



Ahmet Palazoglu
Chair, Assembly of the
Academic Senate
Faculty Representative,
UC Board of Regents

Academic Senate

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1111 Franklin Street
Oakland, CA 94607

senate.universityofcalifornia.edu

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March 26, 2026

Katherine S. Newman
Provost and Executive Vice President
University of California

Re: Approval of UCR Online Master of Business Administration

Dear Provost Newman:

In accordance with the Universitywide Review Processes for Academic Programs, Units, and Research Units (the “Compendium”), and on the recommendation of the Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs ([CCGA](#)), the Academic Council has approved the UC Riverside division’s proposal to establish an online self-supporting Master of Business Administration.

Because this is a new degree title, and the Assembly of the Academic Senate is not meeting within 30 days of CCGA’s approval, Council must approve the program per [Senate Bylaw 125.B.7](#).

I am enclosing CCGA’s report on its review of the new program, and respectfully request that your office complete the process of obtaining the President’s approval.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

Ahmet Palazoglu
Chair, Academic Council

cc: Academic Council
UCR Division Chair Barish
UCR Senate Division Executive Director Cortez
Director of Academic Planning and Policy Corona
Senate Executive Director Lin



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COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE AFFAIRS

Partho Ghosh, Chair
pghosh@ucsd.edu

March 18, 2026

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Ahmet Palazoglu
Academic Senate Chair

Dear Chair Palazoglu,

At its March 4 meeting, CCGA reviewed the proposal for an Online Master of Business Administration (OMBA) from the Riverside Division. After discussion, the proposal was approved 8-0-1.

The proposed Online Master of Business Administration (OMBA) is a self-supporting graduate professional degree program (SSGPDP) which is designed to train students on advanced business skillsets typically expected in a management or executive role. The primary aim of this proposed program is to attract and educate a broader and more diverse set of students by offering a more accessible pathway to the MBA Degree competitive in the business educational marketplace.

The pedagogical goal of the program is identical to UCR’s current MBA programs. It will train students in advanced business skillsets, empowering them to become strong leaders and professionals within their communities. Students in the OMBA program will complete a core requirement consisting of 36 units, which is identical to the current requirement for all UCR MBA students.

Comments were obtained from four reviewers (one internal to the UC system; three external), as well as from UCPB. All four reviewers offered favorable assessments. Three of the reviewers had minor critiques, but nothing substantive. These are detailed in the Lead Reviewer’s report, attached. UCPB provided a favorable assessment of the program, but noted that it would have preferred to see a more robust justification for the program’s demand. The UCPB report is also attached.

CCGA’s approval is the last stop of the Academic Senate side of the

Systemwide review and approval process except when the new degree title must be approved by the Senate. I submit this proposal for your review; please do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions regarding it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Ghosh', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Partho Ghosh
CCGA Chair

cc: Academic Senate Vice Chair Scott
Academic Senate Executive Director Lin
Academic Senate Assistant Director LaBriola
CCGA Members
Director of Academic Planning and Policy Corona
UCR Dean of Graduate Studies Kos
UCR Senate Executive Director Cortez
UCR Senate Associate Director Miller

Final Report: UC Riverside Online MBA Proposal

Prepared by: Wayne Steward

March 5, 2026

The University of California Riverside Online Master of Business Administration (OMBA) is a self-supporting degree program intended to attract and educate a broad and diverse set of students. The overall aim of the program remains identical to the full-time and professional in-person MBA offerings at UCR. The new OMBA will require 64 units, consisting of 36 units for core classes, 24 units for electives, and 4 units for a capstone project. The total is similar to the current requirement for the in-person Professional MBA but lower than the units required for the in-person full-time MBA. Unlike the full-time program, the online MBA will not require an internship/fieldwork course. It will also require fewer electives. To offset for these changes, successful applicants to the new online program will need to evidence more prior work experience. The program expects to enroll 80 students in its first year, with enrollment increasing to 250 active students by the fourth year of operation. Students will be able to complete the program in as short as two years (8 quarters). However, many of the students are expected to opt for part-time enrollment and thus will require longer time to degree. Approximately 50% of the content will be delivered synchronously and 50% asynchronously.

