COURSE BIDDING FAQ (Fall 2015)

Round 1 of online course bidding begins Thursday, July 16th.

You’ll find Fall 2015 course information listed on the MBA Course Catalogue (under MBA Students) on BOSS. Please note that courses may be cancelled at the discretion of the Dean’s Office.

We have created the following FAQ to help you, but if you have questions that are not addressed here, please stop by the Office of Student Affairs in 105 Uris, or contact us at 212-854-5563 or BOSS@gsb.columbia.edu.

Keep in mind: you must be logged onto BOSS to ensure that you’re seeing all the available information.

Will you provide the bidding history from prior terms?
Yes, you will find these in the “MBA Students” area of BOSS – under “MBA Historic Bidding Statistics.” Be aware, however, that the past does not necessarily provide a good guide to the present. A course that went for few points last term may have been up against lots of competition in that time slot. A course taught early in the morning may cost more if it is taught mid-day, etc. so use the information at your own risk.

How can I tell whether a course is being offered for 3 credits or 1.5 credits?
On the Course Catalogue, the credit hours are listed directly under the course title. Also, under the “Day & Time” column, you’ll see that a course is either “Full-term” (3 credits), “A-term” (1.5 credits), or “B-term” (1.5 credits). Please note that not all classes adhere to the half-term = 1.5 credit standard.

How can I tell when a course meets?
Under day & time on the Course Catalogue, there should be information about what days of the week the course meets as well as the time and duration. Please note that Thursday is represented by an “R”. Anything that says MENU is an EMBA class. More information about EMBA courses can be found under the EMBA Students tab (under the New York Fri/Sat or New York Saturday pages.)

What do “A-term” and “B-term” mean, and what are the dates of these terms?
A-term courses meet only in the first half of the semester (August 31 – October 12), and B-term courses meet only in the second half of the semester (October 21 – December 8).
How many credits can I take?
All students may take up to a maximum of 18 credits. Please note that you can only bid on up to 16.5 credits during the bidding rounds.

During their third and fourth semester, students may take up to 18 credits within the regular semester (this would include full-term, A-term, and B-term courses) plus one 3-credit block week course; for a total of 21 credits. Or, if they may take two 3-credit block week courses, plus 15 credits within the regular semester, for a total of 21 credits.

Third and fourth semester students who qualify academically by earning a cumulative GPA of 7.01 or higher (above HP level), or who are enrolled in a block week course, may petition the Office of Student Affairs to take up to 21 credits within the regular semester. Please email osa@gsb.columbia.edu to do so.

Note: the MBA degree requires a minimum of 60 credits taken during four semesters; you can take more than 60, if you wish. Most students choose to take 15 credits per semester, for a total of 60 credits.

What’s the maximum number of courses I can bid on during bidding rounds?
Since we offer both 1.5-credit and 3-credit courses, it is simplest to refer to the number of credits you may bid on, rather than the number of courses. Students can bid on 16.5 credits of class during the bidding rounds.

What’s the maximum number of credits students can enroll in during the add/drop rounds?
During the add/drop rounds, students will be able to add courses up to a maximum of 18 credits. Third and fourth semester students who are enrolled in a block week course may request up to 21 credits without meeting the minimum GPA requirement. Those students who would like to go up to 21 credits in the regular semester and are in their third or fourth semester, and who qualify academically by earning a cumulative GPA of 7.01 or higher (above HP level), may petition the Office of Student Affairs to take up to 21 credits.

Is there any advantage to placing my bid as early as possible in a bidding round?
No. Students may place (and change) their bids on courses throughout the round, and all bids will be processed when the round is over.
Why can’t I enter a bid on BOSS? There’s no box at the right of the screen next to the course I want.
The most common reason why students can’t enter a bid is because they’ve already reached the maximum number of credits they’re allowed to bid for (16.5). If you’ve already bid on 15 credits (the equivalent of 5 full-term courses), you won’t be able to bid on an additional 3-credit course. You’ll notice that the only courses BOSS will allow you to bid on are half-term 1.5-credit courses.

Can I drop a course during bidding rounds? Or do I have to wait until the add/drop period?
You do not have to wait until Add/Drop to drop courses. In the first 24 hours of Round 2 (July 23 at 10:00 am through July 24 at 10:00 am) and Round 3 (July 30 at 10:00 am through July 31 at 10:00 am), students will be able to drop elective courses from previous rounds and get their bid points refunded. You can only drop elective courses during rounds 2 and 3 at the times specified above. Once the “drop period” of that bidding round is over, you cannot drop courses you’re enrolled in until the Add/Drop period.

Note: If you drop courses during the “drop period” of Round 2 or 3 your bid points will be refunded. Points are ONLY refunded for courses dropped DURING THE BIDDING ROUNDS 24 hour drop period. If you drop later, during the add/drop period, points are not refunded.

Will BOSS allow me to bid on two courses that meet at the same time?
Yes. Although it will show a warning that there’s a time conflict, the system will not prevent you from bidding on courses that overlap. If successful in getting both courses, however, it’s the student’s responsibility to drop one of the courses. In other words, by the end of the add/drop period you need to be enrolled in courses you can actually attend. Students may not register for courses that overlap, even if that overlap is minimal.

