

# **Master of Behavioral and Decision Sciences Program**

# **Student Handbook**

**University of Pennsylvania**



**School of Arts & Sciences  
College of Liberal and Professional Studies  
Academic Year 2019-2020**

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## Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide students in the Master of Behavioral and Decision Sciences (MBDS) Program with information vital to the successful completion of their degree. In this handbook you will find information on academic requirements, recommended courses, program and University policies, and resources both inside and outside of Penn. This handbook is designed to provide general information and does not supplant official publications, University web pages, or regular meetings with your advisor. **You are required to meet with the Associate Director at least once per term to discuss your progress and course selection.** In addition, should you have questions that are not answered here or problems that you cannot resolve, you should consult the MBDS Associate Director immediately.

## I Program Overview

The Master of Behavioral and Decision Sciences Program at the University of Pennsylvania is a 9 c.u. graduate program with a capstone requirement designed to prepare students to enter various research-related and decision science professions.

The MBDS program encourages an interdisciplinary approach to the understanding of behavioral decision making, and as such, requires exposure to core courses and electives offered in the social sciences, humanities, business, and health-related disciplines. As a culminating exercise, students must complete an individual capstone project that demonstrates their ability to: define a project or identify a problem; demonstrate critical thinking; develop appropriate methods; complete research; and present the results in a clear and concise manner. MBDS students can select a more research-based or applied format for this project that represents the profession they hope to enter.

Students may study in the MBDS program part-time or full-time and may take either day or evening courses in any school at the University of Pennsylvania, provided the courses are pre-approved by the program's Associate Director. Required courses and are offered in the evening. Part-time students are expected to complete their degree in no more than four years.

### Relationship within the University

The MBDS program is housed in the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) and is overseen by the Faculty Director and Associate Director of the MBDS program. The MBDS program is administered through the College of Liberal and Professional Studies (LPS), SAS's division of continuing education. The program schedules specially designed courses that are taught by members of Penn's standing faculty, affiliated Penn faculty, and outside experts from around the world. Students in the program may also take graduate courses from any department or school within the University (up to three outside SAS) with the approval of the Associate Director and permission of the department offering the course.

Your enrollment status (part-time or full-time) will determine which Penn services you are eligible for. Full-time students are enrolled in 3 or 4 courses (up to 5 with permission) per semester while part-time students are enrolled in 1 or 2 courses per semester. Students are permitted to change their status from full- to part-time and vice versa at any point during their career without seeking prior permission. However, **international students should be aware that they must maintain their full-time status to meet visa requirements.**

## II Curriculum

The goal of the MBDS program is to equip students with rigorous training that increases content knowledge and practical skills for success in industry, research, or further graduate study.

Students are required to complete at least 9 c.u.'s of graduate level course work for the MBDS program. A graduate level course is defined as any Penn course numbered 400 or above. There are **FIVE** required courses for the MBDS program:

- BDS 501- *Behavioral Economics & The Psychology of Decision Making*
- BDS 502- *Social Norms & Informal Institutions*
- BDS 503- *Public Policy & Applications*
- BDS 521- *Judgments & Decisions (or a similar elective)*
- Quantitative Core—choose ONE from the following:
  - BDS 522 Statistical Reasoning for Behavioral Science
  - BDS 516 Data Science & Quantitative Modeling

Once the core courses have been completed, you can select **THREE** courses from disciplines and schools across the University in relation to their chosen area of interest. In addition, enrollment in BDS 599 *Capstone Research* must be completed for degree certification.

### Concentrations

While there are no required concentrations or areas of sub-specialization within the MBDS degree, a structured set of courses that align with the mission of the MBDS program is critical. To aid in students' thinking of how to select courses within the program, MBDS students can arrange courses that fall under informal concentrations including: Public Health, Psychology/Neuroscience, Education Policy, Economics/Neuroeconomics, Sociology/Networks, and Computational systems. Regular advising meetings with the Associate Director will be held to discuss program goals as well as skills and expertise desired upon program completion.

**Up to 3 graduate courses** may be taken outside of the School of Arts and Sciences. Graduate courses are those courses **numbered 400 or above**. Students must obtain permission from the Associate Director in selecting courses that will provide cohesive understanding related to behavioral and decision sciences.

### Capstone Research Project

BDS 599 *Capstone Research* is required as the culmination for MBDS degree completion. To be eligible to take BDS 599, students must first submit a capstone proposal that outlines the proposed project, identifies a topic with aims or hypotheses, gives an overview of proposed methods, specifies a capstone mentor, and provides a timeline for completion. Capstone proposals must be submitted at least three weeks prior to enrollment and must be approved by the Associate

Director in order to enroll in BDS 599. Students must complete at minimum 7 CUs for the program (completing all 8 CUs is strongly recommended) prior to enrollment in BDS 599.

The Capstone is a requirement for completion of the MBDS degree and must be submitted for evaluation by the end of the last semester of the student's program. A capstone reader must approve the capstone before a student may graduate from the program. The capstone project is the culmination of an MBDS student's graduate study. It reflects each student's concentration and the coursework that prepared him/her to undertake the proposed capstone project. Capstone projects may differ from traditional master's theses. One central difference is that MBDS capstone projects tend to be applied, rather than theoretical, research.

In the MBDS program, the capstone draws on methodology from the student's informal concentration and program goals. While it is expected that each MBDS student have a good working familiarity with the literature in his/her field, the student's knowledge of this literature need not be as exhaustive as for students writing Master's theses or doctoral dissertations. Nor is it necessary that the work be publishable in a scholarly journal, although this is highly encouraged.

The capstone length varies depending on the scope and format agreed upon by the student and the capstone readers. Although there are no set guidelines for capstone projects, there are two common approaches to completing the project. Each approach has some general guidelines.

- In the first approach, the capstone is an extended research paper, based on primary and/or secondary sources, that demonstrates the student's ability to understand and synthesize complex behavioral and decision science problems. In this approach, the capstone should reflect the student's MBDS coursework, but may also build upon the student's previous academic or professional experience.
- In the second approach, the capstone is a professional report that serves as a portfolio of professional skills. A student may prepare a consultant's report based on an internship experience that identifies and addresses key issues from the internship experience that need to be examined in depth using training from the MBDS program.

