

Intro

Hi, I'm Jacob Walsh, and I'm Orion Lamontagne. Thank you for tuning in to The Manage-A-Bull MBA podcast where we have deep dive conversations with students, faculty, staff, and alumni to give you a comprehensive picture of the life inside of a top tier MBA program. In this episode, we look back to the first ever recording that Orion and myself took when we decided to start this podcast. We recorded this conversation shortly after the end of our first semester in the MBA program. And now as our incoming class is set to begin orientation this week, we believe this conversation is a great representation of what a new student at the UB MBA program can expect as they begin their professional journey down this path. As always, be sure to check out our show notes, where we will post links to the UB MBA web page and contact information for ourselves. If you enjoyed this podcast, follow us on Twitter @UBMBAandMS to stay up to date on what's happening in the UB School of Management where extraordinary is our ordinary. Thank you enjoy.

Jake

To intro into this for anyone who may be interested and if you're so inclined. One thing that really sets the UB School of Management program apart from a lot of other programs out there and something that you know we've really come to love is this. Just the way they set it up is you have cohorts and teams. So like we had said earlier, we had 116 people in our grade. And they split that down the half. And so we had our grade in two halves. And you do that's your cohort, everything you do throughout your entire semester. first semester and second semester is with that same cohort.

Orion

So every class, you're with the same people,

Jake

Yes, you have the exact same schedules, you see the exact same people every day, they're all the same classes. And within that cohort, you then also have a team. So the teams are usually between like five to seven people. Orion and I were actually on the same team Team M&T, which we'll get into that in a second as well. So you're paired up with the team, and everything you do for all your classes for the entire semester, are with that group of five to seven people. So you sit next to each other in class, you have the same group projects together, you have some larger overarching projects, which aren't for a specific class, but are for multiple classes. That kind of happens outside of that that scope. But you You're always working together, and you have your own personal assignments as well. But a lot of the coursework is actually set up to be group work done with the group. And that was something coming in that at least perked my ears when I was having my first, way before even an interview when I was just talking with one of the one of the recruitment guys, Aaron Shaw, just trying to get a feel for the program he was telling me about the group was like, you know, that's actually really interesting. And

then he was like, Yeah, well, we kind of make them to be a little difficult, like, you know, we purposely make them diverse, and we get people with all different backgrounds in there. It's to kind of teach you, you know, when you're in the business world, and you're working with groups of people, like it's not always going to be you know, picking your friends out of a hat, like, you know, at the we set these up so that you really there will be some boundaries, you got to cross. And I think we were lucky. Our group, I mean, we kind of hit it off from day one.

Orion

Yeah, you know, we definitely very strong group we do.

Jake

And, you know, we had our hiccups here and there as groups do, but even those they weren't too bad, and I think that's because, you know, we were all open and honest with each other from the start. We were very anything that we wanted to do any of our, like main goals and our rules or norms, as you could call them. Like, we will really good at outlining them from day one. And I think we were very productive. We were very proactive, and everything we did to make sure that we were you know, looking ahead, because I think that's one of the biggest things with, you know, keeping the group's coherent and working well is. It's not just like a what we're doing now you all understand what's going on next week, and the week after that and down the line. So when things come up, it's not "Oh, you were supposed to do this." "Oh, no, you were supposed to do this," if you make it very clear all along who's doing what, and because of that, we're able to do so well.

Orion

And I think a lot of it too, is, you know, we had we had a really strong group for sure. And everybody has, I think good, good teamwork skills outside of each other. We complement each other, and it's a diverse group, we should definitely talk about that, um, you know, kind of, because I don't think a lot of people coming in realize MBAs a little bit different because it because of the dual degrees. Yeah. So you have people from all kinds of different, you know, tracks and disciplines that are that are in the program.

Jake

Let's dig into this for a second

Orion

Okay, yeah

Jake

Okay. Yeah. Um, so one of the things that the group, like we said, there was seven people, and they kind of you diverse. So within the MBA program, there's a lot of dual degree students as well. So you have PharmD majors, who are they're getting their pharmacy degree and their business degree, they have straight up doctors who are there, they're fully fledged doctors are there the process of becoming doctors are getting their MBA, we have a lot of 3-2 engineering students, they do three years in undergraduate with in the engineering school, and then

their senior year is their first year of the MBA program. So they do kind of three years of engineering, and then two years of business school that overlap a little bit. And then beyond that, we had some think we had a couple social work. Was it social work?

Orion

It's Public Health.

Jake

Master of Public Health. So that was another one. So I think those are the main ones.

Orion

Yeah and then there was

Jake

I think we have a lawyer

Orion

There's two. Yep. And, and then international students. Don't want to forget that. You and I are both just straight MBAs, but also international student. And that's something that's cool about the MBA program. But just I would say UB, in general, that I appreciate it, since I got here.