Will BOSS allow me to bid on a full course?
Yes, BOSS will allow you to bid on a full class, though it is not recommended. A course with no seats available will say “Capacity(Full)” under the course name and credits. Bidding on a full class will not put you on a waitlist; that is a separate round that happens after bidding is over. Bidding on a full class will tie up your bid points and available credits for bidding. At the end of the round, your points will be refunded. Please note that in Rounds 2 and 3 of bidding, students do have the first 24 hours of the round to drop a course they received in the previous bidding rounds for a refund. Therefore, you should check after the first 24 hours to see if the course is still full.
Can I add an elective which conflicts with one of my core courses?
Yes, students may add an elective even if it conflicts with a core course. Students should contact the Office of Student Affairs to ask to be switched into another section of the core course after they’ve succeeded in getting the elective. If there are seats available, we’ll accommodate your request. Students must attend the class in which they are enrolled. All enrollments are handled centrally by OSA.

Are there any restrictions on taking Master Classes?
You must be in your third or fourth semester and you may only take one Master Class per semester. You also need to agree to the code of conduct for Master Classes. Additionally, attendance at the first class session is MANDATORY for all master classes. If you are on a waitlist for a master class, you should attend the first class session.

I’m planning to participate in the exchange program. Do I need to keep bid points to “pay for” the exchange program?
Yes, you’ll need to hang onto 4,000 points for the exchange program. Students who do not have the requisite points will not be able to participate.

How can I find out whether a course has pre- or co-requisites?
If a course has pre- or co-requisites, that information should be listed at the top of the course description in the MBA Course Catalogue on BOSS. (If there is contradictory information in the course syllabus regarding pre- or co-requisites, students should follow the information on the course description, which has been approved by the division. Please let OSA know if you see any such discrepancies.)

Will BOSS prevent me from bidding on a course if I don’t have the pre- or co-requisite?
If you have not taken (or exempted out of) the pre-requisite for a course, it is not recommended that you bid for the course. BOSS will not block you from bidding, but the Student Affairs Office does check for pre-requisites and co-requisites after each round is processed. If you successfully bid on a course that has a co-requisite, you will be permitted to keep that course throughout the bidding rounds. However, you must successfully enroll in the co-req by the end of add/drop. Students who are not enrolled in the co-requisite by that time will be dropped from the course that requires it. The only way to remain in a course for which you do not have the pre- or co-requisite is to appeal to the division chair under the division which the course is housed in. Please plan accordingly in case your appeal is denied and give adequate time for the division to respond.

If you successfully bid on a course with a pre-requisite for which you are taking the exemption exam, you may remain in the course until your exam results are in. Students
who have not taken and passed an exemption exam for the pre-requisite by the end of add/drop will be removed from the course that requires it.

After attending the first class meeting, I realized I don’t want this course. But I spent an enormous number of bid points on it! Can I get those points back?
Points are only refunded during the drop period (first 24 hours) of rounds 2 and 3. If you drop a course during the add/drop period, no bid points will be returned to you.

What if I decide I want to drop a course after the add/drop period is over?
Students may not drop courses after the add/drop period ends, but they are given a limited amount of time in which they can officially withdraw from a course. The course remains on the transcript with a grade of “W.” The deadline for withdrawing from Fall 2015 Full-term and A-term courses is September 22. For B-term courses, the withdraw deadline is November 11.

Is there an opportunity to make changes to my B-term courses after I’ve attended the first class session?
Yes, there’s an additional add/drop period for B-term courses from October 21 – October 28, as well as a B-term withdrawal deadline of November 11.

I’d like to take a course outside the Business School. Do I bid for it in BOSS?
Only Business School courses are available for bidding in BOSS. If you’re interested in taking a course at another division in the University, click on the Cross-Registration Information link under Course Information and Resources in the MBA Selection Guide on BOSS. If you have questions, come talk with the Student Affairs staff in 105 Uris.

Be sure to look at the University calendar, also linked on the MBA Selection Guide, because their term start and end dates, as well as vacation and exam dates, may be different from the Business School’s. And when choosing courses, be aware that only 6 credits of graduate-level course work outside the Business School will be counted toward the MBA degree. (Course numbers of 4000 or higher are considered graduate level. Courses with numbers below 4000 are undergraduate level, and will not count toward your degree.)

Note: Only 6 maximum credits in total of: graduate-level cross-registered classes, B8800/B8802 Independent Study, B8810 Cross-Cultural Seminar, and/or B8753 Global Business Project will be counted towards the MBA degree. You may take additional credits, but they will not count towards the 60 required for graduation. However, the grade will still factor into your GPA. Dual degree students may not count any courses outside the Business School toward their 45-credit MBA requirement.
If I add a Business course during the add/drop period, will bid points be deducted from my allotment?
No, the add/drop round is a point free round.

If I pass an exemption exam, do I receive additional bid points?
Students who exempt out of the second-semester core course (B6102 Operations Management) will be given additional points with which to bid on electives during online course bidding: 500 points for the 1.5 credit core course exempted. (Additional bid points are not given for exempting out of B8306 Capital Markets & Investments or B8331 Real Estate Finance, which are electives.) Please note: students who exempt out of first-term core courses add available electives during the add/drop period, when no bid points are charged. They do not receive additional bid points because they do not need to bid for these electives in BOSS.