### **III Program Policies**

#### **Academic Standards**

Students in the MBDS program are expected to maintain the highest possible academic standards. To ensure that students are making satisfactory progress toward their degree, the Associate Director reviews student performance every semester. The MBDS Faculty Advisory Committee has adopted the following requirements for MBDS students as they progress toward their degrees:

- Students must take all courses that will count towards the MBDS degree requirements for a letter grade. Pass/Fail courses will not be counted toward the degree. The letter grades of “S” or “U” also do not count toward the degree.
- Students must maintain a **3.0 cumulative GPA** in order to be in good standing and graduate.
- Students can only receive one grade of “C” in any course while enrolled in the MBDS program.
- No grade below a “C” will be accepted toward fulfillment of the 9 c.u.’s required to complete the program.

#### **Academic Probation**

Students who receive more than one “C” grade, or who receive a grade below a “C”, will be issued a written warning and be placed on academic probation. Appeals related to academic probation will be reviewed by the MBDS Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC).

With the permission of the Associate Director and/or the MBDS FAC, students may take additional courses in order to increase their GPA or to fulfill requirements in courses where the student received a grade below a “C”. When the same course is taken again to meet the academic requirements of the program, both courses and grades appear on the transcript, but only the first course’s c.u. contributes to the total number of c.u.’s and only the grade for the first course is included in the cumulative GPA. Students should work with the Associate Director to develop an academic plan that facilitates student success; students will not be allowed to register for courses during their probation without an approved plan in place.

#### **Program Dismissal**

Students who do not meet the terms of academic probation are subject to dismissal from the program. Students can be removed from probation by the Associate Director pending successful completion of the terms of academic probation. In certain instances, and if a student would like to appeal the decision of the Associate Director, the MBDS FAC will convene to deliberate on any written appeal provided by the student. Appeals must be advanced to the MBDS FAC within two weeks of notification of dismissal or remaining on academic probation. The MBDS FAC will

review the academic progress made by candidates on academic probation and decide whether to remove the student from academic probation, continue academic probation, or dismiss the student from the Program. When a student is determined to be dismissed from the program, the student will receive an academic dismissal letter via email and the U.S. mail.

### **Conditions for Readmission**

Students who have been dropped for poor academic performance and who wish to be considered for readmission must contact their advisor for requirements and procedures for readmission. Students will not be considered for readmission for one full calendar year following dismissal. If a student is readmitted, the student must maintain good academic standing throughout the program. If the student fails to meet these conditions, the student will be dropped from the University without further warning, and with no opportunity for readmission.

### **Inactive Status**

Students who do not enroll in courses for four consecutive terms, including summer, will be considered inactive and will be automatically withdrawn from the program during the fourth term. Students who are withdrawn will be required to apply for readmission to the program. Standard application fees will apply.

### **Incomplete Grades**

An incomplete grade indicates that a student has not completed all the work in a course and has done so with the instructor's permission. An instructor who chooses to grant an extension to a student who has not completed a course by the end of the term may grant either an Incomplete (I) or an Extended Incomplete (II). An Incomplete must be made up within the first four weeks of the start of the next term, and an Extended Incomplete must be made up by the end of the next term (including the summer term). In either case, if the Incomplete is not made up by the deadline, it will become an F. An Incomplete is made up only when the official grade is received by the LPS office and recorded by the Registrar on the student's official transcript. If an Incomplete grade is converted to an F, the instructor may change the grade after the student has completed all required work, but they are not required to do so. Students with two or more Incomplete grades are subject to a registration hold and are required to meet with the MBDS Associate Director to explain the circumstances of the Incompletes and develop a plan to resolve them. Students with two or more outstanding grades of incomplete will not be allowed to register for courses; students with two or more outstanding grades of incomplete who have already registered will be dropped from courses.

### **Academic Grievances**

Evaluation of a student's performance in a course is the responsibility of the course instructor. Should a final grade in an MBDS course be disputed, the student must submit a written appeal to the instructor within the first two weeks of the academic

semester immediately following the semester in which the grade was received. The instructor must respond in writing to the student within two weeks of receiving the written appeal. If, after receiving the written response from the instructor, the student still believes that the grade has been unfairly assigned, the student must submit a written appeal to the MBDS Associate Director. If the Associate Director believes the appeal demonstrates evidence of negligence or discriminatory behavior, the Faculty Director and FAC will review the student's appeal and make a formal decision. The School of Arts and Sciences and the Provost's Office have policies governing academic grievances. Students should consult these for additional information about the grievance procedure for other departments and schools.

***SAS policy for graduate students' grievances:***

<https://www.sas.upenn.edu/graduate-division/resources/academic-grievance-procedure>

***Penn Provost's information on Academic Grievances:***

<http://provost.upenn.edu/policies/pennbook/2013/02/13/student-grievance-procedures>

## **Leave of Absence**

Students take time away from their studies for a wide variety of reasons that include to:

- Manage a medical concern
- Fulfill a family obligation
- Pursue career-related opportunities
- Complete military service
- Work on a political campaign

While interrupting studies to take time away may seem intimidating, a leave is a means to the successful completion of a degree, not a barrier to graduating.

Students considering a leave should take time to think carefully about their goals for their time away and for when they return. Speaking with the MBDS Associate Director is an important first step. Depending on the circumstances students should get advice from other sources as well. Students taking time away in order to manage a medical condition should discuss the leave with their healthcare provider. The MBDS Associate Director will help students connect with other campus resources as they prepare to take a leave of absence, such as Student Financial Services, Housing, and International Student and Scholar Services.

Students typically take a leave for a full academic year. Individual circumstances may require more or less time. Students on leave should remain in contact with the MBDS Associate Director and update him about changes in plans. The return from leave process supports students in a successful re-entry to academic life at Penn. When preparing to return, students must consult the MBDS Associate Director to develop a plan that includes connection with appropriate resources.

