GDBA
Graduate Diploma in Business Administration
CHOOSE YOUR OWN PATH TO SUCCESS

The Graduate Diploma in Business Administration (GDBA) works for busy professionals who want to develop core business skills, and who require the convenience and flexibility of online education.

You’ll benefit from the depth and rigour of MBA-level business courses, taught by world-class faculty. And you’ll gain 24/7 access to the educational resources of Canada’s top comprehensive university.

Whether you’re looking for a respected graduate qualification, want a pathway into the right MBA or just need a solid grounding in business fundamentals, the GDBA ticks all the boxes.

WHY CHOOSE THE GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION?

- Study MBA-level courses
- Find a pathway into the right MBA
- Gain core business skills to advance your career
- Benefit from the flexibility of online education
- Study in an engaging, interactive environment
CLASS DEMOGRAPHICS

Average age
32

Average work experience
7

54% men
46% women

SAMPLE INDUSTRY SECTORS
Financial Services, Government, Healthcare, Technology, Manufacturing, Mining, Energy, Natural Resources, Non-Profit, Real Estate, Retail, Telecommunications, Engineering, Education, Transportation, Entertainment

SAMPLE FUNCTIONAL AREAS
Finance/Accounting, Marketing/Sales, Professional Service/Consulting, Administrative/Management, Operations/Logistics, Information Systems/IT Support, Customer Services Support, Human Resources

THE FLEXIBILITY YOU NEED

The GDBA’s online learning system is comprehensive, interactive and user-friendly. It delivers a rich, collaborative learning experience for individuals and teams, as well as everything you need to be a successful graduate student. The experience is very different to taking a MOOC or traditional distance-learning course.

As well as being a valuable graduate qualification that lets you demonstrate your business acumen to future employers, the GDBA provides multiple pathways into Beedie’s MBA programs.

Successfully completing GDBA courses will boost your chances of getting into the MBA of your choice and reduce your future workload while an MBA student.

Most GDBA students complete the program in two years. However, you have the option to move faster or more slowly through the materials, adjusting your study plan to accommodate your changing life and career.

Get the full picture at beedie.sfu.ca/GDBA.

The GDBA was a great program that allowed me to work full-time, go at my own pace, and get started on the business education I was looking for.”

— Wilfred Cheung, GDBA and MBA
MBA-LEVEL COURSES AND INSTRUCTION

All GDBA courses are equivalent to courses taught in our MBA programs and most are taught by the same professors that teach on our MBA programs. Making the GDBA a valuable program and qualification in its own right.

The curriculum gives you a solid grounding in business theory and practice. You’ll acquire the knowledge and language to communicate with colleagues across functional business areas of business, as you prepare to confidently move forward into an MBA program, a new organizational role, or a new career.

HOW IT WORKS

• Begin the program in January, May, or September.
• Complete the program in 24 months (six semesters) by taking one course per semester while working full-time—or take more or less time.
• All students attend a 10-day online orientation before classes begin.
• Each course is delivered online in weekly or bi-weekly modules.
• Each course in the program ends with a final exam/paper.

THE GDBA BOOT CAMP

All students attend a part-time 10-day orientation before starting classes. This “GDBA Boot Camp” is designed to prepare you for learning in an online, graduate-level business program. It ensures that everyone has the same foundational learning skills and program expectations.

YEAR 1 COURSES

Managing People and Organizations

Gain an understanding of how individuals and teams function effectively in work situations. You’ll learn how organizational behaviour themes, such as emotions, motivation, and group dynamics, relate to functional issues such as job design, salary structures, and recruitment.

Financial Accounting/Managerial Accounting

Move beyond accounting fundamentals and processes. Learn to make business decisions in support of broader organizational objectives that are based on sound analysis of financial information.

Business Ethics (half course)

Professional decision-making involves moving from complexity and ambiguity to action. This course equips you with an integrated set of ethical and analytical reasoning tools for addressing the challenges that arise in real-world decisions.

