

Duke Master of Engineering Management Program

Assistant Director of Admissions Susan Brown was online on Thursday, October 29, from noon to 1pm to talk about Duke's Distributed Master of Engineering Management Program. The chat transcript is below.

Susan Brown (12:00 PM): Welcome to Duke's Master of Engineering Management Program chat! I'm Susan Brown, Assistant Director of Admissions for the program, and I hope that I can address any concerns that you have. **This week, we'll focus on our low-residency distance option for working professionals.** Let's get started. Please note that we plan to post a transcript of this chat on our website for future use.

Elijah (12:02 PM): Susan I know this program is very new; I believe it started this summer. How well is it running?

Susan Brown (12:04 PM): Our first cohort joined the program in August, so they're in their first semester right now. Our goal was to have 10 students, and we ended up with 11. Our first residency took place in August, and it was great. They participated in orientation activities, teambuilding exercises, and case studies to prepare for the next two years. We have three distance classes this semester: EGRMGMT 230: Finance and Accounting for Technology-based Companies, as well as EGRMGMT 260: Engineering Project Management and EGRMGMT 299.XX: Designing Customer Experiences

Elijah (12:06 PM): Is admission only available for the fall or is a spring application open also?

Susan Brown (12:07 PM): At this point, only fall admission is available. This is due to our residency requirements - an orientation residency in the summer, one the following summer, and one at graduation the year after.

Celine (12:08 PM): When is the application due for next fall?

Susan Brown (12:09 PM): We accept applications in rounds - you can read more about those at <http://memp.pratt.duke.edu/application-deadlines>. We use rounds as a way to manage the flow of applications and provide decisions within reasonable time period.

Elijah (12:10 PM): I was reading that students in the d-MEMP are allowed to switch into the campus program; how easy is that?

Susan Brown (12:10 PM): We're ironing out the switching process, but the reason we allow this is because it really is the same program, just offered through a different portal. We are currently building a policy on how completing a residency correlates to completing a semester of our campus program's seminar and workshop series.

Elijah (12:11 PM): You said there were supposed to be 10 admits; about how many applications did you receive?

Susan Brown (12:12 PM): We received about 20 d-MEMP applications for Fall 2009. We admitted a little over half, and of those we admitted, all either enrolled or deferred their admission to next year. Applicants have the option of deferring admission for one year without penalty or reapplication.

Elijah (12:13 PM): Will those deferred applications count towards the 10 seats you want to fill for 2010?

Susan Brown (12:14 PM): We wanted 10 for the first cohort, as we were just beginning the program. We expect to enroll at least 20 for Fall 2010.

Elijah (12:16 PM): How are the financial aid packages if any?

Susan Brown (12:19 PM): The program doesn't offer fellowships for the d-MEMP program, as we expect that most of its students are working professionals. US citizens and permanent residents can apply for federal loans. The program's cost for two years is \$38,000, and d-MEMP students do not incur the expense of moving to Durham for a year. I also encourage students to see what their company offers as far as support or simply tuition reimbursement. Students can expect \$9,000 tuition in a semester with two courses.

Andrea (12:21 PM): Is there a possibility of taking a course at NC State if the technical electives may fit my overall objectives better?

Susan Brown (12:22 PM): We do offer that option to our campus students, Andrea, but NC State's inter-institutional transfer agreement doesn't support distance programs.

Celine (12:23 PM): Were there any international students in the D-MEMP program this fall?

Susan Brown (12:24 PM): We had a permanent resident this year, Celine, but due to the short timeframe of our initial application cycle, no international candidates joined us in the fall. I expect that will be different this year - there's plenty of time to plan that first trip to Durham!

Elijah (12:27 PM): does the d-memp student have support with the career department on campus?

Susan Brown (12:28 PM): d-MEMP students will have online access to general career information as it becomes available to on-campus students. However, it is important to note that d-MEMP is targeted towards working professionals and as such, there will not be a strong emphasis on job placement or career development for d-MEMP students. Career fairs will not be accessible in a virtual format. d-MEMP students will have the opportunity to hear from industry leaders during the residencies and through recorded seminars.

Celine (12:28 PM): When are the 1 week residencies done? Are they at the start of the semester, in the middle or at the end?

Susan Brown (12:29 PM): The first residency is usually held in mid-August, during the same week as our traditional program's orientation. Classes begin a week later. The middle residency will take place in July the following summer. The third and final will take place in mid-May the next year, graduation week.

Matt (12:29 PM): Good afternoon. Will the Eng. technical courses be offered online as well?

Susan Brown (12:30 PM): Hi Matt. Certain electives are offered as part of the d-MEMP Program. See <http://memp.pratt.duke.edu/flexible-degree-options#d-memp> and click on the linked words 'Distributed Master of Engineering Management Program (d-MEMP)' to see a breakdown of what's available via distance.

Matt (12:31 PM): I understand that for some courses, there has to be collaboration on projects. Has that worked out well with distance students and on-campus students?

Susan Brown (12:33 PM): That's correct. Our d-MEMP students work on teams with campus students. We make resources available to students to really foster collaboration, and we try to assign teams so that at least two d-MEMP students are on a team together, depending on the course. Generally, these blended teams have done well this semester.

Celine (12:34 PM): What is the most important part when you are selecting a student, GRE scores, GPA, work experience etc?

Susan Brown (12:35 PM): Those are all important, Celine. We consider quantitative factors, like GPA or GRE, but we also study qualitative factors, like work experience (resume), letters of recommendation, and statement of purpose. This year's d-MEMP class averaged two years of work experience. If you want to see our test averages for the program as a whole, go to <http://memp.pratt.duke.edu/exemplary-and-diverse-students> and click on the class profile link in the first paragraph.

Susan Brown (12:36 PM): Are any of you 'local', meaning an hour out of Durham? Just wondering.

Matt (12:37 PM): I'm at Lynchburg, VA, so I could occasionally travel to Durham.

Susan Brown (12:38 PM): d-MEMP students who can make it to Durham are always welcome to attend live classes and other events whenever possible.

Matt (12:38 PM): Well, I have to get back to work now. Thank you for your time!

Celine (12:46 PM): How are classes online conducted? Is it a video taken during the on campus class?

Susan Brown (12:47 PM): d-MEMP courses are recorded using Media Site software, and will be accessible for synchronous and asynchronous viewing via the Internet. Faculty will individually determine what other collaboration technologies and tools they want to use for their courses.

Elijah (12:47 PM): Do text books have to be purchased or is there online access to relevant course readings

Susan Brown (12:48 PM): A lot of our classes use coursepacks, information taken from various sources and bound for us. Students can order their books online before the first residency and carry them home, or they can be shipped directly from the bookstore. Some readings might be available on a course's Blackboard (internal) site.

Celine (12:50 PM): How will testing and assignments be conducted?

Susan Brown (12:51 PM): A lot of our tests are administered using Blackboard. Students can also submit assignments there.

Elijah (12:56 PM): Thank you Susan for your time

Susan Brown (12:57 PM): You're welcome, Elijah! Hope it was helpful.

Andrea (12:57 PM): Yes this was very helpful. Thank you.