## **Requesting a Leave of Absence**

- Students must meet with the MBDS Associate Director to discuss a leave request.
- The student must submit a written request for leave of absence, detailing the reasons for the desired leave.
- The leave request will be evaluated by the Faculty Director, and if necessary, the MBDS FAC. If the request is approved, the program will stipulate conditions that must be met by the student before returning from leave.
- The student will be notified with the result of the leave request. The program may deny any request for leave. In granting leaves, the decision of the program is final.
- A student on leave may not be enrolled in Penn classes and will not receive credit for classes taken elsewhere during the leave unless special approval by the program is given. Students on leave may not live in University-owned housing during the term of their leave. In addition, a student may not participate in and/or hold a leadership position in a registered University organization.
- Discontinuance of study without permission from the University does not constitute a leave of absence. Students who have requested a leave of absence for a given semester may still be dropped from the University rolls if their previous term's grades qualify them for this action.

## **Checklist: Leave of Absence or Withdrawal**

Once a leave of absence or withdrawal has been approved, or the student has been dropped, that action will be posted to the student's transcript. The student's PennCard will be deactivated as soon as the leave, drop, or withdrawal has been processed.

## **Notifications**

Students must notify all relevant offices of the leave or drop. These offices may include the following, if applicable:

- [Student Registration and Financial Services](#)
- [Housing and Conference Services](#)
- [International Student and Scholar Services \(ISSS\)](#)
- [Student Health Service](#)
- [Office of Student Conduct](#)

## **While Out**

During the term of leave or drop, the student may call the MBDS program office if they have any questions. Students need to be aware of the conditions for return outlined in their leave of absence letter, since they will be required to fulfill them before they may re-enroll.

## **Applying to Return**

You must apply to return from leave by the relevant deadline (for the fall semester, July 15; for the spring semester, November 15; for the summer, April 15). At that

time, you must fill out a request to return from leave form and show that you have fulfilled all of the conditions for return as outlined in your original letter from the MBDS program. To begin this process, contact the MBDS Associate Director well in advance of the deadline. Any return request submitted to the program director later than the above deadlines may be denied. Timely submission of requests and documentation is a condition of all leave returns.

The standard length of an LPS leave of absence is one year. Students may request an early return from leave after one full semester on leave, but should bear in mind that this request may be denied.

### **Sub-matriculation**

Sub-matriculation allows students to take graduate-level courses while still enrolled as undergraduates, allowing most to complete their bachelor's and master's degrees in 5 years. Undergraduate students in their *junior year or before the end of their last semester* at the University of Pennsylvania may apply for sub-matriculation into the MBDS Program. Students who miss posted sub-matriculation deadlines will not be eligible to enroll in the next semester. Students should discuss sub-matriculation with the Associate Director of the MBDS Program and then formally apply for sub-matriculation within the MBDS Program.

Students sub-matriculated into the MBDS may double count up to **three** graduate level courses toward both their undergraduate and graduate degrees. These courses must be pre-approved by the MBDS Associate Director and undergraduate major advisor. The remaining **six** courses must be taken while a student has graduate level status. **Sub-matriculating students are restricted to taking no more than two of the remaining six MBDS courses outside of SAS.**

Students should obtain a "Request for Sub-matriculation Course Double Counting" form from the Canvas Online Community (found under "Forms") to apply for course approval for double counting **prior** to taking the course. All College student requests for double counted courses must be made no later than 8 weeks into the student's 8<sup>th</sup> semester at Penn. LPS students should contact the MBDS Office for deadlines specific to their program of study.

### **Deferred Enrollment**

Students who are admitted to the MBDS may petition to defer their matriculation for up to one year. Note that deferral is primarily meant for unexpected and significant life circumstances that prevent a student to attend in the year they were accepted. Deferrals are not guaranteed and are subject to the MBDS Admissions Committee approval. Students who wish to defer should notify in writing the MBDS office. If deferral is approved, students will then notify the LPS Registrar's office of their intentions as early as possible. It is not necessary for deferred students to reapply. However, students must inform the MBDS program if they enroll at any other institution prior to their matriculation at Penn, and they must submit final official transcripts of any coursework completed prior to their first semester in the MBDS

program. Students granted deferral must notify in writing their intent to join the program under the terms and deadline set by the MBDS Admissions Committee.

### **Transfer Credit**

Penn employees and students who enter the MBDS from Penn's Post-Baccalaureate Undergraduate Studies or Non Traditional Graduate program may count **one relevant graduate level** course taken within the last three academic years (at the time of application submission) towards their MBDS degree. Transfer credit will replace one non-SAS elective course, regardless of the course that a student transfers in, thus restricting remaining non-SAS courses to two. These courses must be submitted to the Associate Director, who in consultation with the Faculty Director and the MBDS Admissions Committee, will review for approval **prior to the first semester** of matriculation into the MBDS program. Only courses appropriate to the student's degree program will be considered for approval.

Students who enter the MBDS from another graduate program at the University of Pennsylvania or from another university for which they did not complete a graduate degree may petition to count up to **two relevant graduate-level courses** toward their MBDS degree. These courses must be submitted to the Associate Director, who in consultation with the Faculty Director and the MBDS Admissions Committee, will review for approval prior to the first semester of entering into the MBDS program. Only courses appropriate to the student's degree program will be considered for approval. Transfer credit will replace up to two non-SAS elective course, regardless of the course that a student transfers in, thus restricting remaining non-SAS courses to one. Courses from completed degrees are not eligible for transfer.

### **Additional Notes:**

- Students may not transfer a course that they have taken as part of a completed degree program.
- No course taken as part of an undergraduate program may be transferred into the MBDS program unless the student is a Penn sub-matriculate.
- Transferred courses must have been taken in the last three years.

**Courses taken outside of the University of Pennsylvania during a student's matriculation in the MBDS program are not eligible for transfer credit.**

## **Financial Aid**

### **Tuition Support**

Students who are United States citizens or permanent residents are eligible for loans through Penn's Office of Student Financial Services (<http://www.sfs.upenn.edu/>). International students are not eligible for loans through the University.

### **Research Support**

The MBDS program may have limited funding available to support costs incurred during the conduct of student research. These funds are awarded on a competitive basis and are available for equipment and lab fees associated with the student's research. In addition, MBDS students may apply for funds to present their research at a conference or scientific meeting. Note that research support is dependent on available funding from the University.

