VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Academics

With a “low tuition rate,” “flexibility in class choice and time,” and a reputation as “an up-and-coming school,” the School of Business at Virginia Commonwealth University has numerous assets with which to lure potential MBAs. One VCU student tells us that he “explored other local options, such as the University of Richmond, and found that the quality of faculty, reputation for excellent, well-balanced instruction and the reasonable cost made VCU the more attractive option.” Most who choose the VCU MBA feel the same way.

VCU’s Richmond location is a major asset, students agree. Richmond is home to a number of major corporate headquarters, and MBAs report that this creates excellent networking opportunities. VCU’s solid reputation with regional employers helps translate those opportunities into positive results. Many of these same employers feed the VCU MBA program with young managers looking for a leg up in their careers, many of who plan to stay with their companies post-graduation (in fact, quite a few attend on their employer’s dime). Several students cite “support of the community businesses and government” as one of VCU’s main selling points.

The VCU MBA program offers “a wide variety of MBA concentrations,” including business analytics, global business, human capital, managing innovation, real estate, and supply chain management. “Excellent” professors seek “to teach the students how to think outside of the box” and often succeed, according to the MBAs we surveyed. Administrators are “flexible...they’re pretty good about allowing substitute courses, etc.” They also have a vision for the future. As one student puts it, “the school’s momentum is its strength. A great effort has been undergoing since the new [business school facility] was built.” “Programs have been redesigned to [meet] the needs in today’s economy and business world. The courses are actually based on everyday life...which adds both to the attractiveness of the courses and their usefulness also.”

Career and Placement

The Career Center at the VCU School of Business serves all undergraduate and graduate students in the School of Business. The office provides a wide range of counseling, skills development, and placement services. Area businesses also contact the School of Business directly to post internship and career opportunities available to MBA students. Students can stay up-to-date on such notifications by subscribing to the School of Business Listserv. About 75 percent of VCU’s MBA students attend part-time; nearly all work part-time or full-time, many for companies with whom they intend to remain after graduation. One student who sought, and found, a post-MBA position through the Center tells us that the “Career Services Center is excellent. I was given the opportunity to go to two career fairs on campus in the fall of 2009. I also took advantage of the bus ride to the MBA Career Quest career fair at the University at Maryland, College Park. The Career Services Center also got me two interviews on campus with federal government agencies. I was offered both positions!”

GENERAL INFORMATION

Type of school Public
Academic calendar Semester

SURVEY SAYS...
Smart classrooms
Solid preparation in:
General management

STUDENTS
Enrollment of parent institution 32,470
Enrollment of MBA Program 251
% male/female 70/30
% part-time 74
% international 12
Average age at entry 26
Average years work experience at entry 4

ACADEMICS
Academic Experience Rating 78
Student/faculty ratio 20:1
Profs interesting rating 77
Profs accessible rating 76
% female faculty 15
% minority faculty 5

Joint Degrees
5 year BS/Master of Accountancy (for entering undergraduate students); BS Engineering/MBA; PharmD/MBA; MBA/MSIS.
Student Life and Environment

The VCU School of Business recently moved into a “state-of-the-art...newly built” facility that “provides a comfortable, well-designed environment, including all of the technological amenities one would expect of a top-tier business school.” While many crow about “all the high technology installed” here, some are just as impressed that “the parking deck is located right next to [the] business school building.” Despite the convenience, many students here tell us that “parking is quite the issue unless you purchase a parking pass.”

VCU’s “convenient” campus location is “equidistant from downtown Richmond and the more college-town environment of ‘the Fan’ district.” Life on campus “is very diverse, with an established art school and up-and-coming business and engineering schools. The student life reflects the characteristics one might find in each of these three schools.” The MBA program hosts “many clubs and organized meetings” that help “academic and social communication and activities occur seamlessly.” Not everyone is fully engaged; “there is a very small group of students who are full-time and involved,” with many others attending part-time while working at part-time or full-time jobs. The latter group has little time to participate in extracurriculars.

The VCU MBA program “is geared to part-time students, full-time employees. Most [students] are reimbursed for classes by their employers.” These “friendly” and “professional” students “from diverse backgrounds” “take their academic studies seriously, as they are quite competitive. They’re sociable and are very professional in their manners and their interactions with each other.”

Admissions

Applicants to all MBA programs at VCU must submit a completed application, two copies of official transcripts for all post-secondary academic work, an official GMAT score report, a resume, a personal statement, and three letters of recommendation. International applicants whose first language is not English must also provide proof of English proficiency (the school accepts both the TOEFL and the IELTS and evidence of sufficient financial support to cover the cost of attending and expenses while at VCU. VCU admits students for the fall, spring, and summer semesters.