

Webinar: Meet the UB MBAs (Transcript)

Aaron Shaw

Okay, welcome to the UB MBA Wednesday webinar series. In this edition, we're going to have the audience actually meet the UB MBA and get to know everything that you need to know from the students perspective.

Today's agenda is going to consist of presenter introductions, myself, along with some of our UB MBA ambassadors, before we move into their overall student experience, will then continue on with a brief program overview. We'll get into admissions. I'll talk briefly about the class profile and we'll wrap up with questions.

So currently speaking, I'm Aaron Shaw, the Assistant Director of recruitment here at the University of Buffalo School of Management and the Graduate Programs Office. I attended Ashford University for my undergraduate and where I majored in sports management before moving on to Penn State, where I got my MBA in corporate innovation and entrepreneur.

Next up, we have Orion and I'll have him introduce himself.

Orion LaMontagne

So I'm, I'm a undergrad at UB as well. And, and now I'm in the MBA program first year. I'm in the consulting club, also in Leadercore, which is up leadership preparation curriculum. In addition to that, I'm also a Connection to Excellence scholarship recipient. And basically, that's a scholarship that is sort of leans on your past work experience if you have a lot of work experience coming into the program, and that might be something that you can be competitive for. And I'm also in the VA, which is the veterans Business Association of prior Air Force, United States Air Force, but

Thirth Patel

My name is Thirth Patel. I'm also a three plus two student I did my business and my undergrad in business management and finance and supply chain and doing my MBA in data analytics and finance. But I'm going to be changing that soon. So I did my undergrad and up just like I said, three years. And from there, I decided to get into get into doing my MBA. Currently, I'm a part of the UB MBA Consulting Group. I'm actually founding a whole new professional group within UV specifically focused focusing around media marketing and marketing analytics. And I'm also in the LeaderCore program, just like my fellow colleagues.

Aaron Shaw

And finally, I'll introduce Kate Jarvis, who will be joining us here briefly. She is currently in a class and will be stepping out momentarily. But Kate attended the New England Conservatory of Music where she majored in clarinet performance, and then moved on to the same institution, same graduate program before coming here to UB to pursue her MBA. She's also a Connection to Excellence scholar, along with being in the UB women and management club and also being a leader course students. So we'll hear from Kate once she joins us briefly.

Aaron Shaw

Moving on in diving a little bit deeper into the overall student experience. Do you guys just mind sharing a little bit about your backgrounds as it relates to the academic side of the house but also professional side of the house? And you know, kind of what led you to pursuing an MBA here at UB

Orion

Sure. You want to you want to go first?

Thirth

Sure I can go first? So I'm I like to call your local Canadian Indian. I was born in America, raised in Canada, and I'm Indian by ethnicity, but I came to UB and I had this firm idea that I was going to do my undergrad and go right into law school. And then I realized I was going to graduate a year early and I thought myself thinking, Okay, well, I'm not ready to go to law school just yet. But I do want to think that I would like to get my MBA. So I then began starting doing my MBA. And I had been focusing on finance and data analytics at the moment. But I'm actually going to switch that over to marketing and analytics just because I feel more passion for that, that field work.

Alongside that, I'll talk about how I was trying to form a new professional group within the school because I personally am very entrepreneurial, entrepreneurial, my my, my mind frame is very entrepreneurial.

And so I noticed there is a gap in the school we have a consulting group, we have this amazing group called the Therese Kelly Investment Group for people who are interested in finance, but you don't really have anything for analytics or marketing. So I took it upon myself to create that group. And from there, I'm hoping to get myself an internship somewhere in California, be away from the snow for a little while.

Orion

So this Orion and my like I mentioned earlier, my initial career was in the United States Air Force. I was a jet engine technician, worked on C 130 aircraft for about 10 years. And then from there I was in the beginning, I was working on the flight line, which is basically the pit crew for the airplane. So we went wherever the planes went, so I traveled all over the world.

And then I worked for about two years in an engine overall facility. And at about a year into that, that that function, I was plucked out, and they trained me to be a Lean Six, six sigma facilitator Greenbelt, which is now that that facility was kind of like a big testbed for for that the Air Force had invested a lot in lean and so they were kind of kind of really breaking into it in that engine overall facility. So I did that for about a year. And then I applied for recruiting duty. And then that's how I ended up out here in western New York. So I recruited for the Air Force for about five years in this area, met a lot of UB students, there doing that. And that kind of got me introduced to the school. We did some presentations out here for recruiting as well. And when I get out of the Air Force, I wanted to go back and get a business degree.

At this point, I kind of had some entrepreneurial aspirations. So I went back to school, I enrolled a UB got my undergrad and business with an HR concentration. And after I graduated, I applied for the MBA program. One of the reasons that I wanted to, to continue on with my education was the school itself. And actually, when I wrote my, you know, paper applying for the for the MBA, program that's one of the things I talked about was, you know, it's in this school year, you're surrounded by so many talented people either so many great minds that you can just bounce ideas off of, and I wanted to be able to continue that. So it's, it's more than that just the traditional education you know, there's also the, you know, the awesome talented alum that you get to interact with it that I really appreciate it so so yeah, here I am, first year MBA so Third and I are actually both in the consulting group. That's a organization that does pro bono consulting for companies in the local area. So we're working with triple A currently. So that's the same team on the same team. So that's project that's going on right now. We're, we're basically mapping out their processes and kind of digging into to set their drivers Training Program and hopefully be able to come up with a, an improved future state for them that they can implement and, and, you know, I guess kind of improve efficiency going forward. So that's an awesome thing that that I've been exposed to the UB MBA program mentioned the C2E scholarship. That's, that's great opportunity that I'm so thankful for that's full tuition scholarship that I received for my prior work experience. And the one thing that I forgot to mention on my initial introduction to that, I've worked with Aaron Shaw, my friend, Jake Walsh and I also created the up school management podcast. So that's kind of an additional project that we've been working on that's, that's interesting. So lot of opportunities to get involved and do different things. Get a ton of experience through the Hold the club through the podcast. So yeah, that's kind of kind of me in a nutshell. And that's what's been going on I guess.