## **IV Designing Your Program**

### **Student Advising**

Each student entering the MBDS Program will work closely with the Associate Director. The Associate Director will guide the student through the initial course registration and program introduction as well as throughout their academic career. Students can meet with the Associate Director in-person, by phone, or video conference in the summer before fall classes in order to develop a plan for the remainder of their MBDS career.

Students must meet with the Associate Director at least once a semester (usually before or during Advance Registration) to discuss their program progress and choose courses for the following semester. Students should use the student planning worksheet available on [Penn InTouch](#) to choose courses each semester and ensure that all degree requirements are fulfilled for graduation.

### **Course Selection**

Prior to Advance Registration each semester, approved lists of courses from the MBDS program will be posted on the Canvas MBDS Online Community. In addition, the [University's Course Catalog](#), which is available online, provides course descriptions for many courses offered at Penn. Departmental web pages often include course descriptions as well. The [Course Roster and Timetable](#) appears in March and October and lists courses that will be offered the following semester. Finally, students can search for courses in [Penn InTouch](#) using keyword searches. Students must check with the Associate Director for approval of any courses offered outside of the MBDS program.

## **V Course Registration Procedures**

## **Advance Registration**

The course registration process involves two registration periods, the first of which is *Advance Registration*, during which enrolled students enter their requests for courses they wish to take. Incoming students DO NOT participate in Advance Registration, instead selecting courses for their first semester at a designated program time, typically beginning in late July/early August. Students are eligible to participate in *Advance Registration* starting in the second semester of the program (typically, fall semester) and thereafter. Students are encouraged to register during this period so that they have the best chance of getting into the courses they prefer. At the end of Advance Registration, a scheduling program processes all registration requests at the same time to determine course enrollments. Students are then able to view in Penn InTouch which courses they have been enrolled in. Advance Registration takes place during a two-week period starting in late October/early November for the following spring term or in late March for the following summer. Check the [LPS Academic Calendar](#) for the exact dates.

## **Registration**

The regular registration add/drop period opens approximately three weeks after the advance registration request period has closed and students have been notified of their schedules. During the regular registration period, students know immediately whether or not they can enroll in the course they are requesting. Students register for courses through [Penn InTouch](#).

### **Some important information to remember when registering for courses:**

- Check with the Associate Director to be sure the course for which you are registering fulfills a requirement for your degree and does not exceed the permissible number of electives outside of SAS.
- Courses must be taken for a normal letter grade in order to count toward the MBDS degree. “Pass/Fail” or “Audit” are not acceptable options.
  - Only courses numbered 400 and above may count toward the degree.
  - As a master’s student, permission may be needed from the instructor to register for some graduate courses in other departments or schools.
  - Full-time students should enroll in three or four courses. Students are not permitted to enroll in more than five courses per semester.
  - Part-time students should enroll in one or two courses per semester.

### **Registering for Non-MBDS Courses (also see “Permits” below)**

MBDS students may register for graduate courses (numbered 400 or above) in other Penn departments and schools if those courses are appropriate to the student’s program. Students should consult with the Associate Director to determine if the course is appropriate to their program before registering. MBDS students may need permission to register for courses outside of MBDS. In such cases, students should consult the *Permit Procedures* document on the Canvas Online Community under “Course Lists”. Students wishing to take courses outside of MBDS may not be able to

register until all students in the home department or school have had a chance to register. Permits will then be issued on a first-come-first-served basis. Students should be aware that Law School courses often begin the week before the official start of the semester.

### **Permits**

Courses that require special permission from the instructor are indicated in the Course Timetable as “Permit Required.” Instructions for how to obtain a Permit from various departments can be found on the Canvas Online Community under “Course Information & Forms” > “Forms”. Please check this list before emailing the instructor.

Once a permit is obtained, students must “claim” the permit by actually enrolling in the course through Penn InTouch. After both Advance Registration and Regular Registration are complete, the Registrar’s Office removes unused permits from students’ records. However, out of courtesy, if you decide not to take the course, please inform the office that issued the permit so they might release your seat to others trying to get into the class.

### **Independent Study Courses**

Students interested in pursuing an individualized study project should obtain a “Request for Independent Study” form from the MBDS Online Canvas Community page (under “Forms”). The student should then approach a faculty member and obtain agreement from them to direct their project. It is the responsibility of the student to define the individualized project. Students should not approach a faculty member and request that they define a project for the student. Students must obtain the appropriate signatures from the faculty member and the Associate Director of the MBDS program. Independent Study courses may not duplicate other courses offered during the same semester. Students should bear in mind that faculty members are not required to supervise an Independent Study course. MBDS students may register for up to one Independent Study course during their academic career. **NOTE: Internships cannot be counted for Independent Study credit.**

### **Auditing Courses**

MBDS students may audit courses. However, they will be charged tuition and fees at the MBDS tuition level. Audited courses will appear on the student’s transcript, but no grade will be issued and the course will not count toward the 9 c.u.’s needed to complete the program. Most courses are open to auditors on a space-available basis.

### **Course Changes**

MBDS students are subject to LPS registration and drop/add deadlines which may be different from deadlines for other schools and departments. Students should consult the current LPS Course Guide or the LPS website for deadline dates for making registration changes and for the corresponding financial obligations (<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/lps/calendar>). Students are able to make these changes in Penn InTouch. Adherence to LPS deadlines is strictly observed. Should students need to drop or withdraw from a course beyond the deadline, they should petition LPS (<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/lps/students/current/forms-handbooks>). It may be necessary to provide documentation of the situation that necessitates the drop or withdrawal, particularly if the student is requesting a refund of tuition.

### **Adding a Course**

Students may add a new course via Penn InTouch through the second week of the term. After that, it is not possible to add a course.