Comments were obtained from four reviewers (one internal to the UC system; three external), as well as from UCPB. All four reviewers offered favorable assessments. Three of the reviewers had minor critiques that were offered more as things to consider than as concerns. (The fourth reviewer had no critiques.) The recommendations included:

- Incorporating some experiences that would bring students to campus to build a sense of belonging.
- Further exploring the best balance between synchronous and asynchronous course content.
- Using local business cases and tailoring content to local business contexts to make the program more attractive to potential applicants in Southern California, the region from which the program expects to draw many of its students.
- Expanding potential concentrations.

The domain that elicited the largest number of comments was around course design and faculty staffing. There was concern by one reviewer about reliance on Senate Faculty to do all teaching as overload. Another reviewer noted that the synchronous teaching components will place a large demand on faculty time and that the faculty may be resistant

to a model of course development and delivery that involves a course developer, a manager, and an instructor, as outlined in the proposal. This is arguably the area where the program will need the most attention during its scale-up. Several reviewers also noted that the program will need to monitor tuition and how prospective students respond to the cost of the program, with one of the reviewers observing that the proposed tuition will be on the higher side for online MBAs.

UCPB provided a favorable assessment of the program in its letter but noted that it would have preferred to see a more robust justification for the program's demand. In particular, the committee noted that other campuses could be inspired by the potential for revenue generation to create online MBA programs of their own, which would then draw from a similar pool of prospective applicants.

Given the comments from the reviewers and UCPB, I made a recommendation to approve the program. As noted by the reviewers, the program will need to pay careful attention to demands on faculty and will need to monitor how tuition affects applications and matriculations. But these are areas that I would expect would need study and refinement in any new program. It is thus appropriate to approve the program at this point and to encourage the leads to monitor program rollout in the first few years and make adjustments as needed. CCGA concurred with this recommendation and approved the program at its March 4, 2026, meeting.



Academic Senate

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UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON PLANNING AND BUDGET (UCPB)
Robert Brosnan
rjbrosnan@ucdavis.edu

September 24, 2025

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Partho Gosh
Chair, CCGA

RE: UC RIVERSIDE ONLINE MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Dear Partho,

UCPB discussed the proposed UC Riverside Online Master of Business Administration (MBA) self-supporting degree proposal. This proposal has been reviewed six times on its home campus, from initial proposal in 2021 to today. Currently, only UC Davis offers a fully online MBA. The Riverside proposal emphasizes that it will serve Southern California. Current trends indicate demand for these programs, certainly post-pandemic and with the changing face of the working world, as working professionals can complete a degree while continuing their careers.

The tuition is the same as Riverside’s current in person MBA, but the campus proposes a 35 percent return to aid, moving tuition from \$99,200 to \$64,480. Enrollment is projected to steeply increase from 80-240 from years one to three. UCPB noticed that the unit count for the online degree is lower than the existing MBA. This may affect the value proposition of the online degree. The proposal suggests that work experience of admitted students justifies the lower course amount, but UCPB believes that if that is the case, some documentation or support for the students’ experience should be required.

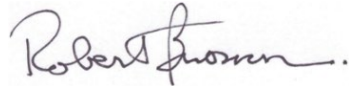
The campus hopes the relatively high RTA will increase diversity and accessibility, and there is an aggressive outreach component to the proposal. Revenues will enable recruitment and course development through the Riverside XCITE Center for Teaching and Learning, a nonprofit intended to facilitate acceleration of startup companies. A ten percent indirect cost rate reflects the online format and is in line with campus norms. Funds from other self-supported programs in the business school

have partly funded a new building. Other uses of generated funds are hiring packages for senate faculty, updating facilities and labs, and full-time MBA students can take courses in the proposed online MBA.

UCPB pointed out that while the proposal attests that there is unmet desire for a program located in southern California, the online format would untether the program geographically. Committee members wondered how the university tracks impacts of similar online programs on those existing at other campuses. Divisions might be inspired by revenue-generating programs on other campuses to launch their own, of necessity sharing at least a statewide pool of potential students. UCPB would have welcomed robust justification of the program's demand and acknowledgement of any potential impact on the Davis program. There may be a systemwide role in the future for program proposals.