Aaron

Yeah, it's awesome. Thanks. Um, so for for those that are exploring this as a possible opportunity and curious as to what it all looks like a regular basis from an academic perspective, can you just walk us through what a day in the life looks like? You're both had completed your first semester, which arguably is the the hardest semester. reasons for that being acclamation a lot of deliverables being thrown at you getting a custom the teammates and the teamwork aspect of it. So can you just walk us through a typical day or week in the life of a UB MBA student?

Orion

Yeah, so, you know, I guess the the first semester, like you mentioned, Aaron, is it's kind of, it's kind of designed to be a crucible experience. So a lot of deliverable deliverables, but kind of another sort of, you know, constraint that you had to work around is you'll be assigned to a team that you'll attend all your core classes with, during the first semester with that team. So it's a group of seven or eight other students. And there's a lot of a lot of projects individually that you're going to be responsible for. But also a lot of group projects. And so, there becomes sort of a, you know, a reckoning point where you realize that you have to split up the team and kind of break things up into smaller pieces. And that's, you know, something that, you know, if you if you end up in the program, you'll have a mentor, and they'll, they'll tell you, you know, this is how this is the only way to get everything done that they're expecting you need to do.

And so there's, there's a lot of group dynamics, you know, situations that you got to figure out. Everybody's got different personalities and everybody's got different things going in their lives so in my team, we have an MD students so a medical doctor going through medical school we have a pharmacy students, we have two engineers, we have international students. So a lot of different backgrounds but also, especially for the dual degrees they have other classwork that they're doing it in addition to the MBA program and medical boards that they're worried about. So there's a lot of given take that you got to be able to, you know, you got to be flexible. With, with everybody's needs, everybody has things going on at different times. And so that can be it can be grueling to try to get the machine to have all the pieces fitting in the right place at the right time.

Thirth

I definitely agree. When it comes to the day to day, especially in the first semester, just getting used to the to the style of work, the work load, it can be pretty, pretty mentally straining at times. But with that being said, once you get over that initial hurdle you're good to go, you start to understand how everything works, you sort of get a feel for what it's like to be an MBA and what it's like to think like an MBA.

For my group, in particular, what we've what we found to be interesting in terms of dynamics was that about three of us were essentially straight from undergrad going right into the MBA, whereas actually, not even three, four of us really, because one of one of our group members of the MD MBA, so he was still going into pharmacy school and doing his MBA, while the other the other three of us were MBAs calling for it Right, right, right out of business undergrad. But compare that to someone who, for example, came all the way from Indonesia and Singapore, with some years of experience under their belt. And it's funny to see how you will react and work with these kinds of people.

With that being said in the first in the first semester, one thing that also is kind of hard is finding out what sort of organizations and clubs or groups you might want to get affiliated with and might want to work with because some of the applications for those groups open up within the first semester. So you sort of you have to, you have to sit down really and and think, long and hard about what type of extracurricular activities do I want to supplement my MBA with, because as it is, as MBAs, we don't really have too much time. So with what other time we have that we pour into these extracurriculars you want you want to be definitely sure that that's something that you want to do and you enjoy.

Aaron

Yeah, great. And on that note, time management is a fantastic skill to have and certainly something that you can do well, do you guys have any lessons learned or best practices based on where you started day one as it relates to time management and where you're at currently.

Thirth

I actually have a good one for that one. So in my undergrad, I was a notorious procrastinator. I get everything done last minute. I still sometimes get those urges. But what you learn very quickly is that the MBA is very harsh and cruel. If you leave things for the last minute, you will be punished. It's just a fact of life. But with that being said, one thing that I did that really helped for me was just actually physically writing out my stuff onto a whiteboard. So I have a whiteboard calendar and then another whiteboard on the sides of my room and I on the calendar, I write down general due dates, stuff like that, sort of like a planner. But then on the blank whiteboard, I would write down priority tasks and homework that are coming up, just so that I will literally wake up and I had that staring at me and I think oh, I gotta do that. Let's get all that.

Orion

Yeah, I definitely second what Thirth said about procrastinating it's it's definitely not going to you can't do that in this program. There's just the timelines are to, to constrained as far as deliverables. There's just too many things going on. You gotta be, you really gotta be ahead of the game. So planning is crucial and planning right from the beginning. And I would say another kind of kind of going back to what I was saying earlier is the team aspect. A lot of it is coordinating with your teammates and an effective way. And so I would recommend, right from the get go, when you find out what your team is, figure out who's gonna who's going to build a calendar that everyone can see, and everyone can share, so that everyone knows where the other person is. I mean, my team is we're pretty functional team. And we have work schedules. A lot of people are holding jobs down and stuff and it's hard to figure out when everyone to meet and it's, it's a waste of time to do it every time you have a new task that you need to meet about the same. Okay, when can everybody mean I can go on the calendar for my team and at any time and I can see where everybody's going to be if I have extra things like this, that I have going on like a podcast recording or, or webinar or you know, even internship interviews, I put that on there so that they can see that I'm going to be, you know, out of pocket during those times. So, you know not to plan something important that would be needed for during that.

