

An interview with Brad Bonney, MSEE '07, MBA '14, Head of Shared Services, Trust & Safety, Airbnb, is available at the [end of this transcript](#).

Stanford MBA/MS Electrical Engineering Joint Degree Webinar August 18, 2014

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Allison Davis: Hello. This is Allison Davis at Stanford Graduate School of Business. Welcome to our Webinar on the Masters in Electrical Engineering and MBA Joint Degree Program. We are going to be together here for 45 minutes, and thank you to so many of you who sent questions in advance. We will do our best to answer as many questions as we can.

I'm here with my colleagues from the other parts of the Graduate School of Business, as well as the Engineering School, so we have a great panel here today: Becky Charvat, who is associate director of the Career Management Center; Jack Edwards, who is the director of financial aid at the Graduate School of Business; Katy Klemme, who is the associate director of graduate admissions at the School of Engineering, Department of Electrical Engineering, and; Mary Oleksy, who is the associate director at the Graduate School of Business for the joint and dual degree programs.

And I'm particularly going to point out Mary because she will, if you do this joint degree program, will really become your new best friend because she's the person at the Graduate School of Business who advises students as they make their way through the two degrees. And as you may know, this is one of several joint degrees that Stanford offers, as we are a big, big believer in interdisciplinary education.

So I'm going to start with Mary, and asking you, Mary, this is a new joint degree. Why is Stanford offering this degree? What is the purpose and the value of it?

Mary Oleksy: Hi, everybody, and welcome. Again, this is Mary Oleksy. And in regards to why we're offering this joint degree, I think it's for several reasons. Stanford is well known for being an incubator for new technology ventures, and this new degree program is designed

to foster that innovation that springs naturally from two of the university's world-class programs, mainly the Graduate School of Business and the Electrical Engineering Department.

The purpose of the program is to provide an opportunity for electrical engineers to develop the necessary skills to become managers and entrepreneurs, and for technologically inclined business students to gain a solid background in electrical engineering by coordinating both of these degrees in a more focused approach. And so for students that are admitted into the joint degree programs, they should be able to complete the degree within nine quarters, which equates to a savings of approximately two quarters since, on their own, the GSB takes six quarters to complete the MBA, and the electrical engineering MS takes approximately five to six quarters.

Allison Davis: Great. Thank you, Mary. And for both Katy, who's the graduate admissions director from engineering and, again, from Mary, who is this joint degree really meant for? Who is ideal candidate for this?

Katy Klemme: Thanks, this is Katy Klemme speaking.

I think for the ideal candidate, we're really looking for someone that has a strong technical background, someone that also likes to think about the big picture. So these are students who want to go beyond the technical aspects of their jobs and really have a vision for how they want to use the technical knowledge that they have to really make an impact. I think in many ways you can think about it as a marriage between the technology and engineering side and the business side of industry.

Allison Davis: Mary, any comments?

Mary Oleksy: I think Katy covered it perfectly, and we're hearing from engineers who know they're eventually going to be managing people and they want to make sure they're well equipped for those challenges that come along with leadership and management responsibilities.

Allison Davis: Becky, from the career end of it, what would be the career opportunities and career paths for students who are pursuing the joint degree?

Becky Charvat: Definitely. Thank you. Yes, this is Becky Charvat. I work in the Career Management Center here and lead the employee relations and recruiting team. And what we're seeing constantly is an

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Becky Charvat, Allison Davis, Jack Edwards, Katy Klemme, Mary Oleksy

increasing percentage of students who want to pursue tech careers, whether they're accelerating or switching into a tech career. And what we find is that a lot of these companies want people with a technical background. So if you're someone who hasn't had that in the past and you obviously are interested in pursuing an MBA, having the joint degree with electrical engineering is highly valuable because you're gaining that analytical mindset.

You're getting those technical skills, and you're able to approach these technical careers which may not seem as technical on the surface. When you hear "product management," you think about it maybe on the high level more the leadership opportunity or maybe as almost your own mini CEO-type role, managing the product. But, in fact, when you drill down into it, you're going to be working with many engineers, and you're maybe not necessarily going to code every single day, but you're going to want to be able to have that credibility with the people that you're working with. And having that technical skill set in conjunction with the business leadership skill set is highly valuable to a lot of employers. So, again, this past year, we saw 32 percent of our students going to tech with 18 percent of the students going into basically an early stage start-up. And for a lot of those roles the companies are really looking for that technical background so the joint degree would be a huge asset from that perspective.

Allison Davis: So it's really an asset not only for people who are going into technical companies, but for many students who are interested in doing their own venture who are going to become entrepreneurs.