### **Dropping a Course**

Students may drop a course with no financial obligation until the published Add/Drop deadline posted on the LPS Website (<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/lps/about/academic-calendar>) (approximately two weeks into the term). Students may also drop a course between the second and fourth weeks of the term, but in so doing they will incur a 50 percent financial obligation for the tuition and fees for the dropped course. Absence from class does not constitute a drop, nor does notifying the instructor. Students can officially drop a course through Penn InTouch through the second week of the term. After the second week of the semester, students must submit a Withdrawal Form to LPS. When making registration changes via Penn InTouch, it is always advisable to double check to make sure the changes have taken effect before logging out. Students may also want to contact the MBDS Associate Director to confirm that the dropped courses are no longer on their schedules. Students who fail to drop a course officially may receive a grade of F and will be required to pay the full tuition rate.

### **Changing the Grade or Credit Status of a Course**

All MBDS courses must be taken for a letter grade. However, students may register for courses that they do not want to count for their program on an audit or Pass/Fail basis. Before doing so, however, they should discuss this with the MBDS Associate Director. Once they have done so, students may change their status in a course from credit to audit, from a letter grade to Pass/Fail, or from Pass/Fail to a letter grade until the published deadline on the LPS website (approximately four weeks into the term). No change is permissible after the published deadline. Auditors pay full tuition and fees.

### **Withdrawing from a Course**

Students may withdraw from a course after the deadline to drop a course has passed (approximately four weeks into the term). To withdraw, students must submit a petition to the LPS office (<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/lps/students/current/forms->

[handbooks](#) ). Normally, permission is granted and a W (withdrawal) is recorded on the transcript. After the published withdrawal deadline, students are permitted to withdraw only under extraordinary circumstances, which must be documented. Students who withdraw from a course have full financial obligation, except in documented cases of illness, military service, or other extraordinary circumstances, when they may petition for a 50 percent refund.

**Note:** Dropping a course is not identical to withdrawing from a course. Withdrawing from a course takes place after the sixth week of class and carries with it full financial obligation. In addition, the student's transcript will read "W" (Withdrawal) next to the title of this course. However, if a student drops a course during the normal Add/Drop period, no record of that course will appear on the transcript and there is no financial obligation.

### **Capstone Continuation Registration**

MBDS students who have completed all coursework toward the degree but have not completed their capstone project will be automatically enrolled in the non-credit *Capstone Continuation* course (BDS 590) for every subsequent semester until the capstone is complete. This includes summer semester; thus, if a student does not complete their capstone in May, they will be automatically enrolled in the *Capstone Continuation* in Summer 11 Week. If the capstone is not completed by August, the student will be automatically enrolled in the *Capstone Continuation* for the Fall. The cost of thesis registration is less than the cost of a regular course and keeps the student status active. Students enrolled in the *Capstone Continuation* have access to the library and maintain their Penn e-mail accounts. Should a student wish to extend their *Capstone Continuation* registration beyond two semesters, they must receive permission from the MBDS Faculty Advisory Committee. Students not completing the program requirements after two semesters of the *Capstone Continuation* may be withdrawn from the program.

### **Student Status and Eligibility for a Federal Loan**

To be eligible for Direct Loan Program funds from the U.S. Department of Education, students must enroll in the MBDS program at least half-time (two or more course units per term). The one exception: students completing the Capstone project in their final term and earning just one course unit are considered full-time and are eligible for a loan.

### **Student Status and Immigration**

International students must enroll full-time in the program, taking three or four course units each term. The one exception: in their final semester, international students may complete just the Capstone project if they submit a Reduced Course Load application to ISSS (<https://global.upenn.edu/iss/rcl>).

## **VI Capstone and Graduation Procedures**

## Faculty Readers

One faculty reader is required for the capstone project. The primary reader will work with the student to plan and carry out the proposed capstone. The capstone reader works with the student on a regular basis to complete the project, ultimately approve the final capstone project, and provide a grade for the capstone course.

Capstone faculty readers need not be members of the Penn standing faculty, and may be drawn from outside the School of Arts and Sciences. However, they must be academically engaged in the student's capstone topic. Professors from local universities have served as capstone readers, as have adjunct faculty members and lecturers. In general, students choose faculty readers from among the professors they have had within the MBDS program.

Students will identify a reader during advising sessions with the Associate Director. All readers must be approved by the MBDS Associate Director and Faculty Director before they are asked by the student to work on the project.

## Registering for Capstone Research

All students are required to enroll in BDS 599 *Behavioral Science Individual Capstone* in the final semester of their MBDS degree program (usually in the Summer Session). Before completing the Capstone, students must have completed a minimum of seven course units towards their MBDS degree (eight course units are recommended).

## Writing the Capstone

The capstone may take one of two forms: an extended traditional academic research paper or a more applied piece (similar to a consultant's report).

Details about what is expected for the capstone proposal and project, including a timeline for completing the capstone, are available on the MBDS Online Community in the "Guide to the Capstone" document.

Table 1 indicates the timeline for completing the capstone. Refer to this table and the LPS Academic Calendar to determine when classes begin and end, as these dates change each term and every academic year.

**Table 1. Capstone and Graduation Timetable**

BDS 599 <i>Capstone</i>	Summer Session (or final semester of the program)
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Completion of capstone	Last day of classes in the term student wishes to graduate.
Graduation Application	Spring Term: Feb 1 Summer Term: May 1 (Feb 1 if you wish to participate in May graduation ceremony) Fall Term: Oct 1

### **Incomplete Capstone Projects and Capstone Continuation Registration**

Students who fail to complete their capstone project by the final deadline must remain active students in all subsequent terms in order to complete the MBDS program and graduate. In brief, the final capstone project is due to the capstone reader approximately four weeks prior to the end of term (students should check with their readers to see if they will need additional time for grading) to permit the MBDS staff to process the grades and audit students for graduation. Any students who have not received an official evaluation of their work by the deadline set for the semester in which they intend to graduate will be registered automatically for *Capstone Continuation* (BDS 590) in the subsequent term, for up to two semesters (including summer) until the completed and approved capstone is submitted to the MBDS Program.

In addition to the requirements for enrollment in each term during which students continue to work on the capstone, graduation posting will also be affected. Students must reapply online for graduation in the term during which they plan to complete the capstone. Thus, if a student does not complete the capstone in the semester in which they originally applied, they must re-apply for graduation in the next semester. The student's graduation date will be posted for the term in which they complete their capstone and receive a grade, not the term in which the student originally intended to graduate.

