



## Interview with Haas Admissions

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**Q:** What is special about your MBA program? In addition to its excellent reputation, what differentiates it from other Top MBA programs?

**A:** Haas is differentiated from other Top MBA programs in a few key ways. First, location: we're in the heart of the most innovative space in business in the world right now, the San Francisco Bay Area. Our connections to and relationships with all the big tech companies, startups, venture capital, sustainability companies, and other innovators is a tremendous advantage for our students. Second, it's our history and commitment to questioning the status quo, one of our key defining leadership principles - that shows up in our investment in entrepreneurship, in embedding that entrepreneurial spirit into everything we do. Third, it's our class culture. We are one of the smallest top 10 programs, and that enables us to really build a hyper-collaborative, close-knit class. You'll leave knowing everyone in your whole class, and you'll graduate into an alumni community that's extremely supportive. Further, perhaps the biggest differentiator is our alignment to the 4 defining principles at Haas: Questioning the Status Quo, Beyond Yourself, Students Always, and Confidence Without Attitude.

**Q:** Are there any recent changes in the programs or in the admission process?

**A:** We have added 7 concurrent degree programs with our engineering school that allow you to graduate with an MBA and a Masters in Engineering from Berkeley - all within 2 years. This builds on our existing MBA/JD and MBA/MPH programs. We have a new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion requirement as part of our commitment to developing inclusive leaders who can lead diverse teams. In Admissions, we continue to value your passions and motivations, including challenges from your personal or professional journey that you have overcome in getting to this point in your life and career.

**Q:** Has the COVID-19 situation have an impact on getting accepted to the programs at your school? Is there any other impact candidates should be aware of?

**A:** No direct impact other than the current Visa and travel restrictions related to the US or to world travel. But we hope this is cleared up soon. No impact on our admissions process - though we do expect to see the impact of the situation show up in some applications - either through reflective essays talking about the impact in your own journey, through furloughs or layoffs due to COVID losses (we understand), or through renewed/new passions for healthcare, sustainability, inclusion, or other broader goals.



**Q:** Can you share some details about the atmosphere in the school? Amongst the students? Between students and faculty? How do students spend their free time?

**A:** Our students are incredibly collaborative and - from everything we have heard - really like each others' company! We think the aligned principle of Confidence Without Attitude really helps here - people are brilliant and driven - and they'll push you to your best - and they'll be there to help you iterate and regroup when you fail at something out of your comfort zone. That combination of drive + support from classmates is what many of our students really need to be at their most creative. With our small class size, you also have great opportunities to engage with professors and faculty outside the classroom. In terms of free time - the Bay Area offers everything. Nightlife and city-life in nearby San Francisco and Oakland, art, culture, social justice. Also, we're only a couple hours away from Yosemite National Park and Lake Tahoe...and less than an hour from Napa and Sonoma Valley Wine Country. If students are looking for something a little closer - they just have to cross the road across from Haas to go for hikes between classes in the Berkeley Hills.

**Q:** Can you share some details about the area the school is located in?

**A:** Haas is located in Berkeley, California, which is just across the bay from San Francisco and a short trip to Silicon Valley. Professionally, you'll find yourself in a hub of innovation . Personally, you'll have immediate access to beautiful nature, diverse communities, and lots of opportunity to engage locally in the community.

**Q:** Can you share some details regarding job opportunities and summer internships for students in your school?

**A:** About 60% of students wind up going into consulting, financial services, or technology firms after they graduate - which means almost 40% are on a path a little more specific. Lots of people come to Haas for a particular niche passion - from food sustainability to impact investing to autonomous vehicles. As such, our career management group is equipped to help our students with both the traditional business pathways and more unique opportunities. With 2nd year peer advisors, our 1st years are well set up for internships, and our students are well set up for full-time offers in the Bay Area or around the world at graduation. For the class of 2019, for example, more than 93% of our students received full-time offers within 3 months of graduation. Further, 15% of job-seeking graduates went to work in startups.

**Q:** What is it that you are looking for in a candidate? Who will especially enjoy this school? who will be a good fit to the school?

**A:** We are looking for 3 things: academic excellence, professional and leadership growth, and a values fit. If you have incredible passion for something, bring it into your application and as a



student here. If you align really well with any or all of our Defining Leadership Principles - you'll thrive at this school. If you are curious and want to get better as a leader in all kinds of ways, you'll do well. We are looking for people who have demonstrated leadership in their careers and lives (informal or formal), seek to have a positive impact wherever they go, and are willing to take risks to challenge established norms in business and society.

**Q:** One most important piece of advice for an applicant based on your experience?

**A:** Be authentic. Give us an application that only you could have written. Don't give us what you think we want to hear - because we can recognize when someone isn't being true to themselves. So - be yourself, dream big, and give us an authentic sense of who you are and who you're trying to be.

**Q:** What NOT to do in the admissions process?

**A.** Brag about all of your accomplishments with no acknowledgement of others who helped you. We expect you to have done really amazing things in your life so far, but lean into our leadership principle of confidence without attitude (in other words - confidence with humility) when telling us your story.

**Q:** Are later rounds worth considering?

**A:** Yes - all rounds are worth considering. If you have your best application ready in earlier rounds - apply then. But, if you're not ready to apply in Round 1 or 2, and you really feel you'll be at your best in Round 3 (for example) - then apply in Round 3! Excellent candidates are well-received in all rounds in our admissions office.

**Q:** GMAT and importance as a % of the candidacy? What is the minimum GMAT you are looking for?

**A:** Whether it's the GMAT or GRE our holistic review process takes into account not just the total score but the applicant's strengths that are represented in each section. We will also look for those strengths throughout the application. Applicants with weaker undergraduate records should consider the standardized testing of greater importance. Similarly applicants without significant exposure to business fundamentals should look to the testing to convey their quantitative abilities. As the importance of the test results varies based on undergraduate and work experience no specific percentage value is placed on the testing results.

**Q:** Is there anything you'd like our candidates to know regarding the admissions process?



**A:** Our admissions process is quite similar to those of our peer institutions in order to streamline the application process for our applicants. Where we diverge is in three key areas. Our essay questions lend themselves to responses that cover not only an applicant's experiences but also their values. We don't utilize a standard letter or recommendation template as we prefer to prompt an applicant's recommender to focus on specific leadership attributes. Lastly, our interview process allows applicants to select from several interview options including a pre-recorded option which allows applicants to schedule an interview that fits their own schedules.

**Q:** Any tips for Israeli applicants considering applying to your school?

**A:** Berkeley Haas is committed to a globally diverse program. In most years over one third of the student body is international. As such we have a robust international alumni community. You can get to know Haas a bit better and opportunities from your region by reaching out to alumni chapters here in Israel. We have chapters in Tel Aviv and Yokneam. Our chapter leaders would be happy to connect with you. Feel free to reach them at this link:

<https://haas.berkeley.edu/alumni/community/chapters/>

**Q:** Can you tell us more about funding – scholarship/fellowship options in your school?

**A:** All applicants are evaluated for fellowships, awards and scholarship funding. In addition we offer a small number of additional awards which require an additional application. We also offer a need based grant which students can apply for separate from their admissions application. Funding will be awarded to students at the time of admission based on the strength of the student's application. Whether a candidate is a domestic candidate or international students is not a factor in our funding decisions. <https://mba.haas.berkeley.edu/admissions/scholarships>

**Q:** Can you share some information about partners who are joining?

**A:** Berkeley Haas is a place that is welcoming of students with families. There are a variety of opportunities that are specifically geared to students attending with partners and children. They include family housing opportunities: We also have an active Partners Club and Bear Cubs Club for students with families.