The committee recommended approval of this proposal with minor reservations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Brosnan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Robert Brosnan
Chair

cc: UCPB

UCPB Proposed Self-Supporting Professional Degree Program Review Template

Name and Location of Program:

UC Riverside Online Master of Business Administration Degree (OMBA)

Lead reviewer(s):

Michael Beman

Academic justification:

Only one UC campus (Davis) currently offers a fully online MBA program, yet current trends clearly indicate demand for such programs, especially post-pandemic. The online format allows prospective students to retain their current jobs while completing their degrees and so makes the MBA more accessible to diverse groups of students.

Planning and Budget overview:

1. Proposed initial tuition and any rate of increase:

From the proposal: “The tuition for this program will match the tuition of our other SSGPDP, the Professional MBA. As of 2024, the tuition for the PMBA is set at \$1550 per unit. The total tuition for the program is \$99,200 [64 units x \$1550]. However, we plan to provide 35% return to aid so the average tuition will be \$64,480, which is significantly more affordable than all other MBA Programs in the UC system. “

Annual increase of 3% per the financial model:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/ou5vxxv93dsrxfj95jl6gz/250821-OMBA-UC-Riverside-Financial-Working-model.xlsx?rlkey=ffnr5no5oejil16wdhc89516g&e=2&dl=0>

Summary Table on page 11 of the complete packet. Most recent proposal starts on page 22 of the packet.

2. Target enrollments for years 1-3:

80	190	240
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3. Projected net revenues for years 1-3:

-\$0.1M	\$1.9M	\$2.1
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*By difference from summary table on page 11 starting Year 1 (not Pre-launch)

4. Proposed indirect cost rate (IDC):

“The campus assessment will follow the model of other campus overhead assessments and would generally range between 10% and 15% depending on the SSGPD program’s expenditure base from two years prior.”

Detailed areas of review:

5. How was the proposed IDC rate determined? Does the proposed rate appear to cover all indirect costs (facilities, IT, etc.)? What are the space needs of the program?

“Effective 3/21/2022, UCR established a policy (in working with the senate) on the role of the Financial Planning & Analysis (FP&A) office in the establishment and financial management of self-supporting graduate professional degree programs. Based on the policy, FP&A will be responsible for the administration of the campus assessment to all SSGPD programs. The campus assessment is following the model of other campus overhead assessments and generally ranges between 10% and 15% depending on the SSGPD program’s expenditure base from two years prior.

FP&A collects the revenue from assessments to SSGPD programs and manages the assessment allocations to campus units directly impacted by SSGPD programs size and the relative cost of services.

Currently, campus assessment for all self-supporting programs is based on the following scale (expenditure 2 years prior¹):

Program's Campus Expenditure Assessment

< \$1M = 12.2%
\$1M to \$8M = 10.6%
> \$8M = 9.7%”

As an online program, space needs are minimal. UCR business school is well-equipped for course development (e.g., recording) and will be used. IT requirements are likely higher owing to the online format. All should be covered by overhead policy.

6. What are the proposed uses of net revenues? How will they supplement [enhance] state-funded programs? Are there other ways that the program, if successful, will benefit the UC mission (e.g., filling a need not covered by state-supported programs)?

Note significant student recruitment expenses and use of UCR XCITE center for teaching and learning for the program are included. Proposal previously considered use of private company (Everspring) but this was removed. Use of net revenue notes that funds from other UCR business school SSGPDP partly funded a new building. General details provided on page 31 of the packet include:

- Self-support funding is used to support administrative and student support facilities that are important for the success of our students at both state- and self-supported programs.
- The online MBA will generate funds that will be used to enhance the effective use of educational technologies in new and purposeful ways to increase access and achievement at both state- and self-supported programs.
- The online MBA will use its self-support capacities to build broader recognition and expanded relationships in important fields to the benefit of campus faculty and students in both state-funded and self-support programs.
- Funds from the online MBA will facilitate the hiring of new senate faculty who, like their colleagues, teach in both state-funded and self-support programs.
- Funds from our self-supported programs are used to update specialized facilities and equipment (e.g., our behavioral lab) that serves both state- and self-supported students.
- Students in the full-time MBA will be able to take online courses offered by the online MBA program.