## VII University Policies and Resources

### **Pennbook**

The Pennbook is a collection of policies that relate to student life at the University of Pennsylvania. These policies govern academic activities such as grading and exams, provide guidance on the use of campus resources, and explain expectations for membership in the university community.

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/>

### **Enrollment Status**

MBDS students who are enrolled in three or four courses per term are considered full-time students and will be billed the full general fee. This fee covers access to many of the services described below. MBDS students enrolled in one or two courses per term are considered part-time students.

### **Student Identification**

Once a student is enrolled at Penn, a student I.D. number (Penn I.D.) will be issued; this I.D. is used for registration and other transactions throughout the University. Never give out your social security number via email or fax. Once matriculated, students should never give out their entire social security number; the PennID number or the last four digits of your social security number are all that is necessary.

### **PennCard and PennCard Center**

[cms.business-services.upenn.edu/penncard](https://cms.business-services.upenn.edu/penncard)

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the Penn Bookstore, 36<sup>th</sup> & Walnut Streets

The PennCard is the official University of Pennsylvania identification for students, faculty, and staff. The PennCard provides access to University facilities, services, cash convenience and more. To obtain a PennCard, students should bring a valid form of photo ID (driver's license, passport, etc.) to the PennCard Center. Only active students registered for courses in the current or upcoming term may receive a PennCard, which should be carried at all times on campus.

### **PennKey**

<http://www.upenn.edu/computing/pennkey/>

A PennKey is required to authenticate, or verify, an individual's identity for many of Penn's networked computer systems and services. Authorized users need a PennKey and password to access such resources as Penn InTouch (course registration), Canvas (used in most classes; <https://canvas.upenn.edu>), certain library resources, and public campus computers. A PennKey is also required to obtain a Penn email address. New students should receive either a letter or an email with information on how to create a PennKey and password within a few days of their admission to the MBDS program.

### **Penn InTouch**

[https://medley.isc-seo.upenn.edu/penn\\_portal/intouch/splash.html](https://medley.isc-seo.upenn.edu/penn_portal/intouch/splash.html)

Penn InTouch provides secure access via the Internet to online course registration, class schedules, academic records, future academic planning, billing, financial aid application status and awards, address corrections and updates, and student health information. A PennKey is required to access Penn InTouch.

### **Email**

<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/computing/help/students/email>

All students enrolled at the University of Pennsylvania are eligible for a Penn email address free of charge. Even if the student plans to use a non-Penn email account, they should also establish a Penn address. The MBDS program will send out program information to this address and also contact students with important information through this system as well as through Canvas. Course instructors will be given this address as well and will expect to contact students in this way. Should students wish, they may forward email from their Penn address to another account through Penn's webmail site. Instructions on how to create and use a Penn email account are available through the SAS Computing website above.

### **Academic Support Services**

#### **Weingarten Learning Resources Center**

<http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/>

215.573.9235

3702 Spruce Street, Suite 300

Provides professional consultation services in skills such as academic reading, writing, study strategies, and time management. This academic support is provided through a variety of services and programs including the very popular series of study skills workshops offered at the beginning of each fall and spring term for students. Consult their website for specific dates and times for these workshops or for more information.

#### **Access & Achievement Programs**

<http://www.upenn.edu/programs/acadsupport.php>

215.898.0809

3820 Locust Walk

Offers individual and group tutoring, and mid-term and finals review sessions for all Penn students. The support services help students enhance learning in core academic subjects, manage their time, find financial aid and feel more confident about their abilities. Assistance and counseling are available on an individual basis.

#### **Student Financial Services**

<http://www.sfs.upenn.edu/paying/paying-grad.htm>

215.898.1988

005 Franklin Building, 3451 Walnut Street

Student financial aid, including applications and disbursement of money, are handled through Student Financial Services (SFS). Call or visit the website for deadlines and procedures.

**Penn Bookstore**

<https://www.facilities.upenn.edu/maps/locations/bookstore-university-pennsylvania>

215.898.7595

36th St. and Walnut St

The Penn Bookstore carries textbooks and trade books as well as stationery, art supplies, school supplies, gifts, and other items.

**Computer Connection**

<http://cms.business-services.upenn.edu/computerstore>

215.898.3282

Second floor of the Penn Bookstore

Carries computers, software, and computer supplies at student rates.

**Career Counseling**

<http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/connectwithus.php>

215.898.7530

3718 Locust Walk

The University provides career counseling through the Career Services office.

**Computer Labs**

[http://www.sas.upenn.edu/computing/teaching\\_resources/computer\\_labs](http://www.sas.upenn.edu/computing/teaching_resources/computer_labs)

For a current list of computer labs on campus, along with a list of software installed and eligibility for usage.

**Tech Center**

<http://www.upenn.edu/computing/crc/general/location.html>

215.898.9085

Suite 202 Sansom West (Grad Tower B), 3650 Chestnut Street

The Computer Resource Center (CRC) offers advice, training, consulting services and computer support to Penn students. Students will need their PennCard for access to the building.

**Libraries**

<http://www.library.upenn.edu/>

3420 Walnut Street (entrance on College Green)

Van Pelt Library, the main University library has extensive holdings, computers, and the Weigle Information Commons.

**Writing Center**

[http://writing.upenn.edu/critical/graduate\\_students/help\\_with\\_your\\_writing.php](http://writing.upenn.edu/critical/graduate_students/help_with_your_writing.php)

[Weigle Information Commons](#) at [Van Pelt Library](#)

The Writing Center provides free writing consultation by appointment at Weigle Information Commons. Appointments are made online.

**Recreation Facilities**

<http://www.upenn.edu/recreation/>

215.898.6100

MBDS students have access to all of the recreation facilities available to the University community. For information on fees, hours, programs, locker rentals, etc. see website above.