Business Analytics

This introduction to the key concepts of probability and statistics provides the basic tools to approach statistics critically. You will focus on the use of quantitative or statistical techniques in managerial decision-making and learn to apply them in business settings.

YEAR 2 COURSES

Managerial Economics

Gain an introduction to the basic concepts in economics, and explore the relevance of economic reasoning to tactical and strategic managerial decision-making. You will understand the importance of economic concepts, economic models and quantitative applications and how the apply to common problems managers encounter.

Managerial Finance (Pre-requisite: Financial/Managerial Accounting)

Gain a practical understanding of managerial finance and the role of the financial manager. Learn how to apply financial statement analysis, valuation techniques, capital budgeting, project analysis, and other financial tools, and explore a wide variety of related subjects.

Marketing Management

Get an overview of the marketing process, including learning how to analyze data and make decisions on pricing, product design, promotion and distribution as part of developing a comprehensive marketing plan. The course concludes with a collaborative online marketing simulation.

Project Management

Learn the technical and soft skills required to be an effective project manager and deliver strategic change to your organization. Qualify to write the Certified Associate in Project Management exam offered by PMI.

Managing Information

Developing and maintaining a good understanding of the relationship between IT and organizational performance is important to your career. The focus of this course is to create knowledge / primary understanding of how management information systems can be effectively and efficiently applied by managers.
YOUR MBA COULD START HERE

Many GBDA students use the program as a great way to start their SFU Beedie Full-Time MBA, Part-Time MBA or MOT MBA. There are many reasons for entering an MBA this way, rather than jumping straight into a more intensive program:

- Learn graduate level business concepts you can apply in your professional career
- Maintain work/life balance
- Try out graduate education before entering a full MBA program
- Spread your MBA workload over a longer time frame

WHICH MBA IS RIGHT FOR YOU?
During the GDBA orientation, you will create a customized study plan that can be adjusted as you progress through the program. This ensures you take the best courses to meet your personal goals, especially if a goal is to enter one of our three MBAs.

FULL-TIME MBA
The 12 month SFU Beedie MBA takes an applied learning approach. Combining theory and application, our curriculum will give you a strong grounding in business fundamentals to help you take your career to the next level. Be part of an internationally diverse class of 55, based in downtown Vancouver.

MANAGEMENT OF TECHNOLOGY (MOT) MBA
Our MOT MBA program immerses students in a business curriculum tailored to the technology sector. This unique, part-time program prepares high potential technology industry professionals to handle the business problems faced by their companies.

Learn more at beedie.sfu.ca/motmba

PART-TIME MBA
Our Part-Time MBA is designed for working professionals, enabling students to apply what they learn in class at work the next day. It’s a transformative experience that prepares you to succeed in roles that require knowledge and decision-making across the functional areas of business, and the ability to adapt to a changing environment.

Learn more at beedie.sfu.ca/ptmba

The GBDA is a great stepping stone to the MBA, especially for people who have been out of school for some time.”

— Andy Baryer, GDBA and MBA
DEDICATED TO HELPING YOU SUCCEED

The same professors who teach our highly regarded MBA programs teach the GDBA. They have a wealth of professional experience and specific business expertise, and are outstanding teachers who are passionate about online learning.

MICHAEL BRYDON, PHD
Associate Professor, Management Information Systems

Michael’s twin research interests in technology and applied decision-making are a natural result of his graduate engineering degree and a PhD in Commerce. His research straddles the disciplinary boundaries of computer science, economics and decision theory, and examines the potential uses of information technology to support decision-making in complex, uncertain environments.
MELISSA MCCRAE, MBA  
Executive Director, Graduate Programs

Melissa is the Executive Director of Graduate Programs at the Beedie School of Business. She has been teaching in the undergraduate and graduate programs at Beedie since 2006 in the area of Management and Organization Studies. She has taught Human Resource Management, Organization Behaviour, and Managing People and Organizations. Melissa is currently pursuing a Doctorate of Education at SFU. Her research focus has been gender in management education, leadership, work-life balance, and generational differences. Melissa has an MBA and GDBA from SFU and a BSc from Queens University.

