

Changing the College of Business Administration to College of Business According to Name Change Policy for Academic Units, AS Policy 97-01

The College of Business Administration is seeking to change its name to the College of Business. Such a name change is consistent with the prevalent naming convention in the nation and the CSU, will not adversely impact the college's ability to achieve its mission, and will not affect the college's curriculum. Shortening the college name will make searching for the college and its programs easier and will likely increase the efficiency and effectiveness of branding efforts.

Throughout their history, U.S. business schools have changed and adapted to new conditions. Joseph Wharton founded the first world's business school in 1881 to produce graduates that would become "pillars of the state, whether in private or in public life."¹ At first a vocational school with a moral dimension, the Wharton School embraced the Progressive movement of modernizing and developing scientific rigor over the next several decades. Joseph Wharton's pioneering vision was to professionalize companies and legitimize working in business, and business schools began providing "scientific management" tools and skills, like efficient manufacturing, bookkeeping, and contract law.

In the 1950s, business schools began shifting to management science from scientific management in part due to the impact of operations research that military funding produced in World War II. The Graduate School of Industrial Administration (GSIA) at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, started in 1949, began moving away from "how to" vocational approaches and started elevating business school research that ranked at the bottom of the academic pecking order. It replaced "institutionalists and business practitioners by true scientists." In addition, the business environment was shifting from managing factories and labor efficiently, like in the 1920s, to managing conglomerate organizations that spanned the nation and the world.

In this context, business schools were being named "Colleges of Business Administration." The Merriam Webster Dictionary definition of "administer" is to manage or supervise. Business administration involves managing and supervising business operations that include accounting, finance, human resources, marketing, and other functions. The role of business schools is to educate managers about how to administer the resources of a business efficiently and effectively in order to achieve the goals of the business.

At CSULB, the development of business education followed the national approach. The Division of Business Administration was formed in 1958 and was upgraded to the School of Business Administration in 1967. It became the College of Business Administration (CBA) in 1992.

Currently, CBA's mission is to graduate highly valued, ethical business professionals prepared to excel in a dynamic global business environment. CBA's vision is to be a globally recognized college of choice for scholarly and educational excellence that prepares graduates to succeed in business and society. While the intent of business administration is reflected in CBA's mission and vision, it is done so implicitly rather than explicitly, and the key word is business, not administration. Dropping administration from the college name will not deter or prevent the college from fulfilling its mission and vision.

¹ About Wharton, <https://www.wharton.upenn.edu/about-wharton/> .

There are no curricular implications from shortening the college name. Curriculum changes in the college have reflected the mission and vision and have not been dependent on the word “administration,” and this will not change after the college name is shortened. College programs currently do not impinge on other academic units, and shortening the college name will not change this. Internet searches by students will actually be assisted by the shorter name and clear differences between the college and other units in the University will remain.

In terms of comparisons, the Academic Senate policy asks what names are used for comparable academic units in other Universities in the CSU System and nationwide? Table 1 helps answer this question by tabulating the names of the 619 U.S. business schools and the 16 CSU business schools (including CBA) that are accredited by AACSB, the premier business accrediting body worldwide. Only 79 accredited U.S. business schools (roughly 13%) have the word “administration” in their names. For the CSU, only 4 business schools (25%) have “administration” in their name.

Changing CBA’s name to the College of Business will actually bring the college more in line with the current national approach for the name of business schools. The college will continue to pursue its mission and vision with its shorter and more efficient name.

Table 1. Frequency of Types of Names of U.S. Business Schools

AACSB Titles			
College of Business Administration	College of Business	School of Business Administration	School of Business
52	216	27	324

CSU Titles			
College of Business Administration	College of Business	School of Business Administration	School of Business
4	9	0	3