkeley: Thanks for coming today, and best of luck with your application journeys!

Angela_Berkeley: It was great to chat with you all. Thanks for your questions!

Candace_Berkeley: Best of luck on your applications! Thank you for your questions.

Gabrielle_Berkeley: Thank you for participating in our chat! Best of luck with your application process!

Cindy_Berkeley: Thanks for the questions. Go Bears!