MICHAEL JOHNSON, PHD  
Senior Lecturer, Technology and Operations Management

Michael is passionate about teaching statistics, quantitative methods and operations management courses. He is the recipient of the 2011 Canada Trust Excellence in Teaching Award. Michael is a former engineer who improved productivity and operational work flows in high-tech, automotive and process related industries. He has also worked as a consultant on a number of industry and research related projects related to operations research and management science.

BARB EDWARDS, MACC., CPA, CA, EDD.  
Senior Lecturer, Accounting

Barb is a Senior Lecturer of Accounting for SFU. Within the GDBA she teaches Financial Accounting and Managerial Accounting. Barb was awarded the Canada Trust Teaching Award in 2001, and has been on the Teaching Honour Roll. Her interests are related to effective and efficient teaching of quality online courses through the use of cases and teams.
INTERACTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE

Although the GDBA program is delivered entirely online, you won’t be alone. In fact, instructors and students often connect more closely than they do in face-to-face classes, where a few students can sometimes dominate discussions.

We move through the modules at the same rate, meeting the same dates for individual and team assignments. That keeps you on track and engaged with the coursework. Instructors deliver each course online in weekly or bi-weekly modules. During that time you are free to study whenever suits you. Expect to spend 10 to 15 hours per week on each course.

WE’RE IN IT TOGETHER

You will join a supportive network of students, staff and faculty, many of whom will remain life-long friends and business associates. Your fellow students bring a wealth of opportunity for exploration, team building and exchange of knowledge.

ANCHORED IN THE REAL WORLD

You’ll create new knowledge through the application of conceptual frameworks to real-world problems. You’ll bring problems from your workplace or industry into the online classroom, and will work with your instructor and peers to propose practical solutions.

USER-FRIENDLY AND ENGAGING

You will have ample opportunity to interact with your instructors and other students in the online platform. Instructors bring the course material to life through a range of teaching methods such as multi-media learning and virtual seminars.

LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

In addition to live and recorded streaming sessions with your professor and other students, you’ll also participate in online study groups, getting to know your classmates by working on projects with them.

ENHANCE YOUR CAREER

Building a career isn’t a sprint; it’s a marathon. Whatever your background, the GDBA gives you space to build the solid foundation on which a successful career depends. The GDBA can enhance your career in a number of different ways.

• Develop core business skills, and demonstrate to future employers that you can be successful in a local business context.
• Move directly from the GDBA to an MBA through one of three MBA pathways.
• Try out graduate-level business education to see if you like it.
• Earn a valuable standalone qualification that signals to the world your ability to be successful in graduate business courses.

CAREER SERVICES

Whether you have a clear goal, a more general idea of what you want to achieve, or are using your time as a student to explore career opportunities, you will enjoy access to the same online resources our other graduate students use.

These resources include:

• access to a Beedie specific job board with more than 2,000 jobs posted annually
• online job search resources designed specifically for business students (including career guides developed by the Career Management Centre)
HOW TO APPLY

The application process is straightforward and can be completed through our website. To connect with an advisor to talk more about the program and application process, or connect with Beedie alumni, please contact us at 778.782.3552 or gdba@sfu.ca.

APPLICATION PROCESS

• Complete online application form
• Required supporting documents:
  » Official transcripts
  » Self-evaluation
  » Resume
  » Two letters of reference from supervisors or former professors

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

• Undergraduate degree: min 2.5 CGPA
• Work experience: Two years or more preferred
• Proficiency in English for ESL candidates: TOEFL 93+ or IELTS 7+

A small number of applicants with extensive experience may be considered without an undergraduate degree.

APPLICATION DEADLINES:

• Mid November for January start
• Mid March for May start
• Mid July for September start

We have 3 intakes to the GDBA program each year. Please see our website for specific application dates.

TUITION

• Tuition: $16,500*
• Tuition is paid each term dependent on credits taken

* Subject to Board of Governors approval.

FEES

• Additional costs for textbooks and related materials: approximately $1,500 (CAD).