

MASTER OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Concentrations: Entrepreneurship
or Innovation Leadership



Western
Carolina
UNIVERSITY

College of Business

YOUR IDEAS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

Are you ready to surround yourself with experienced business mentors and develop your own network of like-minded people sharing the same entrepreneurial spirit and determination?

You could go through years of business trial-and-error, financial setbacks, and high risks with limited rewards – or you could feel confident starting your own business or leading your existing business into new entrepreneurial ventures.

Fostering the Entrepreneurial Spirit in All That We Do

WCU fosters the entrepreneurial spirit by giving students the opportunity to customize their learning experience based on their goals and desires.

Launch Your New Venture During the Program

Our curriculum encourages you to tailor your learning experience around a new start-up company, organization, or idea, allowing you to start your own for-profit business, non-profit organization, or innovative initiative within an existing organization during the program. Our experienced faculty will mentor you along the way, offering a truly unique experience for those eager to hit the ground running.

Whether you aspire to build your own business from the ground up, grow an existing one, or lead change within an organization, WCU's Master of Entrepreneurship in Innovation Leadership and Entrepreneurship (MEILE) program can help you minimize risk and maximize reward.

WCU's fully online Master of Entrepreneurship was created in 2003 as the first program of its kind in the US. We were the first to bring a Master of Entrepreneurship program online and have over 15 years of experience enabling distance students to successfully complete our program.

Our program is among fewer than 6% of programs accredited by the prestigious Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

Through a mix of online learning and real-world scenarios, our master's degree is the right choice for anyone eager to learn what it takes to build and lead an entrepreneurial venture.



To begin your application, visit gradapply.wcu.edu
Contact an admissions officer at (828)227-7398
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You Decide Your Path: Choose from Two Strategic Concentrations

1. **Entrepreneurship** for those launching a new venture or growing an emerging business.
2. **Innovation Leadership** for those leading exciting, innovative change through intrapreneurship (entrepreneurial process within an organization).

Both concentrations allow students to join a collaborative, imaginative, and supportive learning community dedicated to developing dynamic entrepreneurs ready to build the “next big thing.”

Here at WCU, we understand new ventures can be complex, and best thrive with coaching, caring criticism, and collaboration behind every decision.

Our program will teach you how to think strategically about the entire scope of a new venture – providing you with a strong entrepreneurial foundation even if you’re planning to join an existing organization in a leadership role.

We Offer the Flexibility You Need

The MEILE program offers the flexibility you need to enhance your entrepreneurial experience on your time while balancing your work and personal life.



Highlights



Fully online degree with a strong learning community



Part of the 6% of universities accredited by AACSB



WCU offers some of the lowest tuition costs in North Carolina



GRE/GMAT/MAT is NOT required

MORE THAN A DIPLOMA

Our Master of Entrepreneurship program is more than a diploma. It’s a life-changing learning opportunity that will expand the way you think and how you execute your strategies. You will acquire the soft and hard skills necessary to be an entrepreneur and innovation leader.

Our faculty will teach you how to create start-up plans, develop go-to-market strategies, and launch new ventures.

The U.S. Census Bureau finds that nearly one million new businesses are registered each year. There is no doubt entrepreneurial mindset and skills are in high demand, even if you plan on leveraging those skills in an existing business or organization to create impactful change.



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MASTER OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP CORE COURSES

All Master of Entrepreneurship students take seven core classes and three additional courses in their chosen concentration: Entrepreneurship or Innovation Leadership.

Core Courses (21 semester credit hours)

- ENT 601: Entrepreneurial Innovation
- ENT 610: Entrepreneurial Creation
- ENT 640: Entrepreneurial Feasibility Analysis
- ENT 650: Advanced Entrepreneurial Finance
- ENT 655: Planning a New Venture
- ENT 660: Entrepreneurial Strategy I
- ENT 670: Entrepreneurial Strategy II

A CLOSER LOOK INTO MEILE CONCENTRATIONS

Looking to launch a start-up or lead innovation within an existing business? Either concentration in our MEILE program will empower you to customize your experience based on your personal goals and desired career path.



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Entrepreneurship Concentration

The Entrepreneurship Concentration focuses on launching or growing a start-up organization. Many of our students have launched successful new ventures while in the program, benefiting from both faculty and fellow student entrepreneurs through our learning community experience, mentorship, and professional network access.

This concentration will help students develop the tools, assets, experience, and network needed to lead an entrepreneurial initiative, whether a business, organization, or groundbreaking product or service. It emphasizes how to start a new venture, from your first idea, to the official launch date, to scaling the effort. Many of the program's coursework assignments can be immediately applicable to tasks that entrepreneurs will need to complete to move forward with their venture. Examples include developing a press kit, "pitching" the business to various audiences, establishing a partnership and/or management team, and exploring the financial feasibility of an endeavor to assess and manage risk.