Aaron

Moving along in diving a little bit deeper into the program overall. From a strategic standpoint, we like to hang our hats on what we call action learning. So the learning that's taking place outside of the classroom, it's been said on average, a human being is going to retain about 10% of the information

that's being put out there during any particular lecture period. So taking that information, and applying it in a way that that actual learning can take place is some of the programs that you see listed here on your screen. Making mistakes, learning from those mistakes. Reevaluating, retooling going back and taking another approach. Hopefully being successful, the second go around or not. And learning even further and reevaluating, once again, are kind of the foundations that are involved with, again, some of these programs that are built within the MBA program that are listed here on your screen. So as you can see corporate champions entrepreneurship Leader Core, which you've heard mentioned here a couple times already, MBA advantage, the ambassador program case competitions, the Mentor Program, the New York City finance and law program and the social impact fellows are all ways that we give our students opportunities to apply what's being taught in the classroom from day one in real world scenarios with real organizations. So for the ambassador's, can you elaborate a little bit about your experience that you had up into this point? I know corporate champions is obviously right from the get go semester one. So we'll start there. Can you just talk about your experiences with Corporate champions and then elaborate on any of the other topics that we've talked about here.

Thirth

So are our corporate champion was Citibank, we actually worked with the buffalo branch of Citibank, which is really convenient because they're just right up the road from here, but a 10 minute drive from up north campus. But we had a really interesting experience, because for a lot of the corporate champions projects, a lot of the groups were given a specific objective, sort of like, Hey, we have high turnover, find out what's causing it, or we have a certain issue that we want to improve on. For Citibank, we were literally just told have fun, go explore what's in here and if you find something, let us know. It was a very broad scope, very daunting scope, and it sort of made us think well, these these guys are perfect. How do we fix them? Is there even anything to fix it?

But with that being said, the more that we sort of combed through, with a fine tooth comb, we were actually able to find some holes, not many, but some. But it led us to being able to present to them and provide them provide them with some really sound recommendations which they hopefully have on put into practice, just because it sort of puts in the light that no matter how big and successful an organization is, there's always some small aspect or some small portion of it that you can always dress.

Kate

Hi, everyone. I'm Kate. I'm just joining a little bit late here, but my experience with corporate champions, I think, in a way a little bit similar to yours here for my company sort of gave us all this data and said okay, here Here you go, have fun with it. And they were they were good on all of their metrics. So our project then became an issue of Okay, well, where is the improvement Where is, you know, where is something that we can still address with them and have that be meaningful to them.

In some way, it was interesting. Um, so the company I worked with it was independent health, which is a local health insurance company. And we ended up focusing in on their corporate culture through the lens of the core values that they try to exemplify in their, their daily interactions with each other with the community and everything because that's part of their business that was really important to them,

and looking at how the different values interplay within the company. So that was an interesting project. And again, I think speaks to how different everyone's experience with that project can be based on the company you work with, based on the team you work with. So this is something a little unique going on there.

Orion

So I love the Corporate Champions project. I thought it was I thought it was fantastic. Um, in our case, we had we worked with M&T Bank, which is a fairly good sized regional bank out here. And they did give us a specific tasks they wanted us to do into the previous year's employee engagement survey, and look for opportunities where they could do things better. And it ended up being a really interesting project.

We started when we got the survey was all PDF form. So it was kind of a tiresome task of loading it all back into Excel so that we can manipulate the data. But we ended up basically narrowing it down to four main areas. And what was interesting about that project is you work with a liaison from that company that kind of, they come up with what the what the project will be about, and they they do, you know, they kind of work with you along the way to get you access to people, you know, if you want to do a focus group, things of that nature. So, when we met for an update, just kind of show them where we're going with it. You know, we kind of went over each component and the last one was communication.

They're a lot of a lot of, I guess negative or more negative results in survey about communication, and anyway kind of, kind of resistant about He's like, I think you guys are, you know, on the wrong track with communication. I think that's just what how it is with every organization. And so, you know, we were kind of like us, you know, you know, we took it, we took it in, you know, as far as, you know, took it to heart as far as advice goes, but when we dug back into the data, we had a benchmark to measure against and so it turned out that although communication might be an issue in every organization,

the employees at least perceived that there was a problem when you looked at it in comparison to other organizations in the financial services. And so in the end when we presented to the company, you know, we kind of ran down all of our findings and our recommendations and stuff and, and we were able to show it data like, Hey, you know, yes, that that might be the case that that, uh, that communication is an issue in every organization. But, but look at, look at how this compares and when you do that, you know it kind of open their eyes to and they're like, yeah, okay, I can kind of see how that's, that's a problem. And it's and it's funny because I ran into our liaison A while back and you know, they were actually implementing all the things that we had talked about, which is fantastic. That's an awesome opportunity, not only from a learning aspect because it's, it's one thing to kind of go through a class and learn finance or go through a class and learn HR, you know, things like that. But when you actually go to apply and that's when they stick in your brain and they're there permanently. And so I just thought it was an awesome opportunity to learn into, you know, to actually be able to apply some of the stuff that we do an MBA program.

Kate

One thing we didn't actually mention, we have site visits as part of the corporate champions project. And so it's not just the liaison that we're getting to spend some time with. For my team, we went we spent a full day on campus with on their campus sorry, that the corporate campus of Independent Health, and we were able to have lunch with their CEO. Well, he talked to us about his vision for health care and the future of his industry. So there's a lot, a lot more outside perspective that's brought into the project in ways like that. And, you know, another part of independent health is a, an affiliate company that they had to spend a couple hours with, and they're just doing some really cool stuff with trying to you know, revolutionize the health care industry. So it was it was nice for us to be able to go and have some time to talk with higher ups in the organization and really get a feel for, you know, their vision of the company as well.

Aaron

Great point, it's probably my number one takeaway from the program is, you know, your MBA team doesn't necessarily get to pick the organization, that that's going to be your corporate champion. But the one thing that's universal in this is that you have access to leaders within that organization that you can then take it as part of building what I call your leadership transformer. So there's bits and pieces you can see from different industries, different functions, take what you like, add to your toolbox and leave what you don't necessarily want to take with you. Ultimately, transforming yourself along the way into the leader that you hopefully want to become by the end of the program and beyond. So yeah, having access to those resources, I think is just as valuable as actually applying what you're what's being taught in the classroom.

