



Graduate Executive Committee
2/6/2026
Minutes

Attendees:

Voting Members: Amanda Elder, Brian McAllister, Carlos Diaz, Christina Jimenez, Diep Dao, Heather Song, James Pearson, Jeremy Bono, Johanna Baez, Justin Cole, Katie Sullivan, Lavonne Johnson, Lei Zhang, Leilani Feliciano, Morgan Shepherd, Patty Witkowsky, Robert Camley, Robin Kempf, Xin Yee

Non-Voting Members: Alyssa Langness, Amy Rodas, Andrea Williams, Andrew Lac, Asjia Trotter-McGill, Bee Bish, Bri Newland, Bridget Roe, Carolyn Daley, Chris Beiswanger, Courtney Cowling, David DuBois, David Moon, Deanna Johnson, Elisa Thompson, Hillary Fouts, Janel Owens, Jeff Deickman, Jennifer Newcomb, Jenny Russell, Jessica Kirby, Jose Mora, Karin Larkin, Karlye Enkler, Kim Paine, Kylie Swanson, Mary Rupp, Megan Rogers, Monica Yoo, Sam Adams, Savannah Diaz, Scott Kupferman, Shonda Johnson, Stephani Hosain, Sudhanshu Semwal, Susan Eldridge

Agenda Items:

- College of Business Proposed Accelerated Master's Pathway (AMP), BA in Interdisciplinary Studies to Master of Business Administration (MBA) (Bri Newland)
 - GEC voted to recommend the new AMP (11 agree, 0 disagree, 0 abstain)
- College of Business Proposed New MBA FLEX Pathway (Bri Newland)
 - GEC voted to recommend the new pathway (15 agree, 0 disagree, 0 abstain)
- College of Business Proposed Transition from Emphases to Certificates (Bri Newland)
 - GEC voted to recommend the transition (15 agree, 0 disagree, 0 abstain)
- Graduate School Policy on Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory Grades in Graduate Courses (see attached proposed changes) (Hillary Fouts)
 - GEC voted to recommend the change in policy on Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grades in graduate courses (13 agree, 0 disagree, 0 abstain)
- Graduate School Policy on Time Limits for Doctoral Degrees (see attached proposed changes) (Hillary Fouts)
 - GEC voted to recommend the change in policy on time limits for doctoral degrees (15 agree, 0 disagree, 0 abstain)
- Graduate Program Director Survey presentation (Katie Sullivan)

Informational Items:

- College of Business has made the following changes to admissions requirements:
 - Minimum GPA of 3.0 required for MBA Admissions Pathway 1

- Minimum GPA of 2.75 required for COB Graduate Certificates
- College of Engineering: Updates to EAS Online Program’s policy manual
 - Changing the wording of policy regarding the readmission of former graduate students. They will no longer automatically require returning graduate students to submit a new application but will evaluate each request to determine whether they will be reactivated or will need to reapply.
 - “The program will allow more than one C grade to be applied toward a degree, so long as the student’s overall GPA remains at least 3.0.”

Announcements:

- The U.S. Department of Education public comment period for the proposed graduate and “professional” program definitions is now live and will close on March 1st. The Provost Office is working on drafting a letter on behalf of UCCS, but anyone can provide individualized comment letters. If individuals would like to make comments, please be clear that you are commenting on behalf of yourself and not on behalf of the University of Colorado. The pre-publication notice link is [here](#). The link to make a public comment is [here](#).
- The annual 3-Minute Thesis Competition was held on **Tuesday, February 3**. Our winners are:
 - 1st Place: **Sourav Purification (Cybersecurity):** Is Your Signal Real? Unmasking and Defending Against Fake Base Stations. Advisor: Dr. Sang-Yoon Chang
 - 2nd Place: **Danny Bazan (Biochemistry):** Membrane Context Matters: Understanding Galectin-4’s Specific Interactions with Membrane Embedded Ligands. Advisor: Dr. Crystal Vander Zanden
 - People’s Choice Award: **Taylor Hutter (Biochemistry):** Guardians of the Genome: How Histone Modifications and Shelterin Work Together to Protect Telomeres. Advisor: Dr. Andrew Klocko
- See attached flier for upcoming professional development opportunities through GradCO.
- GEC Meetings for Academic Year 25-26 (all meetings are from 10:00-11:30am):

