

2021 Executive MBA Council Survey Results Show Adaptations Powered by Technology

Interest remains strong as applications and inquiries on the rise

ORANGE, CALIF., Jan. 25, 2022 – The [Executive MBA Council](#) (EMBAC) announced today the results of its 2021 EMBAC Membership Program Survey, which revealed EMBA Programs made greater use of technology and format adaptations – with 88.6 percent of schools now reporting offering some form of distance learning compared to 73.9 percent in 2020 and just 55.3 percent in 2019. “Clearly the global pandemic is driving acceleration in the use of technology, and is evidence of how adaptable our member programs are,” said Michael Desiderio, executive director of EMBAC.

The results also show the average number of applications received per program increased by 17 percent in 2021 compared to 2020. Along with this increase, inquiries rose 3 percent in 2021 compared to 2020. “Despite the uncertainty of the global pandemic, interest in EMBA programs remains strong,” says Desiderio. That said, more inquiries and applications didn’t necessarily translate into increased enrollments as average class size dipped a bit from 47 in 2020 to 44 in 2021.

Despite the challenges brought about by the pandemic, EMBA Programs continue to innovate and adapt, with 47.6 percent indicating a change in program delivery this year, compared to 30.3 percent in 2020. The biggest changes result from online and virtual or blended and hybrid additions.

Programs have expanded their use of technology in other ways: Almost four out of five EMBA Programs in the survey purchased cases electronically, and the purchase of electronic books rose from 30.7 percent in 2020 to 35.6 percent in 2021. Programs that use other electronic course materials also increased from 33.5 percent in 2020 to 36 percent in 2021.

In addition to these trends, the findings also show that the percentage of female enrollment in EMBA programs is at its highest ever – now reaching 33 percent in 2021, compared to 30 percent in 2017. “While there is work to be done, EMBA programs are chipping away each year at closing the gender gap,” says Desiderio.

Additional insights from the 2021 EMBAC Membership Program Survey include:

- Executive coaching continues to be an integral part of EMBA Programs: 88.1 percent of EMBA Programs offered executive coaching in 2021, up from 83.3 percent in 2020.
- The percentage of students who received full financial sponsorship dipped, while self-sponsorship increased slightly. The percentage of self-funded students rose from 53.8 percent in 2020 to 56.2 percent in 2021, and 15.2 percent of students received full sponsorship in 2021, compared to 17.6 percent in 2020.
- Almost 60 percent of programs offer scholarships or fellowships, and almost one-third of EMBA students receive scholarships or fellowships.

The EMBA Council currently includes nearly 200 colleges and universities that administer close to 300 programs in more than 30 countries worldwide. Each year, EMBAC conducts a Membership Program Survey using the current methodology annually since 2003. In 2021, the survey was conducted by Percept Research, held from June 22 to Aug. 29, 2021, and was completed by approximately 84% of the EMBA member programs.



About the Executive MBA Council

The academic association that represents the Executive MBA (EMBA) industry, the Executive MBA Council (EMBAC) advances the cause of EMBA Programs by serving as a facilitator of best practice sharing and knowledge dissemination, and fostering an inclusive and diverse community among high-quality programs. EMBAC plays a thought leadership role by engaging in research that offers insights, by generating or packaging relevant content of importance and interest to the membership and industry, by advocating for the industry, and by nurturing an environment of inclusion that inspires all members and stakeholders. To learn more about the Council and its members, visit <https://embac.org>; prospective students should visit <https://executivemba.org> for more information.

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