So we've talked about entrepreneurship a couple times here. Leader core as well. Do you guys want to expand on some of the entrepreneurial tools, resources and some of your experiences within leader core? And anything else you want to touch on here as it relates to action learning

Orion

Yeah, I think, um, I mean, I think the best example that I'm aware of as far as the, the, the entrepreneurship side of stuff is a bit. So he's, we have an MBA, first year MBA right now that worked with Blackstone Launchpad, which is kind of UB's entrepreneurship hub. There. They're an incubator space for that as well. No, yeah. So, so yeah. So he's, he's really involved in in competitions and stuff going forward, as well. But he basically came up with an idea where he said, Hey, you know, we've got college students that are commuters that you know, are spending money on dining

Unknown Speaker 27:00

Here at UB in the various place that you need, would it be cool if there was a place where we can store you know, bring food from home, store it in refrigerated space and, and be able to you know, heat it up and eat lunch a lot cheaper. And so his business is basically a locker within refrigerator, which is a great idea if you think about it. So you can it's called Cold Space you can you can rent a locker and only you have access to it you get an access code to and you type in your code and it pops open. You can store

whatever, whatever meal that you decide to bring and put in there and you're the only person who can get into to that actual locker. So you don't have to worry about it being you know, tampered with or or whatever.

Kate

No one can steal your lunch.

Thirth

The other amazing avenues the Panacci competition. Yeah. So I took part of that competition didn't make the finals. So that competition being simply something similar if you have an idea, form a team, then go ahead and pitch your idea in front of actual, actual actual people who are active in the entrepreneurial community. So people who could be potential investors, for example, for your next venture Green Zone, your next endeavor, that competition has a prize like \$52,000 25,000, Kathy 3000, or in a little bit more and services and legal and legal services and such. But just going through the competition, you maybe don't make it to the finals, just the act of preparing for practicing your pitch. Thinking really hard about your idea, refining it. That whole process is such a such a developmental boon for anyone who does it because you really get to learn what it's like to sort of take control and take charge. And more importantly, you practice a ton of soft skills and a ton of other creative thinking skills all at once. It's it's definitely an opportunity that will really make you get out of your shell and get out of your comfort zone.

Aaron

So fair to say that the tools and resources that are needed regardless of what stage in your entrepreneurial life you're in are available to you be MBA students?

All

Yes, about 90%. Right.

Aaron

And what about leader corps? I know all three of you are lead, of course, students. Let's talk about leader for a little bit.

Kate

Sure. So leader court, for those not familiar with the terminology, it's a leadership soft skills training program. So it's a little bit different from a traditional classroom experience, although we do have a weekly class for this semester, but you have to interview to be in it. So you have sort of a mini job interview to be accepted into the program and you talk about the kind of skills you're trying to develop within yourself. So interpersonal skills, communication skills, leadership styles, qualities Different ways of interacting with people and making sure that you learn to be the best and most effective communicator and leader that you can be through that program. So I think that's something that UB brings to the table that's not in really many other schools. And it's something that is gaining notoriety, definitely within the Buffalo area, and even beyond now, as we have been told that there are alumni, you know, around the country and around the world who are, you know, aware of this and are looking for that and in people, and even if it's not, you know, a situation where you're seeing Buffalo, it's skills that will translate to whatever job whether or not they know, the Leader Core name.

Orion

Yeah, so Leader Core, I mean, it's really pretty interesting. It's a lot of reflecting you, you journal things that happened. This is kind of an oversimplification because there's dimensions that you link your journal entries, to and you graduate at certain levels of success within the program when you finish it, and you have to kind of perform like a or complete, like almost like a thesis of what you've done while you were in leader corps to prove, you know, the level that you've achieved, basically. But um, yeah, I think just the idea of reflecting in general is useful, especially with as many things going on, as we have in this program. And as much as you're exposed to, I mean, it's, it really is a whirlwind. It's it's two years of your life, but it's very, very busy and there's so much happening, you're constantly going in different directions. So that's, I think, valuable to be able to look back and try to glean useful, useful information from what you're experiencing. But then also, what Kate mentioned to is, and it kind of circles back to corporate champions, how you were talking about the you know, how to sccess to executives and different different levels within the the companies that you're exposed to, that you find out, you know, you'll hear over and over again, within these companies, you know, do leader core do data modeling, those are in the UB MBA MBA program. That's what every everybody who's graduated and is out in the workforce, or for just a, you know, its associated or affiliated some way with, with hiring of students in this area. That's the advice that they give you. So it's something that employers are really looking for. And, you know, that's, again, you kind of this, this whole program is so integrated, that you have access to that information. And so you can kind of pick your path based on I guess, actual, not actual knowledge based on the input from employers, which is awesome.

Kate

And Leader Core comes with you get a coach along with your being in the program as well. So it's either someone who is here at the school faculty or some some people who they brought in from the outside who are either past graduates of the program or in organizations connected with the school. So again, it's nice to have that sort of, you know, big brother, Big Sister mentor to guide you through a lot of the leadership skills that you're trying to learn. And that, you know, you can just send them an email and say, Hey, like, I'm having a tough week with something. How, how would you go about this? How would

you get through it? And, you know, my coach, she's here as part of the administrative faculty of the School, and she's such a wonderful person, and we got together to have our first meeting, and I think it was supposed to be maybe a 15-20 minute just check in and we ended up talking for over an hour and so it's just it was really, that's a really nice part of the program too, is that you feel like you're ever on your own. In that development, there's always someone to help guide you through it.

Aaron

Okay, getting into the the actual academics of the program. So, the program is a full time two year on campus program consisting of 16 credits. The breakdown of that is 27 credits related to the core curriculum which everyone is required to take you there is a required internship, which accounts for three of those credits, and then the remaining credits are made up through elective courses, which pertain to the concentrations that you see listed on your screen.