Spring GEC Meetings

 - 2/6, 3/13, 4/3, 5/1

Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies to Master of Business Administration (MBA) Accelerated Master Program

Program Description:

The Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies to Master of Business Administration (MBA) Accelerated Master Program (AMP) is designed to allow students to work concurrently on the BA and the MBA. Up to 12 graduate credit hours earned while enrolled in the BA to MBA AMP can be counted toward the fulfillment of requirements for both programs. For the courses to be credited for requirements in both degree programs, they must be taken after admission to the AMP and prior to completion of the undergraduate degree. Courses also must be from the list of identified courses approved for dual credit.

The purpose of the BA in Interdisciplinary Studies to MBA AMP is to provide an opportunity for high achieving students to complete their undergraduate degree in Interdisciplinary Studies and graduate degree in Business Administration in an accelerated time frame. The result should be to increase opportunities for access to graduate education and expand career prospects. It is also a forward-thinking cross-college partnership between the College of Letters, Arts, and Science (LAS) and the College of Business (COB). Development of the program directly exemplifies the UCCS core values of integration, innovation, collaboration, inclusive diversity, and dynamic responsible growth.

Students admitted to the dual program will earn a Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies upon completion of the BA requirements and will be eligible to participate in the undergraduate commencement ceremony. Students admitted to the BA to MBA AMP must apply for full graduate admission and be accepted to the Master of Business Administration program. BA to MBA AMP students are not guaranteed admission to the MBA program.

BA in Interdisciplinary Studies to MBA AMP students desiring to continue to the MBA program after completing the BA in Interdisciplinary Studies degree must meet with the MBA Program Director and submit an intent form prior to completing courses which will be applied to the BA in Interdisciplinary Studies to MBA AMP. Prior to graduation, students must also submit a formal application to the MBA program, which includes all official transcripts, a written statement of intent, and letters of recommendation.

Instructions for the graduate application process are available on the College of Business website:

[Application Process Checklist | College of Business](#). BA in Interdisciplinary Studies to MBA AMP students are not required to continue with the MBA program after completion of the BA in Interdisciplinary Studies. However, BA in Interdisciplinary Studies to MBA AMP students are admitted on the premise that they intend to complete both degrees. If they choose to withdraw from this program prior to completing both degrees, they will not be allowed to return later and dual count credits.

BA in Interdisciplinary Studies:

General Requirements for the BA in Interdisciplinary Studies Include:

- 36 credit hours of Interdisciplinary Studies course work, 27 hours must be upper division (3000+ level).
- All major course work must be completed with a grade of B- or better.

Master of Business Administration Degree requirements include:

- Completion of a minimum of 30 hours of graduate work with a grade point average of B (3.0) or better.
- Students must earn grades of B or better in all courses applied to the degree.
- The 30 hours include 27 hours of core courses, and 3 hours of MBA elective courses.
- Students enrolled in the BA in Interdisciplinary Studies to MBA AMP will complete STRT 6000 and two additional MBA core courses as part of the undergraduate degree.
- BA in Interdisciplinary Studies to MBA AMP students must complete all the MBA course courses and additional MBA degree requirements as outlined in the university catalogue.

