

1979

A Look Back at the CoB's AACSB Application of 30 Years Ago

USMNEWS.NET has obtained a copy of the USM College of Business Administration's AACSB Accreditation Application of 1979. Many current CoB faculty are comparing the organization today to the one of the Joe Greene era, and this document allows for a serious assessment of where USM's College of Business stands today.

This installment (#4) compares the admissions formula used for entry into the 1979 CBA's MBA program to the one in use by the CoB today. Back in 1979, the following requirement was used to rule on the admission of prospective MBA students (see page 36, 1979 AACSB Application of CBA):

$$(1) (200 \times \text{GPA of last 2 Yrs. of UG coursework}) + \text{GMAT score} \geq 1,000$$

By 2007, that admissions formula had been amended to the requirement below (see [2007 MBA Admission Formula in CoB](#)):

$$(2) (200 \times \text{GPA of last 60 Hrs. of UG coursework}) + \text{GMAT score} + \text{Work Experience} \geq 1,100$$

Because "work experience" was added, which requires an experience-to-points conversion, the following table was adopted by faculty in the CoB:

Work Experience is Factored in as Follows:

No work experience (part-time or full-time)	= 0
Part-time work experience only	= 10
Less than 5 years full-time work experience	= 20
5 – 10 years full-time work	= 30
11 – 15 years full-time work	= 40
More than 15 years full-time work	= 50

The difference to notice between formula (1) and formula (2) is the additional 100 points needed to gain entrance in 2007 versus 1979. However, 2007 applicants can get as much as half of that difference back through various levels of "work experience."

Let's apply an example to delve deeper into the two admissions criteria above. Let's assume we have a 1979 applicant who scores a 500 on the GMAT, and a 2007 applicant who scores a 500 on the GMAT. This means that the 1979 applicant has to gain an additional 500 points from the "(200 x GPA of last 2 Yrs. of UG coursework)" component, while the 1997 applicant must pick up 600 points, but from the broader "(200 x GPA of last 60 Hrs. of UG coursework) + Work Experience" component. If

the second applicant, the 2007 applicant, has a few months (years) of full-time, local work experience, which is arguably a trivial benefit, he/she can capture 20 (30) of the necessary 600 points, leaving 580 (570) points.

To capture the remaining 500 points (to get to 1,000), the 1979 applicant needs an UG coursework (last 2 years) GPA of at least 2.500. On the other hand, to capture the remaining 580 (570) points (to get to 1,100) the 2007 applicant needs an UG coursework (last 60 hours) GPA of at least 2.900 (2.850). At first blush, you might think that the 2007 applicant has a little more work to do at the UG level than the 1979 applicant, but that thought fails to consider the effect of grade inflation – and, we’re talking about 30 years worth of it (grade inflation) here! Sources we have spoken with have stated that they would associate a 2.500 GPA in 1979 as equivalent to something significantly higher than a 2007 GPA of 2.900.¹ If so, it is easier to achieve the necessary 1,100 points for 2007 admission than it was to achieve the necessary 1,000 points for 1979 admission. If so, the rigor of admission to the CoB’s graduate programs has slipped since 1979.

¹ Most were thinking 3.000 (2007 GPA), if not better. Moving from a 2.500 GPA to a 2.900 (2.850) GPA (over 29 years) reflects a GPA inflation rate of approximately 0.51% (0.45%) per year.