And so for the ambassador's, can you talk a little bit about choosing a concentration, sitting down with your academic advisor and kind of mapping that whole whole thing out as it relates to your career objectives, and then I'll circle back and talk about some of the concentration requirements and or lack thereof?

Orion

Yeah, I think I'm a good starting place for that would be advantage because that's where your first kind of exposed to all the different concentrations. So, for me, I came in knowing what concentration I wanted to be. But not everybody, you know it's in the same boat as far as that goes but MBA advantage. It's two weeks. Right? Yeah. So two weeks prior to starting classes and there's a whole lot involved in that. That's kind of a whole whole separate topic. But one of the things that you do is you have an opportunity to break off into different classrooms and and learn about the different concentrations and get information about it. So, for me, I didn't just even though I was pretty sure I wanted to do supply chains and operations as a concentration. I didn't, you know, just limit myself to finding out information about that. I went to several different concentration seminars so they go away. Went to consulting. I think I looked at marketing. So you have, you'll have a fair amount of information right off the bat. But you don't actually really need to worry about concentrations until the second semester. Because the first semester all your classes are, are the same. Everybody goes through the same classes. It's all core. So second semester, that's when you really start choosing electives and deciding if you want to, if you want to even do a concentration, some people just mix and match they, they pick the classes that for electives that they think will be most useful for where they want to go. Others stick to the path that up is kind of outline that, hey, if you want to work operations, you know, these are the classes you should look at.

But another thing too is you have an advisor that's sort of specialized in whatever concentration you're in. So, for me, it's Melissa. Ruggiero. She's awesome. Goes above and beyond, I had a think she caught wind that I was going to

an event where it was CEO of the year that was being awarded. And so some students had opportunities to go to that. She found out I was going to it and there was going to be a bunch of executives there at the table and said, Hey, this is this is a chance where you may end up, it might be a networking opportunity. Let's get your resume ready. Let's make sure it's as good as it can be for that. So the experience I've had with the with the Career Resource Center has been amazing. I mean, they go above and beyond just really phenomenal.

Kate

So for me, I'm a little bit in between things on the concentration, right. So right now I'm planning on doing a marketing concentration which It's about four classes that you take throughout your time here. But then, in addition to that the amount of extra classes that you can take, you can get up to maybe three concentrations if you want to actually get concentrations, or you can, you know, have a focus in something. So, I am also very interested in data analytics and that side of things and marketing and analytics go together quite well. However, I'm relatively confident I will never go into financial battle analytics, finance is not my thing, not not my side of business. And so I still have the opportunity to along with my marketing classes, take those analytics classes that I think will benefit me in that tracking the ones that go together without having that you don't have to take all of them and the concentration you can just, you know, pick the ones that you think will be most developmentally good for you and sort of build your own menu that way.

Thirth

So I thought I was going to be through and through hundred percent financed analytics that is my jam. And I started taking my first finance course this semester and I started to realize, Oh, boy, I'm not as passionate as I thought I was for this. So that's sort of one nice thing about the second semester is that even though you are just beginning to choose your courses for your concentration, it doesn't mean that you're locked into it completely. With that said, I made many, many, many, many, many trips to the CRC. They basically know my person number by heart at this point.

I'm just meeting with all the folks at the CRC just getting advice on sort of what is the concentration for me, what sort of is the right career path and from there, I sort of decided that I still do want to stick with data analytics but I think when the switch of finance for marketing instead because that just seems to be a more of a more of an alert me because I know whatever I do, I want to be on a data and data analytic side of it. But the marketing aspect does seem a little more interesting than finance at the moment.

Aaron

Yeah, thank you. I mean, you guys all made the points that I was going to make about concentration. So thank you. The key takeaway here is that you don't have to go into the application process knowing exactly what you want to do in terms of the concentration. And as you've heard, there's quite a bit of flexibility in terms of customizing it specific to what you're trying to achieve. Meaning that you can identify a concentration that falls in line with your passions. I think you've heard that word thrown out

here a couple of times now. And I can drive home the importance of really pursuing your passions enough, right up into not paying concentration following the rules in terms of general management and selecting electives from all concentrations. So there is quite a bit of customization involved there.

Talking about admissions, let's get into that a little bit here and some of the logistics involved with that. So for those that are viewing this listening to this that have aspirations of joining the US and fall 19. There is time left. There's two remaining rounds. April 15 is our next deadline June 1 being our final deadline for those that are getting ahead, so to speak and looking into the future fall 2020 and beyond. July 1 is when the application opens up every single year. And then these deadlines that you see on your screen, typically fall in line year after year having five rounds February 1 being our final international deadline. And then June 1 being that final deadline for our US applicants.

When it comes to components of the application. Again, you can see them listed here on your screen taking the GMAT or GRE exam is required. It doesn't matter which one you take, I encourage you to take the one that falls or aligns more closely with your strengths two letters recommendation to personal statements, a resume and your transcripts from any undergrad institution where you've earned college credits. All components are required to be uploaded to your application prior to the specific rounder deadline that you're applying to.

And then you'll see there in the bottom left, there is an opportunity right now for those that are seeking to take the GMAT by following the link on your screen, they are offering \$100 off for UB MBA applicants. That'll be good to up into that June 1 deadline. So feel free to take advantage of that. switching over to to your guys's stories as it relates to admissions. Can you share some of your experiences while you were going through the process of being a prospective candidate, filling out the application going through the interview process any any things that you think that that these applicants or prospective candidates should know from that perspective?

Kate

So for me, I would say that I made the decision to come back to School pretty late in the process. So it was probably about this time last year when I actually said, Okay, I'm going to do this, how do I need to make this happen? And my big piece of advice is to not leave it to the last minute on the GRE or the GMAT, because the test results take several weeks to come in. And you need to make sure that you have given yourself enough of a window between taking the test and getting the result. And that final application deadline, so I was right down to the wire. I'm pretty much everything. And fortunately, it worked out for me. But as a result, I didn't really get to study for the test quite as well as I probably would have wanted to. And so you know, I made some decisions on that. I said, Okay, well, I'm good on the verbal stuff, so I'm not going to worry about that and my verbal score turned out to be fine. And I spent a solid month studying all the math questions I possibly could and still came in and extremely average, the quantitative portion.