Dual Credits:

BA in Interdisciplinary Studies to MBA AMP allows students to count 12 semester credit hours toward both the Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies and the Master of Business Administration. For credits to be double counted, the following conditions must be met:

- Dual credit courses must be from among those approved, included in the list of courses approved for dual credit below.
- Dual credit courses must be completed with a B or better
- Dual credit courses must be taken for graduate credit (5000 level or above)

Courses approved for Dual Credit:

- ACCT 2010 (recommended)
- QUAN 2010 (recommended)
- STRT 6000
- ACCT 6100
- BUAN 6000
- FNCE 6000
- INFS 6000
- MGMT 6000
- MKTG 6000
- OPTM 6000

Standards for Admission:

- Completion of the AMP Intent form and admission into the BA in Interdisciplinary Studies to MBA AMP is required prior to taking the dual-credit Interdisciplinary Studies/MBA courses at the 6000 level. Admission into the BA in Interdisciplinary Studies to MBA AMP is competitive. Students must meet the following criteria:
 - A current UCCS student who has completed at least 30 credit hours at UCCS

- Student must have junior class standing or higher for eligibility to be accepted into the program
- A cumulative CU GPA of at least 3.0
- Student is a declared major in the Interdisciplinary Studies bachelor's program
- Completion of at least 15 credits hours in the major
- Any Compass Curriculum deficiencies must be completed
- Meet the standards and admissions requirements for both programs as outlined in the UCCS catalogue (which may include higher standards than those listed above and/or additional criteria)
- Completion of a 1-page (double space, 1-inch margins) essay outlining the student's career goals

Program Retention Criteria:

Students must maintain a 3.0 GPA throughout the undergraduate portion of the program and a 3.0 GPA throughout the graduate portion of the program. To remain in the program, students must meet the requirements of the respective programs as outlined in the UCCS catalog. If students fail to maintain requirements for either program they will be dismissed from the AMP in accordance with the policies outlined in these documents. In cases where the student appeals a dismissal decision, the policy of the college whose requirements are not being met will be followed.

Departmental Authority:

Both the LAS and COB will track students enrolled in the BA in Interdisciplinary Studies to MBA AMP. Both the LAS and COB will inform appropriate offices (e.g., admissions, records, academic advising, graduate school, financial aid) when a student is being admitted to the accelerated master's graduate status as well as when a student is removed from the program due to failing to meet program requirements or if student selects to voluntarily end enrollment in accelerated program. Advising responsibilities for the undergraduate portion of this degree will be the responsibility of Academic Advising. Advising for the MBA portion of the AMP will be the responsibility of the MBA program director.

BA INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES to MBA AMP Five-Year Degree Plan

FIVE-YEAR DEGREE PLAN

Please note that this is an example degree program and your program may vary. Students are responsible for completing all course prerequisites.

	√	FALL	Hours	√	SPRING	Hours
	Year One		ENGL 1310	3		ENGL 1410
		GPS 1010	3		Reasoning Skills (INDS 1050)	3
		Interdisciplinary Studies Course	3		Interdisciplinary Studies Course	3
		Explore- Arts, Humanities and Culture Course	3		Explore- Society, Behavior and Health Course	3
		MATH 1040	3		QUAN 2010 (recommended)	3
		Total		15	Total	

	√	FALL	Hours	√	SPRING	Hours
	Year Two		Interdisciplinary Studies Course	3		UD- Interdisciplinary Studies Course
		Explore – Physical & Natural World Course	3		Explore – Physical & Natural World Course	3
		Explore – Arts, Humanities & Cultures Course	3		Natural Science Lab	1
		Explore – Society, Behavior and Health Course	3		General Elective (<i>Inclusiveness</i>)	3
		ACCT 2010 (recommended)	3		General Elective- (<i>Oral Communication</i>)	3
					General Elective (<i>Writing Intensive</i>)	3
		Total		15	Total	

Year	√	FALL	Hours	√	SPRING	Hours
			UD Interdisciplinary Studies Course	3		UD Interdisciplinary Studies Course

	UD Interdisciplinary Studies Course	3		UD Interdisciplinary Studies Course	3
	HUM 3990	3		General Elective	3
	General Elective (Inclusiveness)	3		General Elective	3
	General Elective (Sustainability)	3		General Elective	2
	Total	15		Total	14