Jake

It's one of the most divers places I've ever been in my life.

Orion

People from all over the world come to this school

Jake

Walking through UB's campus and walking through downtown Toronto, like you feel like the same thing. Like it's so diverse here. It blows your mind, you know, and it's really cool. And that's been able to get this great perspective. So within our class there were several exchange students, which were from India, and the Philippines and East Asian area, I know there was one from Indonesia. We have a girl from Singapore. We have a couple from Vietnam or Taiwan, a lot from India. And then we have one foreign student from the UK. He's kind of as far as the international students go. He's the outlier, which is funny.

Orion

A little place called Liverpool.

Jake

Yeah, Liverpool. Shout out to Dan Gough. Yeah. But yeah. And so getting back to our groups. So for our group, let's see. Orion myself are both straight MBAs. Yeah, we have. Priya, who is an MD/MBA. We have James, who was a PharmD/MBA. Yeah. Then we have Angela Lee, who's a straight MBA, but she's one of our international exchange students. She comes from India. And then we have Archie Ulysses and Alec Delmerico who are both 3-2 engineers.

Orion

One is a Civil engineer and one is industrial

Jake

Archie's industrial, and Alec is civil engineer. So like even that right there. Like, that's a diverse group.

Orion I mean, for anybody that doesn't know what Pharm D means. It's a doctor in pharmacy. So he's, he's going to be a pharmacist. A lot of PharmDs in this program.

Jake I think they're all on our half the cohort, too. Yeah, we are a little more exposed to them. Yeah, we have a lot of PharmDs. We have most of the dual degrees in our half. Yeah, we have a lot of engineers in our half too.

Orion It's crazy, though. I mean, I don't know about you, but I never, I didn't imagine going to school with med school students or pharmacy, really any of these things like, and especially those are programs that are kind of like, I don't know, they're, they're, they're unique that you don't really run into.

Jake Yeah, they're different programs. And the one thing that like that definitely caught me off guard, like, I think over half of our class is actually dual degrees. Yeah. But you know, I know about the engineers, because I had a buddy who did the 3-2 engineering program, I hadn't really thought as much about, especially the students come from the medical background. But to me, it makes sense. And a lot of people you talk to, and it is, they like the medical field, they like where they're going. But they want to be able to, you know, not just be doing medical stuff, they want to also be an organizational leader, at some level, they want to be able to move up, not just based off of their medical skills, but also their ability to, you know, manage groups of people and work in a large organization. And I think that's one of the real things that, you know, people are really looking for in the MBA today, which you hear that a lot with the engineers it's like, they have this engineering background. They're all very smart, talented people, but they want some of the upwards and lateral movement, that having the business degree and being able to understand the functioning of any of these businesses, not just fulfilling a role, but also being able to take a step back and manage roles and manage groups of people. That's one of the big things that I think really people are looking for. And that's why they're coming to UB to get this degree right now is and why we have so many of these dual degree students is because there's a level of autonomy, that understanding the function in functioning of a business gives you.

Orion Yeah, and also, I think, just the nature of the market to, it's what connects everybody and everything together. Yeah. And so that's something that's unique about the business world, is that it touches everything. And so, and I think that's kind of what's also appealing for the dual degrees is they realize, medicine is a business, pharmacy is a business engineering, it all is it's all going to work for a business. Yeah. So. So it's smart to get to get that experience to, you know, you're going to be a doctor, but you're also going to be a part of a business.

Jake Exactly, to understand how you know, how it flows, how it works, and down to, you know, the small level up to being able to abstract it and you know, understand that the larger the larger functioning, like I think, you know that that's crucial to survive in the world today, especially if you want to be able to move vertically up through a business, because they're all businesses at the end of the day.

Orion Right.

Jake So it makes sense, but it's really been eye opening, because it's not something I expected coming in here to see as many of the dual degrees as there was. I've enjoyed it, like really being able to meet so many people who really are from diverse backgrounds, because it's not, it's a business school, but it's not just a bunch of people here that are trying to get finance go work for like an institutional bank. Right.

Orion You know, it's it really is like a lot of people who a lot of people interested in nonprofits, I think, yeah, I think something, I think it kind of surprises, I remember it kind of like the impression that or the impression I was getting from sort of the vibe, and especially from the dual degrees coming in to the business going into the kind of the business environment is I think that they expected it all to be like a bunch of suits that, you know, just want to just want to, you know, be Scrooge and counting gold coins

Jake Hahaha, stacking up our gold coins saying what do I have today?

Orion But I'd say I mean, a large a large percentage of the students are interested in nonprofits and things like that. So yes, it's not really, I think, I think a lot of people think the business world is, is this cutthroat, local, that go into it are, you know

Jake A lot harder, more, you know, hard numbers, you know, a lot more just financial and money base, you know, county nickels at the end of the day. That was another thing that as well, looking into the course load that I wasn't as prepared for. I don't think a lot of people weren't prepared for was the emphasis on soft skills?