During the program students explore:

- Possible markets to enter and their potential
- Feasibility of products/services
- Nature and sources of new venture funding
- How to build an effective implementation team

In addition to the core classes, Entrepreneurship Concentration courses include:

- ENT 600 : Entrepreneurial Planning
- ENT 630 : Entrepreneurial Growth
- ENT 645 : Entrepreneurial Marketing

Students who select the Entrepreneurship Concentration are typically acting as the venture owner or founder, and aim to:

- Become an entrepreneur (and need help developing an idea into a feasible start-up)
- Build a new business or organization from the ground up
- Grow or expand an existing venture
- Radically change, ramp-up, or otherwise adapt to address new threats and opportunities
- Build organizations within an industry profession (such as an architecture firm, engineering consulting service, or a medical practice)



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Innovation Leadership Concentration

Today's organizations are faced with rapidly changing environments, creating both challenges and opportunities to evolve and prosper.

The Innovation Leadership Concentration addresses the emerging practice of Intrapreneurship, broadly defined as the application of entrepreneurial capabilities to develop new ventures within an existing firm. This concentration's curriculum enables professionals working within existing organizations to become innovative and entrepreneurial change agents, developing the knowledge and skills to help create or maintain organizational transformations.

Students in our program join a collaborative and supportive learning community with faculty and peers who are passionate about leading innovation activities from within organizations and creating or growing intrapreneurial ventures.



In addition to the core classes, Innovation Leadership Concentration courses include:

- ENT 615: Design Thinking
- ENT 635: Intrapreneurship: Innovation within Organizations
- ENT 637: Innovative Organizations

The Innovation Leadership Concentration is designed to address the emerging need of organizations, whether for-profit, not-for-profit, or governmental, to become more innovative and entrepreneurial in their initiatives.



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Students who pick this concentration are typically acting from the perspective of a non-owner leader within an organization and aim to:

- **Build an innovation capability**
- **Drive renewal, growth, and expansion**
- **Accelerate strategic growth through innovation**
- **Update their professional skills to include innovation and entrepreneurial practices needed by companies faced with rapidly changing environmental contexts**
- **Enhance skills needed for leadership positions within innovative organizations**
- **Strengthen a family-owned business to help lead the organization into the future**
- **Encourage and empower employees to become innovative change agents within an existing organization**



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Go from Classroom to National Competition to Successful Venture

Students are encouraged to participate in national, regional, and local pitch competitions for additional funding support and validation of their ideas. MEILE alumnus Ed Carroll won a \$10,000 mini-grant from the NC IDEA SEED pitch competition for his company, Edison Marks.

Edison Marks focuses on distilling the ins and outs of cybersecurity into personalized, easy action steps – something judges knew small businesses would be excited about, especially the ones looking to reduce their risk of cyberattacks.

“A good bit of Edison Marks can be attributed directly to the Master of Entrepreneurship program at Western Carolina University.”

Ed Carroll, MEILE Alumnus

Collaborating with Partners and the Business Community

Our Entrepreneurship curriculum was designed in collaboration with employers in North Carolina and beyond. Our students exit the program Business Ready® to meet the evolving market needs in the local and global business community.

Courses are led by academically qualified and professionally experienced faculty, and the program boasts participative engagement with businesses and organizations through virtual tours and guest speakers, adding highly valued networking opportunities to the coursework experience.



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WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH THIS DEGREE?

MEILE students receive both an education and the real-world experience needed to go from creating a new venture to scaling an organization.

Depending on your concentration and aspirations, you might seek a career in any of the following roles:

- Business Owner (Start-up)
- Social Entrepreneur (Start-up)
- Venture Capitalist
- Director of Innovation
- Chief Innovation Officer
- Head of Digital Ventures
- Strategy Consulting (various roles)

FACULTY INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Because our faculty have real-world business experience and are engaged in post-doctoral research and consulting, they can help students understand the link between theory and practice, sharing real-life examples from their careers and anchoring the learning outcomes to match what businesses need most from graduates.

For example, faculty have worked with the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Health Administration (NHA), and other federal agencies on grants and helping commercialize new products or initiate new ventures.

Our Faculty Have Experience with:

- Starting their Own Ventures
- Consulting Firms
- Economic Development Organizations
- Small Business Administration Organizations
- Family Businesses
- Manufacturing Facilities
- Trade Industries
- Retail Establishments
- Fortune 500 Firms
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Private School Charters
- State Agencies
- Federal Agencies
- and More



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WHAT OUR ALUMNI HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Learn in Community

The 'learning community' style was a great experience. It made you step out of your comfort zone and work towards your goals. This type of learning is a great style for future entrepreneurs as we have to be self-starters, disciplined, and able to take constructive criticism.

Learning from peers who have had different experiences than myself has proven to be something you cannot put a price on. With this program being solely online, this type of learning community helps you get to know your peers since we are not in a classroom and able to network in person.

Katherine Pearson, MEILE Alumna

Think Differently

After spending some time in this graduate program, I can attest that the learning community style, in my opinion, is a more efficient learning style and can help develop students in a better way. Students will be better prepared to take on the market and business world with the information we retain and apply in this graduate program.

After finishing my undergrad degree at WCU in Business Law and working in software sales for almost a decade now, I wholeheartedly agree with the benefits and advantages of the 'learning community model' vs. the 'traditional learning model.'