So, you know, make sure and again, you know, make sure you're just giving yourself the time that you need to study properly for it and really be prepared and know that it can take, you know, three weeks to a month to get that score to come in depending on how busy they are and what time of the year it is. In terms of the rest of the process. Everything was pretty, pretty streamlined for me. I think the biggest

part is getting those letters of recommendation and getting people who you know will be good for it. And also you know, that they're good for it by the date that it's due. So you know, know your know your recommender as well and know what their abilities are to be in on time with something like that.

Thirth

I would agree with Kate. So when I decided to get my MBA, basically I was in the middle of a Pennsylvania in the middle of nowhere. And I was actually doing an internship there and then I decided, well let's study for the GRE. Let's give it and then from there I essentially wanted to a mad scramble just getting all my letters of recommendations and everything and it was wild.

Orion

yet so I'm like Kate I waited for the last minute to submit my application I think I think my recommendations came in like the day of the last day or Yeah, I think I finished all my stuff a week or two prior to the to the due date. But But I think the recommendations came in like right and right at the wire so yeah, I would say you know go through that would leave yourself a little bit of of lead time with stuff like that. Especially like Kate said with the with the testing because I took the GMAT and I didn't study at all I just showed up and said Okay, all right. And so I did okay, I think on the verbal side but the GMAT you can't use a calculator at all for the map to give you this like laminated graph paper. And so I was like trying to try to use that like little squares to do calculations and completely ran out of time on the mat. So my master was horrible. And at that point, I pretty much decided that I had no chance of getting into up for the MBA and so I was like well, so much for that. So um, but as actually taking I was actually taking an undergrad class with another individual listen in the MBA program with me now and and he was like, man, take the take the GRE you know the GRE. You know the mass not nearly as bad which in my opinion, opinion is true. I guess results probably buried with that. But with the GRE you get to get to use calculator which makes things so much faster and a lot less chances that you're going to mess something up. And so, so that's, I guess a piece of advice if you're not a super strong math person, then maybe, maybe the GRE, something to look at. So I got the GRE scores, you get them right away, if you do care, as opposed to GMAT. And and you know, you can of course, Google every universities kind of range that there you know, most of their applicants fall into and, and kind of see where you are and whether you should retake the test if you have enough time. But with the with the GRE I scored kind of in the range where I was hopeful that I would get accepted. But again, I would just start early so that you have the opportunity to retake it if you need to.

Aaron

Yeah, so seems that the theme seems to be get it done in a reasonable amount of time ahead of a deadline for sure. And not procrastinate like we can say with so many other things in life. But understand that we real from an admissions team perspective, we realize that circumstances change situations change on a regular basis. And that's why we have an application that's open for nearly an entire calendar year. So if it's something you're thinking about early on, things change. So be it. If you

circle back around and come back to the fact that this probably is the best path for you just know that we're here to assist you every step along the way. And then, you know, a common theme, again, was revolving around the the exam piece of this puzzle. And just know that it's one piece of the puzzle, the admissions committee and the team as a whole does take a holistic approach to this. So if you don't score as well as you had hoped, on that exam, which is 99.9% of people out there, the committee is looking at other aspects of your applicant profile. And so there are opportunities to be balance our weaknesses with strengths in regards to work experience, undergraduate academic performance, what others are saying about you in those letters of recommendation and so they really truly are looking at every single component of this application. Orion had mentioned that you can Google to look up score ranges in what's where you may fall as we as it relates to the class profile. So that's what you see on your screen here now. The class profile for the incoming class as it relates to work experience, the split for gender, GMAT, GRE, lows and averages, and then on the bottom of your screen, last year's graduating class 88% of the class had a job offer within three months of graduating along with the salary statistics there and under Right hand side of your screen, what you're seeing is employers that are consistently recruiting and hiring our MBAs. And on that note, the US News rankings came out yesterday. And UB MBA program ranked 11th. With recruiters and in some of the remarks that they had, were related to the the intensity that MBAs come in with and perform in terms of their willingness to go above and beyond and work hard from day one.

So on that note, do you guys have anything to add? As it relates to second year MBAs that you've experienced and seen go through, you know, a full year of this program, you want to elaborate on the Career Resource Center and how they they play a role and ultimately getting in front of these recruiters or anything along those lines.

Kate

I just remember early on coming in and seeing the second years and thinking like, wow, like these, these guys are really with it. Like they've all they all know what they're doing and they seem super professional already. And, and that's not to say that, you know, it's cutthroat business atmosphere in any way everyone's nice and friendly and wonderful to each other in my experiences here anyway.

So yeah, that's that's been really cool to I guess also see my own evolution to that level of responsibility throughout just this year and I think a lot of that has to do with the sheer amount of coursework that you have first semester and just, you know, at some point you have to say, all right, like, this is the list of things that need to get done and this time I'm going to do and you start making that plan, you start moving through it and and then one day you realize, wow, all the assignments are submitted and I got through it and it's a really good feeling and it definitely you know, I feel like a very different person today than I was six months ago before walking into this building for the first time.

Orion

Yeah, I would kind of I guess echo what Kate saying I think um, it's not surprising what you said about recruiters. I know that that's one of the reasons that I came to UB, to get a business degree was I was a recruiter in this area and had college students coming in from all the schools out here and you'd be

stood out ever in all the recruiters know that and all the offices, you know, very smart people at the school and also just the way that they carry themselves. That's a testament to the CRC is a testament to the faculty and the mentorship that they provide. You know, UB produces a high quality professional person. I think the standards, this is a hard program MBA program is very hard. The standards are really high today.