7. How are any potential negative impacts on state-funded programs and the research mission of the UC mitigated?

Since this is an MBA program, it is slightly isolated from these concerns. Proposal addresses these issues on pages 34-35 of the packet based on national trends indicating that online MBAs do not cannibalize existing programs. Proposal also argues that revenues free faculty to pursue research mission (e.g., pages 46-47 of the proposal).

8. Describe disposition and compensation of faculty serving the program. What is the proposed ratio of UC Senate faculty to non-UC adjunct faculty? For the former category, differentiate between ladder rank and P/LSOE. How will UC Senate faculty be compensated? On-load (i.e., course buyout), overload, or some combination thereof?

Details on faculty contributions are provided on pages 31-32 of the packet, including buyouts and overload. In short, policy will be followed and faculty will be paid by program to develop online versions of their courses, then act as course managers while the instructor role is transferred to lecturers:

“Each course will be tied to three individuals, each charged with some degree of responsibility and maintenance. The three roles are: Developer, Instructor, and Manager.

- The **course developer** will partner with the learning design experts at [UCR instructional design](#) team to create online versions of our existing courses... The course developer will always be a senate faculty member.
- The **course manager** will oversee the course throughout the year... The course manager will always be a senate faculty member.
- The **course instructor** will be responsible for teaching the course and will work closely with the course manager... The course instructor can be a senate faculty member, adjunct faculty member, or lecturer.”

As the program grows the senate faculty who is the course developer (and is expected to teach the course several times) will not be able to teach all the synchronous sessions. As the number of students in the program grows, a senate faculty member will assume the role of the course manager, overseeing lecturers who teach the synchronous session. It is our intent that these additional synchronous instructors be full-time and become part of the fabric of the School. The hiring of senate faculty, made possible by the additional revenues generated by

the online program, will also help us increase our overall research footprint and bring additional reputation to the UCR School of Business.”

“We plan to hire highly qualified lecturers for instructional support. One benefit of an online program is that we will be able to use a broader geographical area to recruit and hire instructors. As a result, we expect a candidate pool that is large, diverse, and highly qualified.”

“Course Developer (author) Stipend: \$30,000 per 4-unit course (one-time expense) Course Manager Stipend: \$5,000 (annually) Course Instructor Stipend: \$15,000 (per course section)”

9. Describe how the program will ensure accessibility and encourage diversity. Note: these concerns may be addressed through return-to-aid used for need-based fellowships, although programs may address accessibility and diversity in a variety of ways and UCPB does not set a standard return-to-aid percentage.

35% of revenue to financial aid. Other diversity components were thoroughly reviewed during the UCR approval process and include concerns about accessing the online content etc. Pages 35-37 include information on recruitment and admissions of a diverse cohort. Also see notes on lecturer diversity enabled by the online format.

10. Describe the market analysis used to justify demand and price point for the proposed program. Will the program compete with others in the system? What are projected percentages of California resident, domestic non-resident, and international students in the program?

A meta-point that this program is authored by a marketing professor and so deserves greater trust and weight. Program may compete with the only other fully online MBA program in the system at UC Davis, although the proposal continually emphasizes the need for a similar program in southern California. Analysis provided on pages 44-45 of the packet establishes the demand for online MBAs and the pool of potential students in southern California. A detailed breakdown of projected student population is not provided, but the proposal and degree are geared toward domestic students and specifically resident students in southern California.

11. Describe relevant consultation and assessment from lower levels of review, external assessments of the proposal, and the like.

Thoroughly reviewed **SIX** times at UCR since 2021 and approved by UCR Division on May 20 2025. Multiple versions of the proposal, committee comments, and proposal author responses are included for reference, leading to the large file.

12. Any other planning and budget concerns?

No.

13. Any academic-quality or related concerns to flag for CCGA?

64 unit requirement is slightly less than other programs but justified for accessibility and in comparison to other online MBAs

14. Are there specific areas of concern that the mandated review after the third year of operation ought to capture?

None

Conclusions and recommendation:

A thoroughly reviewed proposal that seems poised for success based on information provided. I recommend that we vote to approve.