

# BUSINESS, MASTER OF SCIENCE (M.S.) WITH A CONCENTRATION IN FINANCE

## Program accreditation

Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (<http://www.aacsb.edu/>)

## Program goal

The goal of the Master of Science in Business with a concentration in finance program is to train students to take on the quantitatively challenging and highly competitive business environment of the financial industry. Students learn skills to effectively analyze, develop and communicate solutions that take into consideration ethical implications.

## Student learning outcomes

1. Graduates will be able to conceptualize and apply quantitative measurement methods, to analyze business problems and to propose solutions.
2. Graduates will be able to analyze a business problem in terms of both quantitative and qualitative aspects, including:
  - a. A precise statement of the problem and how it relates to the goals of the firm
  - b. A consideration of the ethical, policy and/or practicality limitations on any proposed solution strategy
  - c. A statement and consideration of proposed solutions strategies and their implementation within the limitations
  - d. A plan for implementation and monitoring of the proposed solution
3. Graduates will be able to analyze the ethical dimensions of a business situation and relate those dimensions to general ethical standards as well as to professional ethical standards.
4. Graduates will be able to express the analytic, quantitative and ethical dimensions of business problems and proposed solutions in a clear and well-organized manner.

## VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the **Graduate School website** and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the [academic regulations section](#) for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students.

## Degree candidacy requirements

A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master's or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student's graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student's faculty regarding the student's academic achievements and the student's readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

Visit the [academic regulations section](#) for additional information on degree candidacy requirements.

## Graduation requirements

As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the [academic regulations section](#) for additional information on graduation requirements.

## Other information

School of Business **policies and procedures for graduate students** are available on the school's website.

Apply online today. (<https://www.vcu.edu/admissions/apply/graduate/>)

## Admission requirements

Degree:	Semester(s) of entry:	Deadline dates:	Test requirements:
M.S.	Fall	Jul 1	GMAT or GRE*
	Spring	Nov 1	
	Summer	Mar 1	

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements/>), applicants must submit an up-to-date resume.

\*Test requirements may be waived for candidates with an undergraduate or graduate degree from an accredited U.S. institution with a minimum GPA of 3.25. Waiver request information can be found on the Graduate Studies in Business webpage (<https://business.vcu.edu/graduate-studies/how-to-apply/>).

## Degree requirements

The finance concentration prepares students for financial decision-making positions in corporate, investment, financial and governmental institutions. Courses offered in finance include advanced financial

management, investments and security analysis, funds management in financial institutions, international finance, and derivatives.

In addition to the VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>):

1. All students must have completed a course in calculus prior to attempting graduate business courses. This prerequisite can be met after admission to the program.
2. Students must complete up to four classes (zero to 12 credit hours) of foundation course work. At the time of application, all undergraduate and graduate transcripts will be reviewed to determine if the following courses may be waived. Waiver of a foundation course may be awarded when a student demonstrates equivalent knowledge, such as completing the required undergraduate equivalent course with a minimum grade of C.

## Prerequisite undergraduate and/or foundation courses

Prerequisite and/or foundation courses may be waived for students who present satisfactory equivalent preparation at either the undergraduate or graduate level. This determination is made by the faculty adviser at the time of admission.

Course	Title	Hours
<b>Prerequisite</b>		
Calculus		
SCMA 212	Differential Calculus and Optimization for Business	3
<b>Foundation courses</b>		
ACCT 507	Fundamentals of Accounting	3
FIRE 520	Financial Concepts of Management	3
SCMA 524	Statistical Fundamentals for Business Management	3

## Curriculum requirements

Course	Title	Hours
<b>Required core courses</b>		
FIRE 610	Financial Modeling and Analysis	3
FIRE 621	Cases in Financial Management	3
FIRE 622	Financial Intermediation and Analysis of Fixed-income Securities	3
FIRE 623	Financial Management	3
FIRE 635	Investments and Security Analysis	3
<b>Approved electives</b>		
Select four of the following:		12
ACCT 608	Managerial Accounting Concepts	
FIRE 526	Exchange Traded Funds	
FIRE 540	Financial Analytics	
FIRE 591	Topics in Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	
FIRE 626	Risk Management	
FIRE 629	Cases in Real Estate	
FIRE 650	Derivatives	
FIRE 654	Short-term Financial Management	
FIRE 658	Real Estate Finance and Investments	

FIRE 691	Topics in Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	
FIRE 693	Field Project in Finance, Insurance and Real Estate <sup>1</sup>	
or FIRE 697	Guided Study in Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	
<b>Free electives</b>		
Select one of the following: <sup>2,3</sup>		3
ACCT (any 600-level)		
ECON (any 600-level)		
FIRE (any 600-level)		
INFO 511	Data Reengineering	
INFO 532	Business Process Reengineering	
INFO 601	Database Management	
MGMT 655	Entrepreneurship	
MKTG 673	Marketing Research	
SCMA 632	Statistical Analysis and Modeling	
SCMA 669	Developing and Implementing Forecasting Methods for Business	
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>30</b>

1

FIRE 693 is recommended for full-time students. The department will work closely with full-time students and prospective employers in order to achieve this goal. Students may not use both FIRE 693 and FIRE 697 toward degree requirements

2

A student may substitute a free elective for one of the FIRE electives with the approval of the director of the concentration in finance.

3

Students may choose any free elective approved by the director of the M.S. program in finance. Students are encouraged to select accounting, economics, math, or statistics courses. These courses are pre-approved electives and therefore do not require further approval.

**The minimum number of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 30.**

Students who complete the requirements for this concentration will receive a Master of Science in Business.

## Accelerated opportunities

The department offers opportunities for qualified undergraduate students to earn both an undergraduate and graduate degree in a minimum of five years by completing approved graduate courses during the senior year of their undergraduate program. See the individual program page for concentrations in the Undergraduate Bulletin (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/business/finance-insurance-real-estate/#degreestext>) for details.

### Contact

Austen Gouldman  
gouldmana@vcu.edu  
(804) 828-4622

### Additional contact

Graduate Studies in Business  
gsib@vcu.edu  
(804) 828-4622

**Program website:** [business.vcu.edu/academics/finance/ms-in-business-concentration-in-finance/](http://business.vcu.edu/academics/finance/ms-in-business-concentration-in-finance/) (<http://business.vcu.edu/academics/finance/ms-in-business-concentration-in-finance/>)