	√	FALL	Hour s	√	SPRING	Hour s
Year Four		UD Interdisciplinary Studies Course	3		UD Interdisciplinary Studies Course	3
		UD Interdisciplinary Studies Course	3		Interdisciplinary Studies Summit Course	3
		UD General Elective	3		UD General Elective	3
		UD General Elective- STRT 6000	3		UD General Elective-MBA Core Course	3
		General Elective- MBA Core Course	3		UD General Elective- MBA Core Course	3
		Total	15		Total	15

	√	FALL	Hour s	√	SPRING	Hour s
MBA		MBA Core Course	3		MBA Core Course	3
		MBA Core Course	3		MBA Core Course	3
		MBA Core Course	3		STRT 6500	3
		Total	9		Total	9

Master of Business Administration-Flex Pathway

Introduction and Rationale

The landscape of graduate business education is evolving rapidly in response to significant shifts in workforce expectations, industry needs, and employee professional development trends. Employers across sectors are increasingly seeking professionals who possess not only broad business knowledge, but also specialized, career-relevant credentials that demonstrate targeted expertise. As organizations adapt to changing technologies, emerging industries, and competitive global markets, there is a growing demand for employees to engage in continuous learning through short-form, stackable, and competency-based credentials.

In particular, workforce development trends show that professionals are pursuing graduate-level certificates as a way to upskill, reskill, and advance within their organizations. These credentials provide clear value to employers by aligning employee learning with organizational priorities, while also offering students a more personalized and efficient educational pathway.

To remain responsive to these workforce needs and to provide students with greater control over their learning experience, the College of Business proposes the creation of an MBA Flex Program. This innovative program model maintains the academic rigor and integrity of the traditional MBA, while allowing students to customize their degree through the completion of stacked graduate certificates or a combination of certificate coursework and open electives.

Program Overview

The proposed MBA Flex Program is a 30-credit-hour Master of Business Administration degree designed to provide maximum academic flexibility while maintaining a consistent MBA foundation. This pathway is *only* offered to students with an undergraduate degree in business or a business-adjacent degree (e.g., BS in Management or Marketing).

The program structure includes:

- A required MBA launch course (STRT 6000) at the start of the program
- A required MBA capstone course (STRT 6500) at the end of the program
- Two core courses tied to certificates*
- A customizable elective block allowing students to stack credentials through certificates or open electives

*MBA students who choose open electives over a certificate will have the option to choose the two core courses that best support their career needs.

This model allows students to tailor their MBA experience to their professional goals, industry interests, and evolving career pathways.

Credit Hour Requirements and Program Structure

The MBA Flex Program will consist of 30 total credit hours, structured as follows:

Required Core Courses (12 Credit Hours):

1. STRT 6000 – Strategic Management (Launch Course)
2. STRT 6500 – Strategic Management Capstone (Final Course)
3. Core tied to certificate 1
4. Core tied to certificate 2

Elective Certificate Coursework (18 Credit Hours):

Option A: Stack Two Graduate Certificates (12 core + 18 cert electives)

Option B: Certificate + Open Electives (12 core + 9 cert electives + 9 open electives)

Option C: Open Electives Only (12 core* + 18 electives)

*2 open core options based on career goals

Sample Student Pathways

Pathway Example 1: Business Analytics + HR Management Certificates

- STRT 6000
- BUAN 6000 (core) + Business Analytics Certificate Electives (9 credits)
- MGMT6000 (core) + HR Management Certificate Electives (9 credits)
- STRT 6500

Pathway Example 2: Finance Certificate + Open Electives

- STRT 6000
- FNCE 600 + Finance Certificate Electives (9 credits)
- 1 Optional Core + 9 credits of MBA electives
- STRT 6500

Accreditation and Assessment Alignment

The MBA Flex Program will maintain full alignment with AACSB accreditation standards and the College of Business assurance-of-learning framework. All coursework will remain graduate-level, outcomes-based, and aligned with the strategic goals of the institution. Our MBA students average age is 34 years and are full time professionals. This flex option allows students to build on their business foundation by specializing in areas of business that support their career goals.

