



Master of Science in Accounting and Fundamental Analysis

The Master of Science in Accounting and Fundamental Analysis is a three-semester, STEM-designated master's degree program offered by the Accounting Division of Columbia Business School. The program provides academically distinguished and industry-oriented students the opportunity to obtain rigorous, graduate-level training in accounting, fundamental analysis, statistics, finance, and economics.

Program Benefits. Students take a carefully constructed curriculum of doctoral and MBA courses offered at Columbia Business School. The program has some overlap with the School's PhD program, but is intended for students who prefer a shorter experience than the School's doctoral program and who plan to utilize their technical training in industry.

Academics

Candidates should have academic preparation equivalent to that of entering PhD students and should be fully prepared to participate in PhD classes and to complete a substantial research project. Applicants who may also be considering MBA or PhD programs are encouraged to carefully review the academic differentials between the offerings to better understand the preparation for post-MS opportunities.

Students enroll in the program in September and will complete a minimum of 10 full courses (30 credits) along with a thesis (3 credits) in which they will conduct an original research project. They will take two semesters of coursework over fall and spring.

In the summer semester, students take reduced coursework and complete their thesis requirements. Students are expected to submit their thesis by the end of the summer so that they can meet the requirements for October graduation. Some students who wish to complete industry internships over the summer will be allowed to complete their coursework and thesis later in the fall semester so as to graduate at the end of the fall term.

Career Outlook

The goal of the MS in Accounting and Fundamental Analysis program is to provide students with the quantitative and theoretical tools for a successful career in investment advisory, equity and credit analysis, and consulting. The combination of coursework in Fundamental Analysis plus PhD seminars makes MS candidates particularly attractive to hedge funds, investment management firms, and consulting firms who seek quantitatively trained professionals well trained in state-of-the-art academic research.

→ Prerequisites

The majority of students will come from undergraduate business (accounting) or economics backgrounds and will have completed the basic financial accounting and managerial accounting core courses. Students who do not have formal coursework in accounting could also be admitted but may be expected to pass exemption exams for these courses.

→ Master Thesis

All MS degree students will be required to complete a substantial research project under the supervision of a faculty member. They will get ideas for a research project from the PhD seminar courses and the skills to execute it from their statistics classes. The thesis will be guided by a faculty member who will assign a grade. The professor will meet at regular intervals with all MS students over the summer to discuss their ongoing research in a classroom environment.

→ Standards of Performance

Given our desire to run an elite program, we will require that students maintain at least an HP (equal to a B+) grade in the fundamental analysis kernel of the course and expect similar standards for all other coursework.

"The MSAFA program was created to provide an in-depth exposure to students who will then go on to be "intelligent investors" managing investment funds. These masters students are exposed to the research in the area, taking a number of doctoral courses, but with an emphasis on developing analysis to carry into investment practice. The program thus fulfills the School's aim of taking research to practice through these candidates."

Stephen Penman
George O. May Professor of Financial Accounting;
Chair of Accounting Division

GET STARTED

The application opens on August 1, 2020 and closes on January 19, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. EST for the class entering in the upcoming fall semester. We welcome your questions and invite you to connect with our Admissions team by calling 212-854-2836 or emailing msprograms@gsb.columbia.edu.

Columbia Business School

Master of Science Program
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ABOUT COLUMBIA BUSINESS SCHOOL

Columbia Business School is the only Ivy League business school that delivers a learning experience where academic excellence meets real-time exposure to the pulse of business, developing leaders with the knowledge and instinct to make a powerful impact on the world.

Our faculty members are the best minds in their fields, and their groundbreaking research influences business practices in every sector. Informed in real-time by the global business environment, they teach a transformative and ever-evolving curriculum that develops leaders poised to create opportunity in any environment. At Columbia, our students find the support, network, and opportunity to thrive. We offer students unparalleled access to leaders from across industries—in the classroom, throughout the city, and around the globe. Our 46,000+ alumni are tackling the increasingly complex problems of today and making a difference, not only in their own industries and sectors, but also for society at large.