Becky Charvat: Absolutely, yeah. From an entrepreneurship perspective, it's probably almost even more valuable because if you're setting something up and working, you could be working from the business side, and working with a technical cofounder, or if you're doing the coding and the development yourself, then having that analytical side would also be a really huge asset as well.

Allison Davis: So do you think, Becky, does that mean that the opportunities are really just in Silicon Valley for people doing this joint degree?

Becky Charvat: No, I mean, we're seeing kind of the Silicon everything going around the world, so you probably heard of Silicon Beach in Los Angeles. You've heard of Silicon Alley in New York. Now Austin has a booming tech scene. And, of course, all around the world, so we're seeing growth in China. We're seeing growth in Singapore. We're seeing growth in London across Europe. So the

locations are endless with the Silicon fill-in-the-blank, so I do think that it is highly valuable around the world.

Allison Davis: All right. Mary, back to you. In terms of the structure of the program and the sequence, when would a student be at which school, and how many units would they be taking?

Mary Oleksey: Sure. So let me start by focusing my answer towards people that are not yet enrolled in either program, so this would be for brand new people. You can start with either program. If you start at the GSB, your first year you would primarily be taking GSB coursework, so MBA courses, and would probably have room for about one to three electrical engineering courses, if you desired to take them. And then your second and third years would be a blend of electrical engineering and MBA courses. And you could choose what blend you wanted to do, so you could primarily in one quarter be heavy on electrical engineering or heavy on MBA coursework. So there's a lot of flexibility.

If you were to start at the electrical engineering program, you would spend your first year primarily focused on electrical engineering courses, and, if you wished, you could probably take a small number of GSB electives. And then your second year, you would be almost completely at the GSB, and, again, you would have an option to take maybe one to three courses in electrical engineering. And then your third year would be a blend of electrical engineering and MBA courses.

So overall, as far as units, this joint degree requires 84 GSB units, and 45 MS units in electrical engineering for a total of 129. And the number of units you're going to take per quarter is really going to vary depending on what program you're leaning more heavily into. So at the GSB, students tend to take a higher course load, and over at electrical engineering, the students tend to take a lower number of units per quarter, just due to the technical nature and hours required outside of the classroom to complete the work. But we are pretty confident that students should be able to complete the full joint degree in nine quarters.

Allison Davis: And so if a GSB student's average is 18 units a quarter, what would you say on average at electrical engineering?

Katy Klemme: So if a student is solely in our MSEE program, the students are primarily going to be taking eight to ten units, which is about three classes. Most classes in EE are three units, which requires anywhere from 10 to 15 hours of homework or coursework, group

work outside of the classroom. So it is pretty intensive per class in terms of the hours. Students who are in that joint program, they will probably need to do one or potentially more quarters at that 11-to-18-unit course load.

Allison Davis: Okay. Now we know that all of you on the line are here because you're interested in the joint degree program, but after researching it, you may find it's not something you want to pursue. If that's the case, Mary, can't GSB students take some classes over at the engineering school even if they are not enrolled in the joint degree program?

Mary Oleksy: Yes. That's a great question. So built into our MBA degree requirements, students can take up to 15 units of university courses. And so sometimes it's a better fit for students to really just take an area of focus. And so they'll take 15 units of coursework in one particular area. So in this case, it could certainly be electrical engineering, and that would all count towards your MBA degree.

Allison Davis: Okay. And, Katy, can a masters in engineering student, I believe they can take classes at the business school. Is that true?

Katy Klemme: There are a number of classes that they are eligible to take, and there certainly are also outside classroom opportunities. We've had a longstanding history of students working together both with startups or in clubs and other organizations going back and forth between the GSB and the EE department.

So aside from taking the class work, there are a number of other opportunities for students to really engage with the GSB students as well.

Allison Davis: All right. Well, let's talk about the application requirements and the application process. You do apply separately to the two schools. And let's start with the application deadlines, and I'll just say that for the School of Engineering, there's one deadline which I believe is December 15th. Is that right, Katy?

Katy Klemme: December 9th.

Allison Davis: December 9th. Okay. December 9, 2014. So one deadline. Now what makes it a little complicated is for the business school there are three deadlines that you have to choose from. So you can apply in October or January or April. We would suggest, however, that if you're applying to the joint degree, and you are not currently

a Stanford student, we would highly encourage you to apply in the second round.

And the reason for that is that you could apply in the first round, but you wouldn't know yet – you wouldn't get your decision back from electrical engineering before the deadline to respond to your MBA offer. And, conversely, you can apply in the third round, but you wouldn't know your GSB offer before you had to reply to School of Engineering's offer. So if you want complete information and know if you got into both schools in order to make your decision to come to Stanford, the best round for you would be Round 2. Now if you're a current masters in engineering school student, then you could really apply in any round, so any of those three rounds.

