[For Tulane employees, PMBA offers tuition-free path to professional advancement]

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With Tulane's tuition waiver program, university employees can elevate their professional skills and expand their career options with a prestigious, affordable degree from a nationally ranked program.

When Tulane staff member Maple Goldberg enrolled in the Freeman School’s Professional MBA program, she had two goals in mind.

“I wanted to increase my earning potential and income, and I wanted to put myself in a stronger position in the job market,” recalls Goldberg, who at the time was working as a financial analyst for one of the schools. “I wanted to have greater choice in the opportunities available to me, including roles that offered meaningful work, sustainable work-life balance and a positive workplace culture.”

Today, as financial services manager in Tulane's Institutional Planning & Budget Office, Goldberg (MBA '26) is proud to say she's achieved both goals, and she credits the PMBA program with helping her to do it.

"Since starting the program, I earned three promotions across two departments at Tulane," she says. "I built skills I could use the next day at work to further departmental goals, I'm much more confident in my abilities, and I pivoted to a career path in Financial Planning & Analysis, which I find interesting, satisfying and aligned with my salary goals."

Goldberg is one of the hundreds of Tulane staff members who have used their employee tuition waiver benefit to enroll in the PMBA, Freeman's part-time MBA program for working professionals. The program enables students to elevate their professional skills and earn a prestigious degree from a nationally ranked program in just three years through a convenient format comprising evening and optional online courses. Apart from a bachelor's degree, no prerequisite courses or admission tests are required. While staff members are responsible for their books and student fees, the tuition waiver eliminates the program's biggest cost.

For many Tulane employees, combining the tuition waiver with the PMBA is more than just a benefit. It's an investment in one's future that pays real-world dividends in terms of professional skills, career advancement and personal growth.

"One of my favorite aspects of the program is the ability to immediately apply what I learn in the classroom to real-world situations at work," says current PMBA student Aaron Richoux, director of Facilities, Instrumentation and Safety at the School of Science and Engineering. "Whether the topic is finance, operations, strategy or leadership, I often find myself using concepts from class to improve decision-making and problem-solving."

PMBA student Daniel Goree, director of volleyball operations in the Department of Athletics, echoes Richoux's comments.

"In my current role, I work with Excel and I'm constantly planning future financial decisions for Tulane athletics," he says. "Understanding how to better work with money, finance platforms and co-workers are all skills that I am learning within the program."

Sienna Abdulahad, director of Finance and Operations at the Taylor Center for Social Innovation and Design Thinking, enrolled in the PMBA to get a more comprehensive business education than she could get from professional development conferences or workshops.

“The transition was smoother than expected,” she says. “Most of the coursework connects directly to my position as a director of finance and operations, sharpening my decision making and introducing me to new tools and technologies that are changing how we work and lead.”

While building professional skills is the most common reason staff members cite for enrolling in the PMBA, it’s just one of many advantages the program offers.

“The defining strength of this curriculum is its versatility,” says Ashley Francis, assistant dean of the Freeman School’s Stewart Center for Professional & Executive Education. “It equips professionals with the strategic agility to solve problems and lead effectively, but beyond that end result, Tulane staff members tell us they value the whole experience. They enjoy the classroom interaction and engaging with peers, they appreciate the convenience and affordability, and they love the opportunity to earn a credential that positions them for greater responsibility, higher earnings and long-term professional advancement.”

For some employees, the program also provides a pathway to pivot into a new job or even a new career.

“There are a multitude of reasons I decided to sign up for Tulane’s PMBA program, but one of the major reasons was I wanted to further advance my knowledge within the finance field,” says Goree. “Post graduation, I would love to work in the energy field, preferably involving finance.”

And thanks to the tuition waiver, all Tulane employees have access to this transformative experience.

“It's an extraordinary benefit, and one of the most valuable investments the university makes in its employees,” says Richoux. “It demonstrates the university’s commitment to employee development and lifelong learning.”

For Tulane staff members on the fence about the program, Goldberg offers some pointed advice.

“Go for it,” she urges. “The program is rigorous, but if you invest the energy, it offers a great deal in return.”

That sentiment is one Jantzen Hubbard, assistant director of graduate admissions at the Stewart Center, hears frequently.

"Often, the hardest part is simply making the decision to start," says Hubbard. "Once you take that first step, you are not navigating the process alone. Our team is here to make the journey as seamless as possible for every PMBA student, including our fellow Tulane employees. The application itself is straightforward: a resume, transcripts, two letters of recommendation and a brief personal statement. Both Fall and Spring start dates are available, so applicants can choose the timeline that works best for them, and with our July deadline approaching, now is a great time to begin."

For more information about the Professional MBA program mechanics, curriculum and pacing, or to start an application, visit the Freeman School of Business PMBA website.