Orion Yeah, yeah, exactly. I don't think people realize that.

Jake I did not expect that coming in.

Orion Yeah!

Jake I'm happy there was because it's been huge. It's been incredibly beneficial.

Orion Right.

Jake But um, it's funny, you know, because you come in, and the very first class we sat through on our first day was statistics with Frank Krzystofiak. And we'll get right into the nitty gritty of manipulating data sets. And then we walk out of that classroom and directly into organizational behavior

Orion Which is touchy feely.

Jake Yeah.

Orion Which is how it works.

Jake How to work in groups, essentially, like half of like, actually, is organizational behavior and team skills. Yeah, like that.

Orion So there's definitely, you know, there's as much emphasis on that, as there was on, you know, the finance and the statistics. Mm hmm. easily.

Jake Yeah. And being in these groups, if we didn't have a class that kind of taught you how to work in groups, we probably well would have killed each other at some point. Because there's definitely a lot of good stuff that came out of that. And, you know, I know some people, most people warmed up to it. Some people start off like all this touchy feely crap, blah blah blah

Orion some people will never accept,

Jake yeah, and there's some people who will

Orion Some will never be number crunchers, either, they just and that's it. That's what is there about the other side

Jake You have people on both sides of the spectrum, and people who really gravitate towards the, you know, more of the people interaction based stuff, who are like, screw the numbers, like, I don't want to be in on that data modeling project, you got to have that. And then you have the other side, where people who are like, I'll do math all day, but I don't want to talk about my feelings.

Orion You saw that in our team, too. And it's funny because like, you and I are like we like, we like all of it. Yeah, I like all my classes. This is, I think it's all really cool and interesting stuff. But like, there's people that just don't like marketing, or there's people that just don't like, stats are OB like they don't like, they just think it's, you know, not important, or nonsense, or whatever, or, or they just don't think it's as important, I guess, I don't think everybody realizes that, especially by the soft skills,

Jake you really start realizing how important it is. I think that's another thing that I think UB is done a good job with that, to tie everything together. So you're not just getting classes. So one big thing. I know, we've covered a

few big, different things that differentiate UB's management program from other programs. But in your very first semester of your very first year, you do this project called a Corporate Champions project. So all these groups that have been split up of over 100 students, seven, seven people, seven person groups, I think there were 17 groups is what we had. But each group is paired with a local business that does work in Buffalo, and you work with that business throughout the whole first semester, and you do a project, you essentially do a consulting project. Yeah, for local businesses, essentially what it is. And the way that the project set up is, it really digs into all the different classes, but especially statistics, organizational behavior, and communications, those are those are the three that you really draw upon the most.

Orion And it affects your grades in those three classes to it. So whatever grade you get on that project, it's not just tied to one class to you that that grade is applied to statistics. It's applied to your OB grade, and also your communications final grade. Yeah, yeah. Which is interesting. It's I can't think of anything else in my college career that anything that

Jake I've never done anything before the accounted for a substantial portion of my grade in three separate class.

Orion Yeah. I think it's, I don't want to reveal too much, because I think some of the stuff that they do is kind of, I don't know, I don't want to some of it should be a surprise for people to go into the program. Yeah, like, there is kind of this. There's a connection, especially between those three professors, there's three classes that they like, you,

Jake They work well together to make sure it's a good experience. Yes, fluid between the different classes, right. So it's not just in the one classroom walk into a different, and the teachers aren't on the same page. And that's one thing that definitely helped it is. Tim Maynes who does organizational behavior, Mary Ann Rogers does communication and then Frank Krzystofiak teaches Statistics. And the three of them are, first of all, they're all incredibly dedicated, hardworking individuals. But they also put a lot of work in communicating outside of the classroom, which I think really helps keep that continuity.

Orion And you can tell they're always talking because they'll be like, Hey, we found out that you know, such and such as going on, so I decided I'm going to do this. Yeah. Or they'll be like, I'm going to talk to Professor Krzystofiak about that and see if he thinks of this guy's like,