For the business school, the application requirements [<http://www.gsb.stanford.edu/programs/mba/admission/application-materials>] are as follows. We require a transcript. We do require the standardized test. But, again, if you're applying to the joint degree program, you would want to take the GRE and not the GMAT because the School of Engineering does not accept the GMAT. So if you're looking at the joint degree, please save yourself some time and take only the GRE. If you are an international student and you went to a school where the language of instruction was not English, then you do need to take one of the English language tests. But, again, School of Engineering will only accept the TOEFL. So if you're applying to the joint degree program, again, save yourself some time and just take the TOEFL, although the business school will accept some of the other English language tests.

We also at the business school require two recommendations. Your first recommendation must come from a current direct supervisor at work, and if you don't have work experience, that could be from an internship or a summer job. Your second letter of reference, you have a choice of either choosing another supervisor, or can you can choose a peer, which is a person who's worked on a team with you.

The work experience I want to mention. We do not require work experience to come to Stanford in the business school. So you can apply as a college senior, and if you are admitted, you actually have the luxury of being able to decide if you want to come immediately after you graduate college, or we do offer deferrals to college seniors of one or two or three years.

We also ask you about extracurricular activities if you have them. And, lastly, there's two essay questions. "What matters most to you and why?" and, "Why Stanford?"

Katy, what about for engineering? Can you please walk us through the application requirements?

Katy Klemme:

Sure. So for EE, we have an annual admissions process with one deadline. As Allison mentioned, this year that deadline will be December 9th. And students that are applying during the annual process, they are admitted to start in autumn quarter. So students, that means that December 9th deadline will be applying for admission to start in September 2015.

Again, no work experience is required. Many of our students do have some work experience anywhere from one to four years, usually on average. To be eligible to apply to the MS in electrical engineering, students must hold a four-year bachelor's degree from an accredited institution, and that's a requirement from Stanford. Almost all of our students that are admitted do come from a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math) or hard sciences background although it is not required.

There's also no prerequisites in terms of specific classes, but our students do need to have a very strong foundation in engineering, and specifically in electrical engineering, is strongly recommended. Because this is a rigorous academic program, your application should really showcase your propensity for graduate-level study in EE at Stanford.

So you'll find a list of all of our application requirements [<http://ee.stanford.edu/admissions/application-requirements>] on our website, and I'm not going to go through each of the individual requirements, but there are a few that I do want to highlight. Specifically the GPA and GRE, so one of our most frequently asked questions is, "Is there a minimum for the GPA or GRE?" No, there is no minimum. Typically, our students that are admitted tend to be in the top ranks of their undergraduate classes, and then also in the top percentile of the GRE. We don't have an average in terms of our admitted students for the GRE. However, typically, our successful applicants are in the 90th percentile or higher on the quantitative section of the GRE.

Again, that's not an average. It's not a minimum or requirement. It's just something that we typically see in our successful applicants. I also wanted to discuss the letter of recommendation.

So we require a minimum and maximum of three letters of recommendation. And these should really be coming from academic references. So people that can speak to your aptitude for graduate study, former advisors, professors, researchers that have really worked with you in an academic setting. So this is one of those differences between the GSB and our application. So something to really take note of.

Allison Davis: And any essays?

Katy Klemme: Yes, we do have a statement of purpose, and it's just a very general statement of purpose, and that's your opportunity to discuss how you're prepared for graduate study, what you want to do, your career aspirations, and, again, we're really looking for what is your aptitude for graduate study in the EE at Stanford. And, so that's something you want to really showcase and pull out throughout your entire application.

Allison Davis: And I should mention for the GSB – this is Allison, again – that we also don't have a minimum GPA or GMAT or GRE score. And for the GPA, we're really looking at your academic performance in the context of the rigor of the institution, and the rigor of your major.

So Katy, I do want to ask you because we did have several questions come in, if somebody does not have a STEM undergraduate major, are there certain courses that they could be taking in advance to prepare to make themselves more competitive as an applicant for engineering?

Katy Klemme: Sure. There aren't any specific classes. And like I said, we don't have any prerequisites. Usually what I tell students that are looking to apply and that don't come from that traditional STEM background, something that will give you a little bit more perspective is to take a look at Stanford's Explore Courses [<https://explorecourses.stanford.edu/>]. And, if you go ahead and find the Electrical Engineering department, this is a list of all the classes that are offered in EE, and you can categorize them by different quarters.