The quality of work that is expected is, is at a different level. I thought I could make a nice graph before. But literally, yeah, you know, I, I, if I were to look at, you know, the, the Excel graphs that I was producing before, which I thought were just fine. I mean, I just would be kind of embarrassed now to submit them. And so you know that the faculty has high standards in the program, which is awesome because that's what you need, if you're going to grow and be successful. The school really does a great job of preparing you for whatever you're going to do. There's so much to offer. There's so many things, so many opportunities, so many things going on the experiential learning aspects that program does so well with, but also just the standards. You know, you can have, you're going to end up coming out of here with, you know, really top quality abilities that are going to be, you know, heads heads above. A lot of a lot of the people you'll be competing against for jobs in the workforce. And I've heard that from UB second years that have done internships out here, they're like, Oh, yeah, you wouldn't believe in you go in there with your data model, modeling experience, and nobody's ever seen stuff like that. They're like, Wow, I can't believe you did this. How did you do this? So the faculty that they that they have working in the MBA program is pretty stellar. There's some, some teacher, some professors with really pretty impressive backgrounds and credentials. They really know what they're doing. And not just on the teaching side, but also they have background and consulting work and things of that nature. And, and years and years of experience doing it well.

Kate

And I think to a lot of the projects that we do, it's not just about Did you do it? Or did you not do it? It's, it's about the growth through the process, a lot of the coursework, it's built on previous coursework. So you see that improvement in, you know, your data modeling or in your communication skills throughout the course of the program, because each project, you know, builds a little bit more on the skills that you've learned from the last one. It's not segmented, it all fits together. It's all a very comprehensive, holistic growth in your own skills.

Aaron

Yeah, fantastic. Okay, so to recap, we went over the student experience in the very beginning, you had an opportunity to be introduced to three of our MBA ambassadors. Learn a little bit about their backgrounds and you know, ultimately some of their day to day, alongside some of the academics and other topics related to the student experience. We got a little bit into the program overview as it relates to the academic side of the house, the concentrations, and then we got into admissions. And finally, you saw a little bit about the class profile. So I want to take time now to answer any questions that we may have out there. And the first one is, you know, feel free to answer in order. Why did you choose UB? I

know that we've talked about it a little bit throughout the duration of the webinar up to this point, but what was the one deciding factor on why you chose UB?

Kate

Sure. I mean, I think it's a pretty simple answer for me. I'm married and my husband has a job here and I have job here and we have family here. So Buffalo was really the only city that I looked in. But when it came down to choice, and there are several options of MBA programs within Buffalo, so I don't really like oh, but you'd be with the only option because it obviously was not. But what made UB really stand out again, it's, you know, the quality of the program, the fact that it is one of the, you know, the ranked programs in the country. And, you know, I think I'm very confident that I made the right choice for myself, just with the amount of personal attention that you can get from the faculty, everybody here is just so helpful and really, they want you to learn and grow and be the best leader that you can be. So well, my decision was a little bit geographical and also, you know, definitely had to do with up his reputation in the area and knowing that it ultimately is a very high quality program.

Orion

Yeah, so, um, for me, geography also played a factor for me as well because I own a house and everything. With that being said, you know, like I already mentioned, I had exposure to the school as a recruiter. And so even before I, I enrolled in and came back to get an undergrad degree at UB, I already had a really good impression of the school. Applicants always came in just, you know, dressed in a suit had a resume, like you could just tell that they were prepared and that wasn't the case with other colleges. That honestly, I don't think other college any of the other colleges the applicants to that, so, so you'd be really stood out just in, you know, how individuals were prepared and, and just professionalism, easy to work with. And so, that's how I ended up, you know, doing my undergrad here. And then also I keep mentioned, it's, it's got a good reputation as well. So there is that, but one thing that I didn't talk about earlier that I kind of want to touch on is kind of the culture of the school and that's something that is a really awesome aspect of attending school at UB. It's not I think Kate kind of kind of touched on a little bit when she said, You know, it's business program, but it's not cutthroat. You know, everybody isn't here to, to work on Wall Street. And, you know, it's not a Wolf of Wall Street, Business School. So I like attending school here. I like the people that I'm exposed to. They're smart. They're decent people. A lot of unique backgrounds. I like that there's a lot of international students. There's, you know, in, in just our small MBA program where you know, our first year is classes only about 100. There's several people from India there's person from England. Thirth who was talking earlier, he's his family's from India. He's got a really interesting background, just all kinds of all kinds of exposure to different people different knowledge. That's just fantastic. And people are interested in doing amazing things. And they're also interested in doing good things for the world not just doing things that benefit them. And that's something that's important to me and something I appreciate about going to school here. And honestly, you know, just kind of a little story about this. That kind of relates is when I bombed the GMAT I remember when hung out with my in laws, they've got a cabin down the southern tier of New York and, and I was talking my father in law and I was like, Yeah, he's like, how did it go? How did the GMAT go? I'm toast. And he's like, Oh, you know, I've got an MBA and he went to

Emory. He's like, I didn't I didn't have to take the GMAT is other schools. Yeah. But in the back of my mind, oh, you know, I had already decided if I didn't If I couldn't go to the the MBA up, then I wasn't going to do it. So. So the school for me, it was definitely a big factor.

Kate

You know, of all the schools in the area, I wouldn't have done an MBA in any other school. Yeah, I agree with you the only school that I ended up applying to, even though I did research on a few of the others. And one thing that, Orion, what you're saying, sort of remind me of, you know, I've been out in the workforce for a few years before coming back, so I was hesitant about what it would be like to be a student again, especially, you know, I'm, I'm in my 30s. So being with a bunch of classmates who are significantly younger than me and what that dynamic would be like, and I found, you know, that age is completely relative and does not matter at all here. You know, everyone from every background from every area is equally accepted and bring something to the, You know, so my my close friends in the program, you know, have probably almost in, you know, 20 year age range between that. So it's it's really interesting, and something that I think it's really great that the program fosters friendships between people of all different backgrounds and ages and, you know, previous education and work and everything.

