

A Master's Program for the developing "Versatelist"

"Versatilists apply a depth of skill to a progressively widening scope of situations and experiences, gaining new competencies, building relationships and assuming new roles."

- Thomas Friedman (The World Is Flat, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, NY)

As the business world evolves at an alarming pace, the leaders of tomorrow will need to have BOTH a broad set of skills as well as specific technical knowledge in order to effectively compete with an expanding set of global competitors. Many, including Thomas Friedman, have referred to this growing group of young leaders as "versatilists."

In partnership with SAS®, the **Business Analytics (BA) Track** within the **Master's in Accountancy Program** at the **College of Charleston** has been designed to develop accounting students into versatilists equipped to perform the detailed business analytics required in today's data-driven fields of accounting and finance.

The Business Analytics (BA) Track

The **Business Analytics (BA) Track** curriculum is designed to cultivate an appreciation for the history and theory ("big picture") of accounting as well as a unique specialized set of analytical skills through ten (10) graduate-level courses (30 credits).

Six required/elective courses (18 credits) must be completed by all **Master's of Accountancy** students while the student concentrating in Business Analytics will earn the remaining twelve (12) credits through the completion of four (4) track courses designed to foster the development of data mining and data management skills using SAS®.

Required/Elective Courses – 18 credits:

Two required courses expose students to the past and present of accounting, with a focus on the ways in which various stakeholders use financial and non-financial information to assist them in making decisions.

Four elective courses give students an opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills in areas related to accounting, finance, and the law.

Track Courses – 12 credits:

Upon successful completion of four track courses, students will receive a **Joint Certificate in Data Mining** from the **SAS Institute®** and the **College of Charleston**.

Through track courses in **SAS® Programming and Data Mining**, students learn how to clean, organize and mine data in order to generate useful information. Once students gain familiarity with **SAS®** programming and data mining methodologies, facilities such as **SAS® SQL**, **SAS® MACRO** and **SAS® ODS** are explored in detail to support a variety of accounting applications, including fraud detection, profitability analyses, forecasting future financial performance and the support of audit/tax functions.

Additionally, students explore more sophisticated forecasting and mining techniques through their introduction to **SAS® Enterprise Miner** software. Enterprise Miner is used to employ data mining methodologies through techniques such as linear regression, neural networks and decision trees to facilitate the analysis of important problems within the fields of accounting and finance (i.e., earnings management, default risk, etc.) throughout the track course sequence.