Jake Even some of the jokes, I remember getting into Tim's class and he would crack a joke about some dumb thing we did in Frank's class half an hour earlier. Yeah, I heard you guys did this today. And it's like where have you been. But, um, yeah, back into the corporate champions. So we're





other classes. So they're going to make you use that. But at the same time, like especially where you're saying where it's, it's, it's too much like I really kind of, I enjoyed it to an extent, there is like a divide and conquer necessity. Yeah. Like, our first few projects started out in like, we had all seven people working on the same project. And there was a lighter load at the time, and you're able to do that, but then the semester starts picking up, and you've got individual assignments do for everything you've got, like for group projects, doing a week, we started splitting up pretty early on and like dividing the team up in half and being like, okay, these three people are doing statistics, those four people are doing organizational behavior, like, will link up afterwards. And, you know, it was necessary, but I think, and it would, it really teaches you to do and kind of what they were hinting at all along is like, business world is busy deal with it. Like, that's just what's going to happen. Like, if you can't handle a single busy semester at school, you're not going to be able to handle like playing with the big dogs up in the business world. So like, I think it was a good introduction. And what I understand we'll see if it actually happens, the first semester is kind of the most hectic, yeah. So we'll see. I'm not completely convinced on that one yet. Right. But it's, it's planned chaos like that. So you have to learn like, not everything's going to be perfect. You know, sometimes. There's just things that don't get done the way you want to, like, you know, you wish you spend more time getting this presentation done. But it's like, I can either waste time on this Yeah, to, to change it from like, you know, that last few points is like, probably a 94. Now, or like a 92. We could spend all this time trying to make it 100. Or we can work on the other four projects due next week. Sometimes you just got to learn like,

Orion

There's not enough sources. Yeah. So you got to, you got to decide where do you want to put those resources? Because there's not enough to do everything that you want to do. There's not enough time, there's definitely not enough power.

Jake

Yeah, it definitely teaches you how to utilize the human capital in your group. Yeah, like what's available to you, definitely teaches you, you know, when, when to know when good enough is. And you know, and to say that some people are like, I wasn't good enough. But sometimes it is good enough. And you got to accept that because nothing's ever going to be perfect, right. And then also, one thing I think it definitely did was, I think, like my efficiency, my efficiency, like, tripled during the semester, just you just had to get good at doing good work and short amount of time. and call it a day, as soon as you're done with it. Like you can spend too much time going back and double checking yourself. So that's one of the things at least I personally noticed was that all these things going on just made me incredibly efficient.

Orion

Yeah. And that's, that's something to that. I think we should talk about because organization within the team. I mean, it's, it's going to be every crucial, crucial. And so you took you kind of took the mantle on that right from the beginning. And so, and you did a really good job. I mean, what do you review? Because literally, you had you were the one who stitched everything together from the start organized, yes. Decided meetings. So how, you know, how did I get? How did you go about that? How did you know?

Jake

That's, I mean, that's kind of like a, almost an obsessive thing in my life now is, I used to be like, I didn't give a crap about organization at all, I used to be amazingly unorganized. But the same time, like that wasn't just my personal stuff. That was my life as a whole was completely terribly unorganized. Which, you know, that's a whole other story, like leading up to this. But I got to a point a few years ago, where I was, I was trying to get my shit together, I was getting back into school to finish my undergraduate degree. And I just like, it's just got to be organized. So I started organizing my life, like little bits of time. And then it's kind of all built up to this, like in graduate school, like I was already pretty organized. But coming into this, I just knew I was like, everyone I've talked to when we talked about this first semester, because I just kind of laughs like any of the faculty and staff, because I worked in the building, right? during the summer. You mentioned it, they just kinda like Haha, yeah, you're gonna have fun, yes, like I kind of knew that it was coming. And one thing I remember doing an undergrad, which is never fun is when you don't organize enough or play seriously in the beginning of the semester, and then spend the second half of the semester playing catch up. Right, that was the absolute last thing I wanted to do. Because I had a feeling that the second half of semester was going to get busier. So I don't have time to play catch up, So one thing that I've done, and I try and do it, I'm still doing now, I mean, I've already got our calendar for next semester, mostly set up, is, as soon as you know the date for something, you put it down, like the second, the second you find out anything with a hard date, immediately put in your calendar my way, or give yourself a chance to forget it, right? You know, it's not like the day is going to change usually that once you have a date, that's the date. So getting back to like the Google Drive stuff we had talked about earlier. first week of semester, I took all of our class syllabus is and I just made a shared Google calendar that had everything in it. And then I went through the syllabus is good. This is one thing like anyone coming into a graduate program, but especially this program, like your syllabus is your Bible. I mean, the hardly any teachers ever change anything in that. So right, it's like if it's in the syllabus, it's written in stone, like that's those are those are your 12 commandments of 10 commandments right there. So I went in, and I found any project that had a date attached to it, and

he tests that had a date attached to it. And the assignment had a date attached to it. And I put it on calendar. And then I also went and I made a spreadsheet. And I made each line, a date going down, and I had individual working group work and I just you just map it all out, you gotta you got to make yourself a map is really what it is, is just mapping out how you're going to do things. And that's what I think you know, what helped our group excel so well. There are a lot of lots of groups that did great. But there are also groups that, you know, did struggle with throughout the semester. And I think one thing that really held our group together was the fact that we had some running documents that yes, I started but everyone I was helped contribute to like, one thing is popped up like Anjali be like, Oh, I already added to the calendar.