### **Office of the University Ombudsman**

<http://www.upenn.edu/ombudsman>

215.898.8261

The Office of the Ombudsman assists individuals in finding solutions to problems that they may not be able to resolve through normal channels. The office is concerned with safeguarding individual rights and promoting better channels of communication throughout the University. It is independent of all administrative offices. The Ombudsman is not an advocate for any one individual or group. He or she is an advocate for fairness, adherence to University regulations, due process, and personal responsibility. The Office supplements, but does not replace, any existing grievance mechanisms or modes of redress. It can and does recommend changes in the existing rules and practices when necessary.

### **Student Health Information**

<http://www.upenn.edu/shs>

215-662-2850

The university has a number of health-related requirements for students. These include completion and submission of health and immunization records, coverage for outpatient medical care through the Student Health Service (SHS) and maintenance of health insurance coverage for in-patient and catastrophic care. Students are advised to call SHS or consult their web site for the most accurate and up-to-date information on student health requirements.

### **Student Health Service**

<http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/shs/>

3535 Market St, 1<sup>st</sup> floor

The University provides outpatient medical care to students through its Student Health Service. The SHS offers an array of clinical services, including initial and follow-up treatment of acute medical illness and injury, management of chronic health problems, health screening and preventive care. All full-time students must carry coverage for care at the Student Health Service, either through payment of the Clinical Fee or through enrollment in the Penn Student Insurance Plan (PSIP). Full-time students who have private or employer-sponsored insurance do not have to purchase the student plan, but they must still pay the clinical fee for coverage at the Student Health Service. Coverage for the Student Health Service (either through the clinical fee or through enrollment in PSIP) is optional for part-time students. Be sure to bring your PennCard and insurance information whenever you go for medical care. For hours and other information refer to the Student Health web site.

### **Student Health Insurance**

The University requires all full-time students to maintain medical insurance with coverage for in-patient care and catastrophic illness and injury. Students may satisfy insurance requirements through private or employer-sponsored plans or through enrollment in PSIP. All full-time students must either enroll in PSIP or submit a waiver indicating alternative coverage. Students who fail to provide information about coverage will be enrolled and billed for PSIP. Part-time students may enroll voluntarily in PSIP, but they are not subject to the insurance requirement, and will not be enrolled by default in PSIP. Coverage for the Student Health Service (either through the Clinical Fee or through enrollment in PSIP) is optional for part-time students.

### **Immunization**

Students enrolled in the MBDS program are part of the University community and benefit from the University's efforts to provide a safe and healthy environment. All MBDS students are required to comply with immunization requirements upon first enrolling in credit courses.

To comply, students should complete a Pre-Matriculation Health Record obtained from the Student Health Service. Please note: Students born on or before January 1, 1957 are exempt from the above requirements. The Student Health Service can provide missing immunizations at a fee that covers costs. In the event of an outbreak of a communicable disease in any Penn class, all students in that class would be required to comply immediately with the University's immunization requirements. Contact the Immunization Coordinator at 215.349.5047 for more information.

### **Code of Conduct and Code of Academic Integrity**

Provost's Code of Academic Integrity:

<https://provost.upenn.edu/policies/pennbook/2013/02/13/code-of-academic-integrity>

Provost's Code of student conduct:

<https://provost.upenn.edu/policies/pennbook/2013/02/15/code-of-student-conduct>

Student Guide to Academic Integrity:

<http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/>

Inasmuch as the standing of an educational institution and the value of a degree from that institution are dependent upon the integrity of study and research carried on at that institution, the Code of Academic Integrity is drawn to make clear the policy of the University concerning academic honesty. Each student attending the University must abide by this code, the text of which appears in the Pennbook and is found at the website above.

### **Confidentiality of Student Records**

<https://provost.upenn.edu/policies/pennbook/2013/02/13/confidentiality-of-student-records>

Pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, in general, personally identifiable information can be disclosed to people outside the

University only with the written consent of the student or alumnus involved. A statement setting forth specific University policy concerning (1) disclosure of information to people outside the University, (2) disclosure of information to people within the University, (3) permitting students to inspect and review records and (4) providing students with the opportunity to seek the correction of their records appears in the Pennbook and is found at the website above.

### **Nondiscrimination Policy**

[www.upenn.edu/affirm-action](http://www.upenn.edu/affirm-action)

215.898.6993

3600 Chestnut Street, Sansom Place East, Suite 228

The University of Pennsylvania values diversity and seeks talented students, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds. The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national or ethnic origin, age, disability or status as a disabled or Vietnam Era veteran in the administration of its educational policies, programs, or activities, admissions policies and procedures, scholarship and loan programs, employment, recreational athletic or other University administered programs. Questions or concerns regarding the University's equal opportunity and affirmative action programs and activities or accommodations for people with disabilities should be directed to the Director of Affirmative Action.

Also see:

<https://provost.upenn.edu/policies/pennbook/2013/02/13/student-grievance-procedures>

Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy:

<https://provost.upenn.edu/policies/pennbook/2013/02/13/equal-opportunity-and-affirmative-action-policy>

### **Rules Governing Exams**

Provost's Policy on Common Midterm Examinations:

<https://provost.upenn.edu/policies/pennbook/2013/02/13/policy-on-common-midterm-examinations>

Rules Governing Final Examinations:

<https://provost.upenn.edu/policies/pennbook/2013/02/13/rules-governing-final-examinations>

### **Holidays**

Provost's Policy on secular and religious holidays:

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/secular-religious-holidays/>

The University observes the following holidays: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, and New Year's Day.

The University also recognizes that there are several religious holidays that affect large numbers of University community members, including Christmas, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the first two days of Passover and Good Friday. In consideration of their significance for many students, no examinations may be given and no assigned work may be required on these days. Students who observe these holidays will be given an opportunity to make up missed work in both laboratories and lecture courses. If an examination is given on the first class day after one of these holidays, it must not cover material introduced in class on that holiday.

### **Student Responsibility**

While advisors, faculty, and staff will assist the student in every aspect of their graduate study, it is the **responsibility of the student** to ensure that all steps and necessary paperwork have been completed and submitted to the Associate Director, Faculty Director, MBDS Faculty Advisory Committee, and/or LPS as appropriate. Grant proposals, awards, accepted publications and other records of achievement should also be submitted to the Associate Director.

