

MA IN APPLIED ECONOMICS: CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

MA in Applied Economics prepares Data-driven Changemakers.

Preparatory Semester (typically July and August)

- Self-study online modules in Economics and English
- Coursera-based Calculus class

Fall Semester (September to mid-December): Foundations

- Discovery week
- Intensive mathematics review (pass/fail)
- Core classes: Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Quantitative Methods 1, Statistical Programming
- Effective Communication for Applied Economists
- Personal Professional Development (pass/fail)

Spring Semester (January to March): Acquiring experience

- Core class: Quantitative Methods 2
- 2-4 elective classes
- Interventions Module (Intervention seminars, Fieldwork/solutions seminar)
- Communicating for Impact 1
- Personal Professional Development (pass/fail)

Summer Semester (mid-April to mid-July): Impact

- 3-4 elective classes
- Group client project
- Communicating for Impact 2 (consultations for Group client project)

Note: in 2016-2017, students can take either 5 electives + Interventions module (equal to 2 electives), or 7 electives without the Interventions module

Each course typically meets twice weekly for **two 90-minute sessions**. Courses often have an additional **90-minute exercise session**. If possible, no classes are scheduled on Fridays. To graduate, students need to pass all the courses listed above with a GPA of 1.75 or higher.

Taking three or more electives in a given area will grant you a specialization:

- Financial Economics,
- Public Policy,
- Macroeconomics and Forecasting, or
- Corporate Economics.

1 YEAR, 3 SEMESTERS, 40 INTENSIVE WEEKS OF CLASS

	Week	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
FALL: FOUNDATIONS September-December	Discovery days	Field-based projects													
	Intensive math review														
	Microeconomics intensive course														
	Macroeconomics intensive course														
		Quantitative methods 1 intensive course				Statistical programming intensive course									
		Effective communication for applied economists													
		Personal professional development													
SPRING: ACQUIRING EXPERIENCE January-March		Quantitative methods 2													
		Elective 1													
		Elective 2													
		Interventions seminars										Solution design seminar			
		Fieldwork in intervention topics + solution design seminar													
		Communicating for impact 1													
		Personal professional development													
SUMMER: IMPACT April-July		Group project – for client or independent													
		Elective 3													
		Elective 4													
		Elective 5													
		Communicating for impact 2: Consultations													
			Personal professional development: Consultations												

Course descriptions

Preparatory semester: Getting ready

Several months before joining the program, students receive a test in mathematics for self-evaluation. If test results indicate that students need additional help in mathematics, students are encouraged to sign up for a free Coursera course in Calculus. Students also complete a self-directed course in Economics and English by studying special materials to review basic areas of Economics and English.

Preparatory Semester is designed to be part-time. The more students are prepared for the program from their previous degrees, the easier and less time consuming the preparatory semester will be for them. Students do not have to be based in Prague for this period.

Fall semester: Foundations

Week 0. Orientation and Discovery Days

Students discover companies and organizations that have achieved impact in a variety of ways and work on short projects for these companies or organizations.

Weeks 1-2. Intensive Mathematics Review

Students who have waited until now to review their math will find the course extremely fast and not satisfactory enough for the subsequent work they need to do in the other core and elective classes. Math is a pass/fail requirement. Students cannot graduate without passing the class.

Weeks 3-13. Core Courses

The **core economics and quantitative courses** are offered in two blocks of 5.5 weeks each, or in parallel. If these classes are offered in blocks, students

concentrate intensely on two core classes at a time, finishing with finals for Microeconomics and Quantitative Methods 1 right around mid-semester. The **Statistical Programming** class is a very hands-on course that helps students master the software they will need to use in later semesters. Study groups will be formed for each 5.5 weeks to enable deeper learning.

Effective Communication for Applied Economists concentrates on precise writing skills in different formats and effective, persuasive presentation skills.

During **Personal Professional Development**, students start exploring their interests, values, strengths, and growth areas. With the feedback from their peers, they write a Purpose Essay, outlining what they would consider a meaningful life for themselves. They do a benchmark self-assessment on various character areas, followed at the end of the semester by a peer-assessment by their classmates. Throughout the semester, guests from different organizations and companies are invited to talk about how they discovered their purpose in life, as well as about the jobs they are doing. Some students choose to try competitions offered by a variety of companies, mostly in consulting and finance. Students are encouraged to engage in extracurricular sports and well-being activities. PPD is a pass/fail class; passing it is required for graduation.

Spring semester: Acquiring experience

The spring semester continues with **Quantitative Methods 2**, where students deepen their understanding of statistical and econometric methods, ending with a project using STATA.

Additionally, students choose 2-4 semester-long **electives** drawn from a longer list offered the summer before they join the program. Classes in the past have included Time Series Applications in Finance, Human Resource Economics, Monetary Theory and Policy, Energy Economics, Credit Risk, and others. Students must take totally 5-7 electives in order to graduate. Taking 3 electives in a given area enables a student to obtain a specialization (for example, Financial Economics). Students who choose to take the Interventions module can count that class instead of 2 electives.

The **Interventions module** is a new series of classes that helps students develop knowledge in a larger variety of areas through the 3-4 week long interventions seminars, test these areas in the real world through field work, and learn problem solving and design thinking skills. Gradually, over the course of the semester, students generate ideas based on their readings and field work, filter them through divergent and convergent methods into a smaller number, develop several working prototypes of solutions, and finally propose a solution that has been tested with relevant stakeholders and has good chances to succeed. Intervention seminars are discussion groups with professors that revolve around curated articles showing the most effective interventions and tools in a given area. Topics may include migration, microfinance, discrimination, or corruption. The Interventions module always requires students to take both the research seminars and the fieldwork classes in parallel.

Communicating for Impact 1 class supports the ability to effectively inspire change through written and spoken word. In addition to writing, presentation and interviewing skills, one of the modules includes negotiation skills.

Personal Professional Development continues to bring speakers from different areas. Additionally, students are paired up with mentors that help them develop in areas where they are looking to grow. Students also prepare the job application package (CV, cover letter, LinkedIn profile) and set up the job search plan.

Summer semester: Impact

In the final semester, students continue to take **elective** courses. A minimum of 3 and a maximum of 4 electives should be taken this semester..

The rest of the semester is focused on using their skills to work on a **Group client project**. Students who submit an early proposal for their own project idea will be granted the possibility to work on their own project. Other students will join teams to work for client projects in the private, public and non-profit sector. Typically, groups of 3-5 will be formed to work on these topics, using the skills acquired in the program so far. This class will take up most of the student time, approximately 10 hours/person/week, even though actual review hours with the teaching team will only take up 30-60 min/team/week, and the review sessions with the client may take another 1 hour per week. In 2015/2016, students are working with clients such as the startups Dateio (credit card transactional data), and Zonky (innovations in credit risk scoring), and Social Bank, a new banking segment of the largest Czech Bank concentrating on providing loans to NGOs (market potential for private fundraising). Other available projects included working on urban economics projects, or calculating the value of open data.

Communicating for Impact 2 has the form of consultations: professors assist teams and individuals by appointment.

Students will do their final self- and peer-assessment at the end of the school year with the help of the **Personal Professional Development** staff.