Assessment will include:

- Program-level learning outcomes mapped across certificates and electives

- Capstone evaluation in STRT 6500
 - Continuous improvement through faculty review and curriculum oversight
- This ensures academic quality, consistency, and accreditation compliance while providing flexibility.

Conclusion and Request for Approval

The proposed MBA Flex Program represents a forward-looking evolution of the MBA degree that responds directly to workforce credentialing trends, student demand for flexibility, and institutional goals of sustainable enrollment growth. This option has been approved by the MBA Team, voted on, and approved.

College of Business Transitioning from MBA Emphases to Certificate Programs

Introduction

The landscape of business education is undergoing a fundamental transformation. Traditional MBA programs with fixed emphases or concentrations are being restructured to accommodate more flexible, modular certificate-based systems (Think MBA, 2026). This change responds to several key drivers: rapidly evolving business environments, the need for lifelong learning, employer preferences for specific skills, student demand for customizable educational experiences, and reduced confusion among our MBA students.

Rationale for the Transition

The traditional MBA format is increasingly being complemented by micro-credentials, certificates, and other modular credentials that enable students to tailor their learning journeys (Think MBA, 2026). A global report from the Graduate Business Curriculum Roundtable (GBCR), drawing data from 110 business schools and 245 graduate programs, confirms that traditional degree structures are giving way to flexible and modular formats that allow learners to shape their education over time and focus on specific competencies (Leckrone, 2025). This also supports our new MBA Flex pathway.

Student Confusion

The MBA Emphases are a holdover from when the program offered some emphases that were not certificates. Today, all the emphases are offered as certificates, so the redundancy is causing significant confusion among students. Given a student who completes an “emphasis” earns a certificate, the MBA Team voted to remove the use of “emphasis” from our promotional materials and website to avoid this confusion.

Outcome

The COB would like to remove any reference to the emphases in promotional materials, the website, and catalog. The COB MBA Team has approved of this change.

References

Leckrone, B. (2025, April 17, 2025). Survey: Business alumni want lifelong learning. <https://www.bestcolleges.com/news/business-school-lifelong-learning/>

Think-MBA. (2026, January 25). The defining shifts for MBAs in 2026. <https://think-mba.com/the-defining-shifts-for-mbas-in-2026/>

Graduate School Policy Proposal on Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory Grades in Graduate Courses

Article IV, Section B: Grades and Quality of Graduate Work

6. Pass/Fail Grading

Courses applied to graduate degrees must not be taken as pass/fail or **satisfactory/unsatisfactory**, with the exception of clinical practicum, **and** internship coursework, **and candidate for degree**.

Graduate School Policy Proposal on Time Limits for Doctoral Degrees

Article IV, Section K: Time Limits for Completion of Degrees and Certificates

Doctoral Degree

Doctoral students are normally expected to complete all degree requirements within **nine years ten years** from the date of the start of coursework in the doctoral program. A student who fails to complete the degree in the **nine years ten years** must file a petition for extension with the program director and have it approved by the Graduate School Dean. The petition, giving reasons why the student should be allowed to continue in the program, must be endorsed by the program director or by three members of the student's dissertation advisory committee. If the Graduate School Dean approves, the student may continue studies for an additional year. If the Graduate School Dean does not approve the request, the college/school dean, with the concurrence of the program director, may dismiss the student from the program. If the Graduate School Dean and the program director do not agree on whether a student should be continued in the program, the Graduate Executive Committee shall make the final decision. If the extension is granted, any coursework that is over **nine years ten years** old must be validated prior to graduation. Courses that have been validated will be eligible for use towards graduation for **nine years ten years** for a doctoral degree. If the student takes longer than that from time of validation to complete the degree, a new course validation will be required.