Orion

Yeah, she's an awesome

Jake

I know she's great. Yeah. But you use it as a living document, you know, he started early with as much information as you have. And then as soon as things come up or get added, you add it to that. But that helps keep you in a good frame of mind. Because since I was updating all the time, I kind of mentally knew you know, what's one week out, what's two weeks out with three weeks out, then also as a group, everyone in the group can go and check that and see what it is because like I've been put, because we have some three two engineers, like we put it and James and Priya, we put the conflicts for the your dual degree majors so that way, Orion and I would know, like, Oh, we can't ask people to meet this time, because to amount of class, you know, so it really helps give you a map to see. So I think that's one of the biggest things for anyone who's getting into a graduate program is you got to be proactive on this stuff. If you don't know how to use Google Calendar, you're going to learn how to use anything, learn how to use Google calendar. Because that's amazing. Like, you know, color coded, we call like, you take everything's in like one color. But then if you have a test, you just change the color that specific day kind of pops out, you can do you can see it ahead of time. And then the other thing, which I think our group did really well was we assign different projects, different individuals. So as far as the group projects go, instead, it's not as what we did is we took the syllabus as and we used our spreadsheet, we mapped out every assignment due for the entire rest of semester. And we did this pretty early on to the semester, which is great, because you could look out a month and a half and see Oh, this is do then. But not only did we do that we assigned every member of the group to be quote, unquote, in charge of that project. And so they were kind of the one running point on it. Even if they didn't mean they did all the work, but they just kind of coordinated whoever was working on that project, like making sure it got done on time making sure is all done properly. And you know, leading up to it, it's like, Hey,

you know, this project is going to be due next week, like we got to start working on this now. I think that was another thing because it diversifies the responsibility. So everyone on the team equally was in charge of multiple projects at the same time. Because there wasn't as much for any individual to be responsible of, there were just a few things. Like, I think it gave everyone a level of like autonomy and responsibility, but also made sure that everything was being taken care of, because it wasn't one or two people trying to keep track of all the assignments for every class, it's each of us had a few

Orion

Yeah, and it allowed everyone to because you also have individual assignments that you got to worry about too. So, you know, each person has to manage that on their own, they're going to decide when they work on that. But also they know like, oh, I've got this other thing that the group is relying on me to make sure I come through on Yeah, so you can, if you if you found that out, mid stride, no, then that can be a problem. Because you may have, you may not you may have other stuff, you know, that you have to do for your, you know, your individual side of the of the, you know, the score that that's going to also, yeah, click with that.

Jake

And like really, for anyone who's already accepted thinking about accepting being accepted? Or can you ready to start off, you gotta plan this stuff out and as soon as you can, because I think that's one thing, which I remember laughing about before and after. But you have a busy, like, kind of busy throughout the first half of the semester. And then there's like a little lull, right, um, and then I remember like, kind of looking ahead at the spreadsheet. And there was about four weeks straight leading up to Thanksgiving that were just loaded, there was like 29 group assignments do in like four weeks. And we were always kind of like laughing see it come in, like day by day and get one step closer on the spreadsheet, like, Oh, it's about to get busy guys or be about to get crazy. And then it was all out. There was like three weeks where I was here sun up to sun down. I'm pretty sure you were most of our group was just every day. And then at the end of it just kind of like laughing and be like, wwwwooooo

Orion

Yeah, yeah. I forgot what project it was. But I mean, we were here till I think almost midnight that night. To what you were working, and he came up kind of at the end of it.

Jake

Oh, yeah. Yeah, that was we were working on that was a statistics project that was the sophomore Jinx.

Orion

Yeah. And it's not like it was because we, you know, took it easy. And we're getting stuff done. Like it literally.

Jake We started working on it during our first available time.

Orion Just Yeah, exactly. It's not, it was not it was all the other times were, you know, used for something else. So we had to do so. So yeah, I think that's really good advice for people that are coming into the program. Somebody needs to definitely, you know, take that role. And yeah, good. But it's also it's challenging, because you know, you the groups are, you don't know, the people coming in. And so you don't know strengths and weaknesses, you find that out as you go through, like who's actually good at what and, you know, and you might be good at something, but there might be somebody else in the group that that's even better at it. And that's going to make a huge difference

Jake Something that is interesting, you know, learning that out. And I definitely know, we definitely had a learning curve again and everyone, but I will say that's part of the reason where I just made that calendar from the get go, is because you don't know. And I hadn't, I knew that I like was pretty organized. Like, I was like, I'm just going to go ahead and put this calendar together now in like, first of all, we just start like, once again, like I said, as soon as you have stuff, why wait, but I'm also like, I'm just going to put it out there and like, make sure there's at least something to start with. Like, as we get to know each other, you know, if someone better comes along, like, I'll let them take it, if it's me like, I'm happy to do it. But I just want to make sure that something happened. Because I didn't know. I put this thing on because I always live by my calendar and everything. So I'm like, least get this fricken calendar made. Like at the bare minimum, that's what I'm gonna do right now is get this calendar made. And the group was receptive and I kind of just fell into the roles, you know, the organizing stuff like that, which I was happy to do, because that's kind of the direction I do want to go with things. I like doing that level of, you know, organization, calendar, just calming for me to put a calendar together sometimes.

