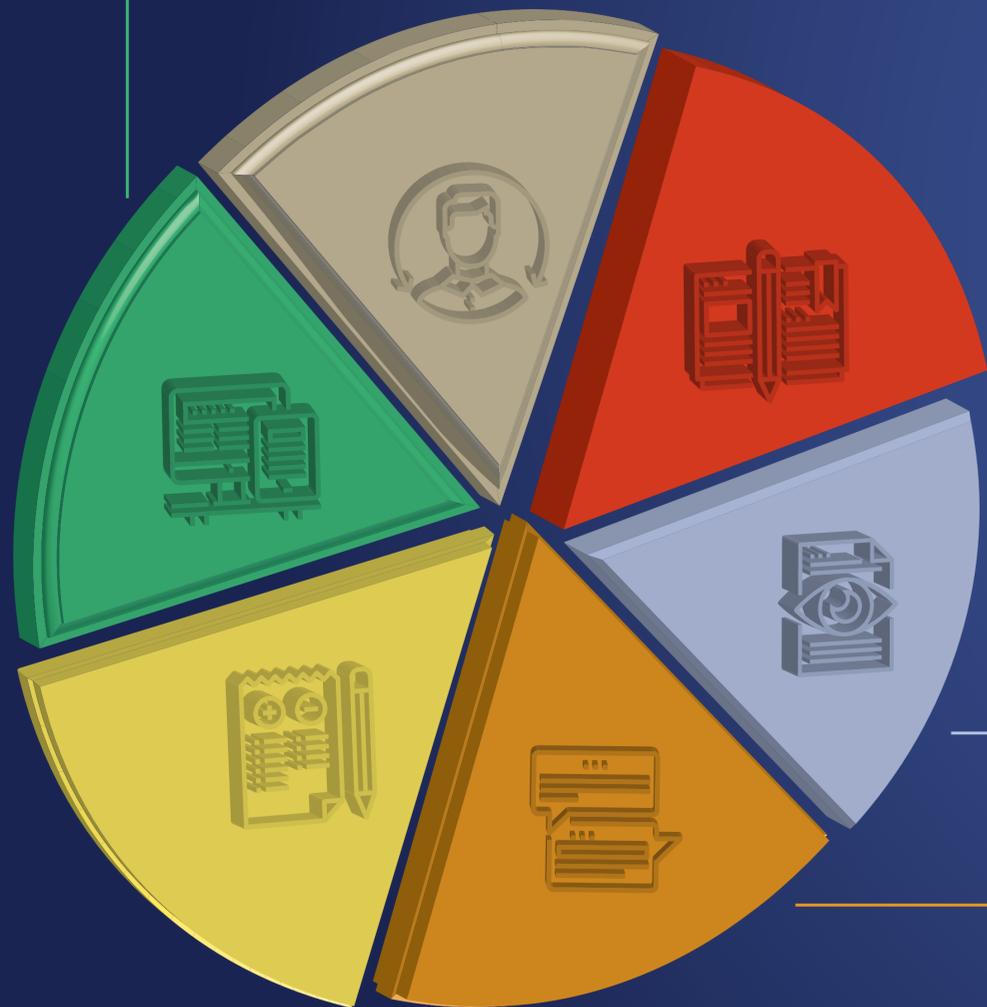


How to Determine Which Online MBA Program FITS YOUR NEEDS



Decide what you need in a program.

You're likely looking at online degree programs because they can be scheduled around your already full-time life. Time flexibility is obviously important to you, but what are the most important gains you want from a program? Is the opportunity to network the most important factor? Do you want a degree from a prestigious university to make your resume stand out? Does your MBA program have to offer specialization options, or are you looking to simply pump up or refresh your business skills?

Read student reviews.

Browse the online reviews of your potential MBA program. Are there current, positive reviews? Are there recurring issues, such as "The system always crashes," or, "I didn't feel like instructors were invested in me"? Take note of both positive and negative review trends before you make your decision.

The faculty and curriculum matter.

An online MBA program's coursework should be virtually indistinguishable from on-campus MBA programs, and the faculty members for online degrees should be similar in experience level to on-campus faculty. Compare the online program's classes and faculty members with the on-campus program—does the online program have leaders in business teaching classes? Have they been awarded any accolades or received recognition for corporate leadership? What kind of business experience are staff members bringing into the virtual classroom?

Research networking opportunities.

Although online MBA programs are popular because you don't need to be on campus, look and see what kind of networking opportunities will be available to you in your potential program. Are there in-person events or intensive workshop weekends? Are there optional conferences and seminars? What about social channel groups on LinkedIn or Facebook? Part of the reason MBAs are so valuable is because of the opportunity students have to make important business relationships and contacts..

Check out the technology.

You're about to get a degree entirely online, so you need to know whether the MBA program's software is user-friendly. Does the program feature an interface that makes it simple to stream videos, turn in assignments and keep track of your grades? Is the software designed to make it easy to participate in classes? Remember, you'll use this technology every day!

Consider your finances.

MBAs can really pay off in the long run, but there's the short-term issue of paying for your degree to consider. Does your prospective online MBA program offer financial aid? Do they give scholarships or accept veterans' funding? Will they work with your current employer if you're able to get tuition reimbursement? What kind of payment plans are available?

Learn more about the Online MBA from Cal State Monterey Bay.

mba.csUMB.edu