Most of the graduate-level courses our students are going to be taking classes are at the 200 level or higher, and so what we recommend that prospective students do is to take a look at those 200-level courses and see what the prerequisites for the class are. Now the prerequisites for each class are determined by the faculty member, and you may have taken a very similar class in undergrad, and feel free to email the faculty member and say,

"Hey, I took this class in undergrad. It sounds very similar to the prerequisite for your class. Would this be appropriate, or do I really need to take the course here that you've recommended at Stanford?" And, that's a really good way to gauge whether or not you're prepared to take these classes.

Because the program is so compacted and it is so dense, you really don't have time to be taking a lot of those prerequisite classes. You want to be able to jump right in and start taking those 200-level classes for the master's degree. So I think that's really a great way to kind of gauge where you're at if you don't come from that STEM background.

Allison Davis: Thank you. I know we have some current Stanford students who are interested in the joint degree program, so, Mary, I'm going to have you address for current MBA students what they need to know, and then, Katy, for current masters of engineering or incoming masters of engineering students, what they would need to know to apply for the joint degree.

Mary Oleksy: Sure, okay. So, if you are a current or incoming MBA student, you should apply for the Electrical Engineering MS program this year. You need to do it during your MBA1 year if you did not do it concurrently when you applied for the MBA.

Allison Davis: All right.

Katy Klemme: Yeah, and the same case for those current EE students that are out there, you will need to be applying during that first year. Second-year students are not eligible to apply. And, the only difference for the EE students is that you have the opportunity to apply in any of those three deadlines. Any of those first-year GSB students that are out there, they need to meet the December 9th deadline.

Allison Davis: So just to be clear, current second-year MBA students and current second-year MSEE students are not eligible to apply for the joint degree program, but they could, if they wanted, just apply to the other program. And, do it sequentially one after the other?

Katy Klemme: That is correct. That's correct.

Allison Davis: All right. How are we going to pay for all of this? I'm going to turn it over to Jack Edwards to talk about tuition and financial aid.

Jack Edwards: Hi, folks. Happy to talk to you today. The tuition cost [<http://www.gsb.stanford.edu/programs/mba/financial-aid/cost-summary>] that you're going to be paying, you'll pay six quarters of GSB tuition. Tuition is fixed for a two-year period, so it's the same rate. So the incoming class, say for the Class of '16, their tuition rate now is at \$61,875. What's on the screen is the typical GSB cost of attendance. So if you're going to start the joint degree, I recommend, from a financial perspective, you're going to want to start at the GSB first, because we do offer financial aid for all three years that you're in the program. Your third-year tuition will be billed at the graduate rate for the university, which is a little bit less than what the GSB tuition rate is.

Katy Klemme: We have that up if we want to go ahead and navigate to the graduate engineering tuition rate [<https://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/gradadmissions/admitted/financing-expenses>]. So any units or any quarters that are beyond the six GSB quarters of tuition will be charged at the Stanford graduate engineering tuition rate, and that will either be at the 8- to 10-unit rate, or the 11- to 18-unit rate. For 2014-15, the eight- to ten-unit rate will be just over \$10,000 or about \$30,000 for the entire academic year. For the 11- to 18-unit rate, it's about \$15,000 per quarter, or about \$47,000 for the entire academic year.

And in the School of Engineering, the academic year is autumn, winter, and spring. For the six quarters of GSB, I'll go ahead and turn it back over to Jack.

Jack Edwards: And for the six quarters of the GSB tuition, we don't know what the incoming rate would be for those that are starting in fall of 2015. You can project probably about a four percent increase in tuition costs. And so for the two years that you're at the GSB rate, that'll be the same rate for both years.

So in the financial aid piece is financial aid [<http://www.gsb.stanford.edu/programs/mba/financial-aid/>] that the GSB is determined based on financial need. So students have to demonstrate that through submitting applications. Domestic students will file the FAFSA plus a CFS profile application. International students can file the CFS profile. Our fellowship funds -- there's no distinguish between being a domestic or an international. It's based off that need, so everybody qualifies based off of what their application and their individual information is.

Also, we do have a loan program specifically for our international students as well so that they have access to loans at a competitive

interest rate. And information about that is also on our website so you can do some research, and you can see what types of aid are completely available. And so if you're in the joint degree program, you still will have access to fellowship funds, as well as the student loan for your third year.

Allison Davis: And, again, this is if you were to start at the GSB.

Jack Edwards: Right. If you are currently already in the MSEE degree, your two years here, you would have access to financial aid if you're admitted to the MBA Program.

Allison Davis: Okay. And when you say "financial aid," you mentioned loans and fellowships. It's typically a combination. With one or two exceptions, there's really no full-tuition fellowships.