Orion It was calming for all of us. I think I think I speak for everybody. We definitely appreciate the work that you put into that. Because, I mean, it ended up being ended up being vital if we didn't have that from the get go. Yeah, if we just kind of like, we're learning that, uh, you know, how, how busy was going to get if it was, you know, for groups that didn't have that going for him. They found out probably when it was too late. And they were like, oh my god.

Jake I remember talking come to some groups and being like, oh, they're like, Oh, yeah, this week isn't too bad. And next week doesn't look too bad. I'm like, sure about that.? I was like, This week's not bad. And next week's not bad. The week after next week is terrible. So this week, and next week, might want to be working on some other stuff. So when that

terrible week comes through, you've already got, you know, half of it done, which is something we did a lot like when we had the opportunity we worked on like,

Orion

I know, the one chip away at stuff.

Jake

The one for OB, I think we did it our team charter, I think we did it like a week and a half ahead of time. But it's just like, it's not due till the end of next week. But we have, you know, stats project and this other project due next week. So like, let's get this one out of the way, work on that one later. So I think that was, you know, huge and the groups that planted out well did well in the groups that didn't, didn't come in again, sometimes I you know, you see some people who are clearly fed up with the group, ah this person, you know, didn't put this together and didn't tell us this was happening. I'm like, it's on everybody. And all this stuff can be handled if you're just proactive about it.

Orion

Yeah, I think that it kind of goes back to the soft skills side of things and new kind of we didn't I think our group kind of meshed? Pretty, I mean, almost perfectly from the beginning, so we're lucky

Jake

we're lucky with how everyone meshed. Yes, you know, we definitely did get off pretty well with that.

Orion

And that just kind of goes back to the to the OB side of stuff, the soft skills, communication and stuff, because you do find out how important that is. And it's funny. I'm one of the other one of the other students. in our, in our first year group Kate Jarvis, I remember, yeah, we were going out to a thing in Buffalo together, and we were talking about it. And she we're both older than, than a lot of people in the program. And she I remember her saying, like, I think, you know, a lot of people here, they're like, Oh, this is nonsense, the touchy feely? And she's like, I think it, it's, she's she said, I think it's because, you know, I'm older. And I've been out in the workforce and a little bit longer. And, and you realize that, you know, that's, that's what drives everything? Like, yeah, I mean, you know, it doesn't matter how good you are with the numbers, or how smart you are, how many, you know, how much you can you know, how much you can calculate or how good your PowerPoints are. If you can't work together with other people, then the whole thing just breaks down because businesses or organizations, and so they don't they don't think as an individual, you know,

Jake

And that's one thing that, like I can, I'm happy I kind of understood and not quite as long as you but I did you know, I? I took a little break off of school before I went back. So you know, we do have a lot of students who rolled right through Yeah, and you know, they just, they've never left school that ever lived in like on out there. So I think I kind of

appreciate it, someone like you do. And it the kind of the soft skill stuff kind of got me because statistics, all those things, yes, they're great. They're hard, like, I'm happy, we're here to learn them. And I'm not learning on my own. But if you want to, you could learn a lot of the hard skills on your own. With today's technology, at home with a computer, you're not going to learn how to interact with people right at home in front of your computer. So that's a big part of it. And you know, you'll hear you hear people say this from day one, but it's pretty true. Everything's in every conversations and interview, you know, you're always meeting people who could put either puts you somewhere you need to be or put you in connection with who you need to be right. And even the people who might not like the soft skills, no one can deny, you know, half the time, you always hear people say, you know, it's not about it's all about who you know, that's what almost that's what almost any industry anywhere, like if you know someone like you're already good to go, so like being able to present yourself well, you know.

Orion In an authentic way to like, it's not, you know, I think if you just approach it from, I'm trying to I want to know this person, because I'm trying to get something from that, you know, that's, that's kind of like the opposite of what's going to what's going to help?

Jake No, you really dig yourself a hole doing that.