Communication skills are essential. I could tell that this program in a learning community model would enhance our needed communication skills to progress in corporate leadership and entrepreneurship.

Another part of the learning community model and this graduate program that excited me was being groomed to think differently regarding taking risks, retaining and applying information, and networking.

Stokes Warren, MEILE Alumnus

Career Transition

I looked for a year for a program that would help me now and in the future once I leave the military. WCU's MEILE program just ticked all the boxes for me.

Military Officer MEILE Alumnus



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AFFORDABLE PAYMENT OPTIONS TO FIT YOUR BUDGET

Financial Assistance and Tuition Rates

With some of the most competitive graduate tuition rates in North Carolina, we keep affordability and accessibility a priority. We make it easy for you to elevate your career prospects while seizing the opportunity to earn an affordable degree.

View our [tuition and fee](#) rates online. Look for the “graduate business” category (students using military benefits may get special rates, listed under the “military graduate business” category).

Federal student loans are available by applying through [FAFSA.gov](#), and the university offers a payment plan. Be sure to list WCU’s school code (002981). The WCU FAFSA priority filing date is January 1 for the following Fall semester.

Scholarships are available to all students, with a university-wide application deadline of February 1, and a College of Business graduate scholarship deadline of June 30, for the upcoming academic year. To learn more about scholarships and how to apply, visit our [scholarships webpage](#).

International Applicants

As a fully online program, we welcome candidates from around the world to study from their home countries. International applications are evaluated based upon English language proficiency and prior coursework / degree equivalencies.

Approved transcript evaluation agencies and more information on international applicant requirements are available by visiting [internationalgrad.wcu.edu](#).



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ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS



Prospective graduate students must hold a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited college or university.

Application Requirements:

- Copies of transcripts
- Resume
- Essay (such as a personal statement about the candidate’s venture idea(s), entrepreneurial and professional goals, and motivation for applying to the program)

Additional optional items include:



Letters of Recommendation



Documentation of Leadership / Innovation / Entrepreneurial Achievements



Award documents



GRE/GMAT/MAT scores



Interview with the Director of Graduate Programs or a Faculty Member

Application Deadlines: Aug. 1, Dec. 15

How to Apply

Applicants can [apply online](#) through the Graduate School at WCU.

Additional Admissions Information

Please visit the [MEILE program page](#) to get the most up-to-date admissions information by following these links:

- [Application Deadlines](#)
- [Admissions Requirements](#)
- [Attend an Upcoming Virtual Open House](#)



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WHAT CAN WCU OFFER YOU AND YOUR FUTURE?

Tucked away in the mountains of western North Carolina, WCU is a close-knit community of faculty and students working together to build a global network. With more than 11,500 students attending Cullowhee, Asheville, and online programs, WCU offers a large network of students and alumni locally and across the country (and around the world!) to leverage for future networking opportunities.

WCU has more than 120 undergraduate majors and concentrations and more than 40 graduate programs focusing on high-demand degrees, including various programs in business, engineering, science, healthcare, education, humanities, and the arts.

WCU's College of Business Graduate Programs provide a diverse range of graduate degrees and certificates for recent graduates and working professionals. We focus on developing the relevant skills, experience, and leadership acumen needed to advance in an increasingly competitive global economy.

Relationships Matter to Us

WCU College of Business faculty value one-on-one relationships with students, supporting them throughout their graduate experience and continuing to offer mentorship after the graduation caps have been thrown and tassels turned to the other side.

Our professors share deep business wisdom and offer a rich experience to empower students in their careers now and well into the future. We aim to foster lasting relationships with alumni and local businesses to keep our community thriving together.

Why Enroll at WCU College of Business?

Our accredited and devoted faculty are the #1 reason students love their graduate experience at WCU.

Our programs are built around deeply engaged faculty who not only have years of experience as educators but are also leaders in their respective fields, bringing their diverse knowledge directly into each classroom.

We believe education should be accessible and affordable for anyone dedicated and willing to learn. WCU offers students an affordable, high-quality education that carries all the prestige of the UNC system.



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World-Class Faculty

More than 94% of the faculty members in the College of Business hold doctoral degrees representing 38 different universities. Beyond the classroom, senior faculty members publish research, work in public service, and provide private consulting. Faculty members are also active in professional organizations and serve as editors for professional and academic journals.

Real-World Education and Experience

Our programs offer an immersive learning environment with a proven and collaborative approach that mirrors the demands of dynamic business environments. We focus on expanding critical thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving skills so you can leave the program feeling confident in your next career move. You will emerge personally and professionally empowered to pursue a career as an entrepreneur, thought leader, or star employee.

Flexibility

Whether you are a working professional looking to move up the ranks in your field, or a recent undergraduate who wants an educational advantage as you enter the workforce, our programs are designed for your individual needs.

Accreditations

Western Carolina University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award Baccalaureate, Master’s, and Doctorate Degrees.

WCU’s College of Business is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the premier global accrediting agency for business programs. Less than 6% of business schools have AACSB accreditation for their graduate and undergraduate programs.



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