### **Office of Student Conduct**

<http://www.upenn.edu/osc/>  
207 Duhring Wing, 236 S. 34th Street

215.898.5651

The Office of Student Conduct (OSC) is responsible for acting on behalf of the University in matters of student discipline. OSC deals with alleged instances of academic dishonesty and other student misconduct, in order to determine how best to resolve these allegations consistent with the goals and mission of the University as an educational and intellectual community.

### **Mission**

It is the purpose of the student disciplinary system to further the educational mission of the University by resolving alleged violations of the Code of Student Conduct, the Code of Academic Integrity and other applicable policies regarding student behavior. There are numerous ways complaints about alleged student misconduct can be resolved. These include the formal disciplinary process as outlined in the Charter of the Student Disciplinary System, referral to the University Mediation Program, and referral to other University resource offices.

The Office of Student Conduct at Penn has twin goals: to help create a safe environment where academic life can flourish; and to promote the development of students.

Our student disciplinary process is meant to set the standard for behavior on our campus and to determine a student's standing in the community. It is not meant to replace or substitute for the criminal justice system or other legal avenues. However, the student disciplinary process provides an important additional forum to respond to the interests of the Penn community. Our processes are designed to educate and, where appropriate, sanction those students who violate our rules. We seek both to promote a student's sense of responsibility by enforcing accountability, and to protect

our community by, where necessary, removing or restricting those who may pose a threat to others.

Finally, our Mediation Program is available to everyone in the Penn community to facilitate the constructive resolution of disputes (excluding academic integrity complaints). Our intention is to emphasize the peaceful and productive handling of conflict when possible and where appropriate.

### **Student Codes of Conduct Enforced**

In addition to the Code of Academic Conduct, Penn students are expected to adhere to the provisions of all other codes as well. More information on these codes is available at the above link. They are:

- Code of Student Conduct
- Code of Academic Integrity
- Policy on Acceptable Use of Electronic Resources
- Guidelines on Open Expression
- Acquaintance Rape and Sexual Violence Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Anti-hazing Policy
- Alcohol and Drug Policy
- Bicycle Policy

\*The Student Disciplinary System does not handle alleged violations of the University's parking regulations\*.

### **Counseling and Psychological Services**

<http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/caps/>  
3624 Market Street, First Floor, West

215.898.7021

CAPS provides professional psychological and psychiatric services to all Penn students who need help in dealing with academic stress, social difficulties, situational crises, managing personal problems, developing greater self-awareness and skills for life-long learning. Students presenting with more serious concerns like depression, anxiety, and eating disorders, among others, are seen as well. Licensed psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers provide confidential short term psychotherapy for individuals, group counseling, emergency crisis services, medication evaluations, workshops, career assessments/development counseling, and referrals free of charge.

### **Office of Alcohol and Other Drug Initiatives**

[www.vpul.upenn.edu/alcohol/](http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/alcohol/)  
3611 Locust Walk

215.573.3525

This office seeks to identify methods to reduce substance abuse and violence, control and mitigate campus environments where potential abusive behavior exists, and foster a campus culture in which healthy living efforts are plentiful and successful.

### **Student Disabilities Services (SDS)**

[www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc](http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc)  
(click on *Student Disabilities*)

215.573.9235 or TDD 215.746.6320

Stouffer Commons, 3702 Spruce Street, Suite 300

The Weingarten Learning Resources Center houses the Office of Student Disabilities Services (SDS), which provides comprehensive professional services and programs for students with disabilities to ensure equal academic opportunities and participation in University-sponsored programs. Reasonable accommodation to a qualified student's known disability may be provided to assure equal access. Penn invites students with disabilities to self-identify at any time during their course of study as enrolled students. Although the self-identification process is confidential and completely voluntary, it is required for those requesting accommodation.

### **Office of Student Affairs**

<https://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osa/>

215.898.6533

The Office of Student Affairs, a department within the Division of University Life, serves as a primary source of information and advice about co-curricular opportunities and resources. Staff members assist students in becoming involved in campus life, conduct leadership development programs, provide continuity for organizations from year to year, manage organizational finances, educate students about University policies, mediate disputes, advise event planners, and help students put classroom learning into practice through the techniques of experiential education. A full list of services provided by the Office is available.

The Office of Student Affairs seeks to provide a range of co-curricular experiences designed to supplement students' classroom experience and contribute significantly to their personal development. Staff members encourage students to create and participate in intellectual, artistic, social, recreational and multicultural activities; to assume campus leadership and governance responsibilities; to develop positive interpersonal relationships and skills within groups; to explore different cultures, ideas and experiences; and to put their learning into practice in the laboratory of co-curricular programs. Staff members support students through various forms of advocacy, through the encouragement of proactive approaches to campus problems and concerns, and through a commitment to the creation of a Penn community.

OSA provides information on student organizations categorized as follows. Students can learn more by visiting their website.

- Academic and Educational
- Cultural and Support
- Environmental Organizations
- Governmental and Umbrella
- Hobbies and Recreation
- Honor Societies
- Performing Arts
- Political Issues
- Publications and Media
- Religious

- Service
- Social
- Graduate and Professional Organizations
- Registered Organizations

**Penn Violence Prevention (PVP)**

<https://secure.www.upenn.edu/vpul/pvp/>

The University of Pennsylvania is committed to the safety of all students, and is at the forefront of handling cases involving sexual violence, relationship violence, and stalking. The Penn Violence Prevention (PVP) is a collaborative program that grew out of the Penn Women's Center. PVP aims to engage the Penn community in the prevention of sexual violence, relationship violence, and stalking on campus. The goal is to not only ensure students have access to safe and effective resources, but to provide preventative education focused on building healthy relationships, understanding consent, reaching out to friends in need, and being an active bystander.

**Please go to the following links for specific concerns or issues.**

**Sexual Violence, Relationship Violence, and Stalking Policy:**

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/sexual-violence-relationship-violence-stalking/>

**Student disciplinary procedures for resolving complaints of sexual assault, sexual violence, relationship violence and stalking:**

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/student-disciplinary-procedures-sexual-assault-violence-relationship-stalking/>

**Sexual Harassment Policy:**

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/sexual-harassment/>