Orion Yeah, you got to build connections with people. And I think, you know, you probably agree with me, as far as you know, in terms of that, when things got really hard. It was the connections within our group that kept the friction from really becoming overwhelming, because had we started to pick at each other,

Jake There were a few points, you know, that were minor, though. Yeah, ours were minor overall. But like, I won't pretend that we got through without any hiccups, but it happens. I mean, when you're working with seven people, 10 - 12 hours a day, for 15 weeks straight, like sometimes, you know, butt heads, you know, there. But I think the important thing is to let it not really get past bumping heads. But also So, like I said, we always have to be proactive, we were pretty upfront with each other at the very beginning. Like, when the hiccups do come, like we have to make sure to keep communicating with each other in the certain fashion so that, you know, what might be a small little thing doesn't blow up out of proportion, because we don't address it properly. Right. So I think that's another thing that, you know, helped us down the road is not only were we meshed well from the beginning, but at the same time like we were all willing to work past the hiccups that didn't rise. And no one no one gave up on anyone. No one called out anyone or like no one ganged up on anyone like we're all pretty good about dealing with each other and

with the situations that presented themselves yet. And throughout it all grow as friends, like really? Like, I'm happy to be here doing this with you. Yeah, like we just decided to start this together.

Orion

I miss you guys over the break.

Jake

Same here I was talking with James the other day, he gave me a call. It was so great. I was I miss you, buddy. And I been thinking about it too. Because I first couple weeks, I was just like, on the road doing stuff with family. But now I was finally back here and like, kind of itching to get back there and work with them.

Orion

I was telling my family they're like, you know, are you not looking forward to going back? and I kind of want to go back and just, I don't know, I like everyone's motivated

Jake

I feel you man just. You know me I'm extroverted, high energy. And the very first day when we had our final presentation at M&T on the Friday morning, and we all went our separate ways. I was actually like, super depressed the first 24 hours I got home and I was like, What the hell do I do myself now? Like, it goes so hard for so long. I like I felt like I should have been doing something and just go from this busy building with people all day. And I was just sitting home and looking to my dog and like, what are we going to do? Yeah, like I didn't feel bad, because that advice. Lester's getting busy. But I first got back. I just said, what am I going to do for the next six weeks? Yeah. But then the holidays picked up. And I've been keeping myself busy with things here and there. But I am ready to get back to the grind with you folks.

Orion

Yeah. So I think, you know, when the organization part of it, I think that's good advice for, you know, for incoming MBAs. And then I think what we're kind of touching on now, too, is, you know, the team aspect. I think, you know, as far as like, leadership, that's obviously important the person to take the, you know, take the helm when it comes to organization and stuff like that. But I think another important part in something that I sense is maybe an issue with some of the other teams that I've heard that struggle is followership. I think that's equally as important. And luckily everybody. Again, everybody on our team, I think they're good followers, they know, you know, when to when to push ahead. And but they're also able to kind of let other people you know, take the reins for things too. Yeah. And so I think about like, you know, especially with the MBA program, it's a lot of type A's. And so imagine like, like, what if on day one, you were like, I remember you saying, Hey, I'm gonna, I've already looked at the syllabus is and I want to organize, and then there's a team member X that had the same idea. And, and then they really wanted to do it, because they wanted to, you know, they wanted to have that leadership role. And so like, that could that could



have torn the team apart somebody, somebody got to decide like, okay, it's okay, I don't need to be, I don't need to run everything. And so, I think, you know, incoming students need to also be guarded that they're not.

Jake

You do have to let others take the reins at some point. And one of the biggest things, especially, you know, looking more like leadership dimensions, some of the best leaders and I think one of the most important qualities for a good leader is knowing when to follow and knowing how to follow, because if you're leading always 100% of the time, like, that's doesn't happen. There's no leader that's just always leading unless you're some Supreme Leader out there, I don't know. But true leaders, you know, good bosses, good managers. They know when to listen, they know when to follow, they know when to give other people, you know, the position to lead and I think that's one thing that we are really good about, especially with all our different projects is it's there were some projects I led there's some projects you led there are some projects Anjali led, Alec, like everyone took a turn leading at some point. And no one had any qualms with that. Yes. Huge. There was no one who was like, I'm the leader like trying, right, you know, and people were like, Oh, you got that like, Oh, that's awesome. Like, what can I do to help you? And that's, that's a real sign of leadership is, you know, not Oh, you should be Why are you leading this I want to lead it, No, no, you already, like got a handle on this? What can I do to help you? Yeah, that's one thing that, you know, people definitely need to understand coming in, is that when you're working in these groups, and working as teams, and you're all equals here, like there are no, we're all training to be managers are not managers yet. That you have to it's give and take, push and pull, lead, follow its, you got to strike the balance somewhere. It can't always be one or the other. Yeah. Which I was happy that we were able to do figure out so well. So really, I'm really

Orion

yeah. And I think to, like, one thing I saw several times within our team is, you know, a lot of, I don't know, a lot of leeway was given. just happened organically, people just did it. When other people had stuff going on. So we had, you know, like we mentioned earlier, we have teammates that are med students,

Jake

Priya had to take her boards, right during the middle of our semester.