Aaron

Yeah, fantastic. So part of the admissions process is writing personal statements, and one of those personal statements revolves around your future goals. So the next question is, where do you see yourself in the next three to five years, keeping in mind that you wrote those essays as a part of the admissions process? You know, and how does it relate to the experience that you've had up to this point and has anything changed? But going back to what do you want to be when you grow up?

Orion

Kate and I are both are both switchers. So, we've already were older than, you know, the average profile in the MBA program. And we've we both had careers previously. And, for me, I guess nothing's really changed. I, when I wrote that I have aspirations of building a farming operation. I own some land. And so really, that's my end goal. And there's and there's more to it than beyond just farming that I'm interested in. So symbiotic farming, vertical farming, things like that some of these newer, you know, kind of untapped ideas, concepts within agriculture, technology, incorporating technology, I think that's interesting. So, yeah, the things that I'm learning in the MBA program will hopefully help me to leverage that's super competitive business environment, it's probably one of the most competitive business environments that that exists. So, there's that. And then also, you know, in the meantime, I want to learn as much as I can. So, especially when it comes to supply chains, operations, building the system, building the machine, the business, that's what I'm interested in. And so hopefully UB's MBA program will open some doors to, to some organizations where I can continue after I graduate, to be exposed to, you know, great minds, smart people in, in those fields that I can kind of, I can learn from that I can

bounce ideas off of that I can generate ideas from kind of, kind of, you know, piggybacking off things that they say or do, kind of taking it all in and hopefully spitting out something some kind of interesting output in regards to, you know, my other ambitions. So yeah, that's I guess that's my my schpiel on that.

Kate

So the reason why I came back to school was because that where I was in my career, I really sort of realized that I was at a bit of a dead end, and that I wasn't satisfied with the work that I was able to be doing with the education that I had currently, which I know Aaron introduced me earlier. So I have two music performance degrees, which is great, but didn't really set me up for any sort of growth in the business world. And so going in I didn't really have any clear idea of where I wanted to be. I just knew that I wanted something more from myself. So I've really been using this first year. And in particular, just the fact that we have core classes that you get exposed to every aspect of the business world throughout the first year of class is, you know, has really given me a much better idea of the things that I enjoy. Like I mentioned earlier marketing data analytics. And and really given me some experiences thinking about business in a way that I haven't before and, and sort of led me to think, Okay, well, this is what I want to do that these are the kinds of problems I want to solve. This is the impact that I want to make when I get out of here, so I know it's not a terribly specific answer, and I'm still figuring it out a little bit, but I think I have a whole lot more direction now than I did. You know, a year ago, a year ago, it was more like, I'm going to do this so I can be better. And now it's, it's much more focused than that.

Aaron

Great. Okay. Any final piece of advice that you would like to offer to a student who's evaluating MBA program as a whole as it relates to UB specifically?

Orion

I think my advice in terms of the MBA program would definitely be just what you're doing right now, if you're listening to this research, the more research you do on the front end, the better off you're going to be. You can plan. Shameless plug for the podcast, listen to the podcast, because we dig deeper into a lot of things that we've talked to talked about today. You can kind of get some, get some insight into faculty members and other other people's perspectives within the program. But research, research research, learn as much as you can try to figure out the system as quickly as possible. And then just like I mentioned earlier with the, you know, with the planning aspect of it, right, right from the get go get all your syllabus is somebody either one person or everybody within the team, start building a semester plan that everyone can follow and start trying to figure out who's going to be doing what and scheduling because you'll, you'll have weeks where there's Numerous really big deliverables all coming to at once. And if you're a procrastinator, like we mentioned earlier, it's not going to work. There's you'll, you'll figure out too late that there's not enough time to do all those things and then you're going to suffer for it. So try to stay ahead of the game, especially the first semester because it's just it's a lot harder than I

think. I think everybody would agree and I know, Kate, you're like a superstar and even even you even heroes right to believe right?

Kate

So yeah, I'll all of what Orion said for sure. You know, just making sure that you're staying on top of everything and, and trusting the process and trusting the people around you. That was a big thing. For me. I'm very independent. I always want to be the one to complete the project on my own to do things my way and this program is so much about teams and teamwork and team building and getting to trust the people around you who again, everyone's here for a reason we're all qualified. So learning to relinquish some of that need to be in control all the time, which seems almost counterintuitive, because you know, business, school managers, leaders, everything. But, you know, the lesson is that sometimes you do have to lead by stepping back and you have to come together as a team, you know, make some tough decisions about well, my strengths are here or there or, you know, what can I work on that will be the biggest impact on all of these things that we have do and split things up and just trust people to take care of what they've agreed to take care of.

And then going back to the admissions portion of that, I think, you know, just really being yourself and really, you know, trying to show who you are in the uniqueness that you bring to the table again, I'll reference my music background. And that's not a traditional thing around here, you know, musician, artist turned business person.

And I think, you know, I didn't shy away from that in my applications and in anything and I haven't really shied away from it in my coursework here either. So, you know, making sure that you are being true to yourself, regardless of what you're working on. And obviously, I'm not saying don't grow within that because I think that's a huge part of the program, but also not denying, you know your path.

Thirth

So, what I would advise for anyone looking to get into program is before you go and have a have, have an idea or an outline of what you want, but don't restrict yourself to that outline because life's a winding road. Anything can change it literally any moment. So keep an open mind coming in. But how about it'll have a rough plan in the background in the back of your head, have some research to back it up like Orion said, and more importantly, have some have some fun with it, be yourself at the same time. Keep up, keep a nice little hole in the head sort of a dartboard that sort of aim for.

Aaron

Great. Thank you and to the audience. Thank you for joining us for another webinar Wednesday. We truly hope you enjoyed meeting the UB MBA.

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