MINDEDGE LEARNING

More Than An MBA

at Anderson University

Continuing Education Case Study

For Giovanni Calise, Associate Dean at Anderson University in South Carolina, giving MBA students ***"the techniques, the skills, the certifications, and the know-how to advance their careers"*** is a serious responsibility. That was the mindset Anderson University had when it looked to reshape its MBA program.



Positioning students to graduate with a set of core competencies designed to have an immediate business impact is a high priority for the program. Calise believes that this idea of immediate impact is important because he understands that employers want to see ***"tangible results versus just a diploma" and that MBA students "care less about that academic piece of paper and care more about the direct application of skills to their field."***

As an innovative and forward-thinking institution, Anderson University revised its MBA program with these ideas in mind. With the integration of Six Sigma and a Lean Six Sigma Certification into the MBA curriculum, the Anderson MBA teaches the critical thinking skills, problem-solving methods, and process management tools that students see as career "game changers."

Anderson's business program faculty chose to add Six Sigma to its MBA curriculum because it is a proven method of business process improvement, helping organizations improve the quality of its products and services, employee morale, and ultimately its profits.



In 2021 Anderson University augmented its traditional MBA curriculum with a Six Sigma class and an online Lean Six Sigma Green Belt Certification, the certification provides an opportunity to earn a high-demand and recognized certification as part of the MBA tuition.

Calise noted that "it's one thing to take a class where you are learning about Six Sigma, it's another thing to graduate with an MBA diploma accompanied by a Six Sigma certification. That, we thought, was invaluable for students to have on their resumes."

When talking with students about the Six Sigma class and certification, Calise heard that it was ***"one of the most practical and thought-changing classes that they had taken."*** He also noted that, ***"after they had implemented the class, end-of-program test results increased 15% -20%."***

Building support for the program required Calise to engage faculty and academic Deans in the design process. Instead of "going high then down", Calise decided to "start down and then go up". His first step was to get faculty buy-in. This involved one-on-one meetings with all faculty members to get their feedback, he then met with the department Deans to get their support, followed by meetings with administration. This approach ensured high levels of collaboration and support for the program, and set the stage for implementation.

After assessing the time and resources required to develop and maintain the Six Sigma certification preparatory classes, Calise and his team concluded that employing a content partner allowed ***"faculty to focus on the application of Six Sigma, allowing a third party to focus on the instruction and certification."*** When choosing a third-party provider, the team at Anderson considered the partner's reputation, content quality, and availability to integrate with internal systems.

With the help of outside industry experts, Anderson evaluated Six Sigma content. These experts ***"dissected the content page by page, module by module, word by word, paragraph by paragraph", and this evaluation resulted in selecting MindEdge's Six Sigma Green Belt Certification.***

Student success, positive feedback, and enhanced value have Calise and the faculty looking at expanding certification options. "Our question is what types of certifications are in high demand, how do these certifications fit our program, and how can we incorporate them into the curriculum? On our radar right now are Project Management and Scrum," but more are under consideration as Anderson University continues to evolve its MBA program.