Orion

Yeah. And, you know if everyone had said "it's not my fault you have board", kind of took that approach. Not only would that hurt her, but it would hurt the whole team. And yeah, we just fall into disarray. You know, you got to, you got to have a given take within the team.

Jake

Yeah, I remember leading up to that, like, there was some stuff going on. At one point, Priya looked at me, and she's like, what's going on with

that? And I'm like, don't worry about it, like you have boards in three days later, we got this, study your boards go kick ass on that, when you get back, we'll put you back to work haha. You know, but being able to do that. And I think pretty much almost everyone had to leave, at least, even if not missing classes, there was like a weekend where someone was gone. And weekends are big time to do group work. Yeah. So to be able to understand that, like, we're all busy people, not everyone's going to be at everything. And, you know, as long as it's not a situation, and we didn't have a Luckily, were someone just always cutting out. But sometimes, you know, people have something to do. And you got to understand that and work with it. And that's life.

Orion I think that's one thing, too, that you probably will run into very much within the MBA program, as far as people not doing their share.

Jake That's one thing at this level.

Orion Yeah, people are everybody's pretty, pretty hard charger. I think if anything, the biggest threat to a team coming in is trying to do too many things to try to try to great, you know, control too much, or try to kind of have too much power, you really get to like,

Jake Or everyone involved on everything all the time. Because like, especially in the beginning of semester when it was only a couple projects at a given time, we could do that. But later on, instead of like, you have four projects do this week, everyone needs to work on all of them. And so like, okay, these two are going to work on this one, three of us going to work on this one, and the other four going to do these two countries and being able to do that. And once again, you're all kind of following to an extent, you're all kind of leading to an extent because you just got your own project, but you're trusting the other people. Like when we were working on the corporate champions project, and the other half of the group was working on the statistics project. Like we were trusting them to do it. You know, it's like, we'll help review it before it gets handed in. But we were doing the bulk of the work, and they were doing the same for us. So like, yeah, hope you're writing a good essay over there.

Orion Right!

Jake We're doing our best you know. know, yeah. So I think, you know, that level of trust, being able to extend the trust of your academic grades and academic integrity to some other people sometimes. That was that was big, you know, that was internally a little tough for me at first, and I was incredibly happy with the group, because that was something that before the semester started, that really gave me some anxiety. Yeah, where it's like, because I'm definitely more type A like, I like my grades, all good and whatnot. And there's some things I'm like, if I have some jerk in my

group, screwed up grades, because they're not giving it their all. And that never happened. Everyone, everyone was very into it very involved. And when it was time to split up, I completely trusted the other half of the group to come through and do well. And they always did. Yeah, we always did. Well, our group, I think did very well, overall, both as a group and academically as well. It was an incredibly successful semester.

Orion

Yeah. and enjoyable, too. And, you know, just yeah, overall. And I think, you know, hopefully, these podcasts are, you know, giving people useful information that they can use. And I think, hopefully, you know, anyone who's listening, this realizes that we talked for a long time about the teams and how the teams work and everything about the teams, people should understand that the team is going to be everything, it's you know, it's going to decide everything is going to decide how enjoyable the experience is going to decide how successful you are. Because even if you are, you know, the great genius in all of America, all of the world, if your team breaks down, you're still, you're still not going to pull off some grades, because the team grades are also a big part of it. And so I mean, you got to invest in your, in your, in your group,

Jake

That's back to Tom Ulbrich and entrepreneurship is it's better to have a B idea with an A team, than an A idea with a B team,

Orion

And it is true, and you see it and like you do, and that kind of like brings it all back around to how well this program has integrated all of the stuff that they're teaching into the experience so that you're feeling it in your Yes, you're right. And when you said that, I was like, Yeah, because it's over and over again. With entrepreneurship, it's all about, you know, the best team trumps the you know, the suckier team with. Yeah, even better product, even if,

Jake

Yeah, because that doesn't matter at the end of the day. It's in. It's not What, its Why.

Orion

The Golden Circle.

Jake

Yeah. And it is Why and I think our whole group had a good Why we were all dedicated to be here. And I think the grade and UB as a whole, like there are staff here who are incredibly helpful and always they know their Why, you know why they're here. They know why they're doing this. And that carries through to us as well, because that's why we're doing this, you know, like we're taking time we want to create this new form of content because we love what the school has to offer with the school has offered what it's doing for us and hopefully that can get out there for more people. Yeah, for more eyes.

Orion

I agree.

Jake Well, Orion. I think we've been going to this for about an hour and 10 minutes.

Orion Wow Oh, yeah, that's true, though.

Jake Sounds like a good place to wrap up.

Orion Yeah I agree

Jake Good first podcast

Orion Me, but yeah, we need to come up with a cool ending to all of our podcasts. And funny and stupid haha

Jake Yeah

Orion Like a little phrase or something

Jake and Orion Hahahahaha