

ESTABLISHMENT OF A JOINT DOCTOR OF MEDICINE (M.D.) AND MASTER IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (M.B.A.) PROGRAM

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors establish a new joint degree program between the Doctor of Medicine Degree (School of Medicine) and the Master of Business Administration (Mike Ilitch School of Business), effective fall 2022.

Background

The proposed joint degree will help physicians in training understand the economic and financial aspects of and the strategic, organizational, and operational issues within the health care industry supporting their efforts to drive improvements in the health care system. Completion of the joint degree program will open up career pathways to leadership roles in hospital administration, to more effective participation in healthcare policy research and policy development, and to opportunities with pharmaceutical, medical device, health tech and insurance companies. This program also opens the door to entrepreneurial endeavors ranging from the creation of a private practice to the establishment of a non-profit focused on efforts to address health disparities, to a potential role of founder or medical advisor to healthcare startups. This program will also provide a bridge to future elective and specialized degree offerings in the field of healthcare management in the Mike Ilitch School of Business.

Before the far reaching and ongoing impact of the pandemic, the explosive growth in the healthcare sector and widening of health disparities produced increased demand for MD-MBA joint degree programs across the country. Wayne State is late in responding to these trends and to the increasing interest shown by medical school students in various aspects of the business of medicine. Recognizing this increased interest, as of October 2021, the WSUSOM is now offering first year students in good academic standing the option to apply to and enroll in the Business of Medicine elective which will run from October-March. Discussions with current and future medical students ongoing since the late Summer of 2020 have underscored their strong interest in this degree option.

There are already many MD/MBA programs in the U.S., but the vast majority are 5-year programs which require medical school students to “pull” out for a full year, delaying graduation from medical school or delaying the start of their residency. As designed, this lock-step cohort program will allow students to concurrently satisfy the degree requirements of both programs in four years. WSUSOM would be one of a handful of schools offering a 4-year option, providing yet another differentiator to attract students.

Program Description

Students in this joint degree program will earn both the MD and MBA degree in four years. Electives currently offered within the MD program are being designed and co-taught with MISB faculty ensuring a high degree of integration and knowledge transfer. This program will build on this progress. MBA courses are taken concurrently during the 18-month Pre-Clerkship and 14-month Post-Clerkship phases of the MD program.

Graduates of the program will benefit from joint preparation in medicine and business and increase the range of options for finding employment in either field. The curriculum will provide students with core courses in both the medicine and business, as well as supporting/elective courses in each field, and specialized course in medicine as well as business, along with the opportunity for interdisciplinary coursework with students and faculty in fields associated with healthcare, such as nursing, pharmacy, public health, and biomedical engineering. Upon successful completion of this program students will be prepared for employment as physicians and in a wide range of additional settings in the public and private sector.

Admission Requirements

Applicants to this program must be admitted to both the School of Medicine four-year Doctor of Medicine Degree Program the Mike Ilitch School of Business MBA program. Students are first granted admission to the MD program and then apply to the MBA program during their first year of study. Students must meet the admission and graduation requirements of both programs and will enroll concurrently in the two programs during most of the period in which they are completing their degrees.

Curriculum Requirements

The program structure which emerged following an examination other programs and a side-by-side analysis of the WSU MD and MBA programs is a cohort program which is lockstep, with MD students completing all but one of the MBA core courses prior to their one-year clerkship, with the timing and sequence MBA courses situated within the best opportunities presented by the new SOM curriculum. Students complete a minimum of 36 credits total for the MBA program, with 9 credits transferred from the MD program; 9 credit hours are double-counted and used to fulfill the degree requirements for both the MD and MBA program. The medical students completing this program thus save time and money by completing this joint degree program.

Graduation Requirements

Admitted students must complete the required courses for both programs in order to graduate. All coursework must be completed in accordance with Graduate School policies and the regulations governing graduate scholarship and degrees. If students' complete requirements for only one degree, then one degree will be awarded. Although it is our intention that these students will complete both degrees in four years, it would be possible for students to complete requirements within six years of admission.

Program Administration

Each component of the joint degree will be administered by each respective faculty unit, as is the case for each independent degree. The School of Medicine will serve as the home department for the joint degree program.

Budget and Resource Requirements

Each constituent degree program already exists independently. No additional courses or faculty will be required for the joint degree; all required and elective courses are already being offered regularly by their respective faculty. The cohort model will mean that designated sections of the MBA core courses will be designed with the health care industry as the primary focus, though comparative studies will occur. The cost of offering these designated sections will be addressed

through the tuition assessed to the students enrolled in this joint degree program. MBA courses taught to the MD students will be taught by MISB faculty on an overload in addition to their standard course load.

Accreditation

No specialized accreditation is required, as both programs are already fully accredited. All that is needed is notification (but not approval) by the LCME.

Approvals

The proposal for the MD-MBA joint degree has been approved by the Graduate Educational Policy Committee, Faculty Senate, Academic Assembly and Dean of the Mike Ilitch School of Business, and the School of Medicine faculty senate, Dean of the School of Medicine, the Graduate Council, the Dean of the Graduate School and the Provost.