Jack Edwards: No, there isn't the expectation of that. It's a combination of fellowships and the student loans. We look at all of your resources and determine your financial strength. And we take that financial strength and subtract it from what that total cost of attendance [<http://www.gsb.stanford.edu/programs/mba/financial-aid/cost-summary>] that appears at the bottom of the page, so total there. And that determines a calculation. So there's a total amount.

So we look at that number, and that's when we do the calculation to determine. So, it's a combination of both. And, so if you have external resources that you may be bringing with you, you may have a grant, you may have a scholarship, that is taken into consideration in the calculation as well.

Allison Davis: And when does the process occur, the financial aid process?

Jack Edwards: So depending on when you applied to the MBA Program in the rounds, that's when you're going to want to take care of applying for financial aid as well. To be eligible for the fellowship, you're going to want to make sure that you're applying by those deadlines; there's a different deadline for each round that you're admitted in.

Allison Davis: This is after you're admitted.

Jack Edwards: After you're admitted to the MBA Program.

Allison Davis: So first, you would get your decision, hopefully, from both schools, and then you start the financial aid process. And if you are completing all your paperwork by the deadlines, you will have a financial aid offer before you need to accept your offer with the

school. So you'll have full information about your financial aid offer before you have to make a decision.

Jack Edwards: Correct.

Jack Edwards: Just one other reminder is if you're a current MBA student who's receiving fellowship and for your MBA, and you're now applying to the masters in electrical engineering and you get accepted there, so you'll have one additional third year. You'll be calculated for eligibility for fellowship as well.

Allison Davis: Okay. And I know some people in the audience were alert to when I said, "With one or two exceptions," and are probably wondering what those are. Well, the one or two exceptions is we do have a full-tuition scholarship for citizens of India that's sponsored by Reliance, and we also have a full-tuition scholarship for citizens of Africa, the Stanford Africa MBA Fellowship.

And we have had one person, Mohammad, ask, "How does the Stanford Africa MBA Fellowship work with the joint degree if they were to receive that fellowship?"

Jack Edwards: The Stanford Africa MBA is strictly just for two years. We would recalculate you for eligibility for fellowship for the third year in a different format. There is eight (Stanford Africa MBA fellowships) available.

Allison Davis: Okay. So you would still have access to fellowship funds for your third year.

Jack Edwards: Correct.

Allison Davis: And the Stanford Africa Fellowship, and this is true for the Reliance Fellowship for India nationals. It would pay for your first two years and then you would be eligible for financial aid for the third year based on financial need.

Jack Edwards: Right.

Allison Davis: All right. So let's talk a little bit, Becky and Katy, about what the opportunities are to interact with Silicon Valley companies while you're a student here, and also just more generally, what students do during the summer.

Katy Klemme: I think that there are a number of ways that students can get connected with companies and internships here in Silicon Valley.

I think many times students and other people assume that it's our proximity to Silicon Valley that sets Stanford EE apart from other programs. And while geographically, yes, it's great, it's right in our backyard, it's really our history and our partnership with Silicon Valley that sets us apart. Our faculty and students, they've played a very key role in founding Silicon Valley, and continue to shape what develops there. And so, therefore, in many cases, our students are connected with opportunities often through personal relationships with both our faculty and students. But we also formally have many wonderful resources on campus, which include the Computer Forum [<http://forum.stanford.edu/>]. And we can go ahead and take a look at their website.

The Computer Forum is a great organization here on campus. They are working specifically for students that look to enter careers in electrical engineering and computer science. They have over 60 members within Silicon Valley and also worldwide. They hold career fairs, résumé workshops, mock interviews. They do site visits. Really great opportunity. And then, of course, we also have Stanford Career Development Center [<https://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/cdc>]. This is really more for our general audience.

They have many of the traditional resources; again, the career fairs, the mock interviews, résumé workshops. But, of course, this includes a very heavy focus on CS and EE. And they have dozens of connections with companies and opportunities here in Silicon Valley and worldwide. So that's really the perspective from the EE side. Becky, do you want to talk about it from the GSB side?

Becky Charvat:

Sure, thanks. Yes, so like Katy was saying, there's a lot of opportunities at the GSB for one-to-one connection, networking, that sort of thing, and we do a lot to facilitate that through the Career Management Center [<http://www.gsb.stanford.edu/cmc>]. We start off in the fall for full-time. We have a very structured on-campus recruiting process, so if you decide you want to pursue a career at a large tech company, we have a large variety that come to campus for on-campus recruiting, everything from Apple, Google, Microsoft, Amazon, Cisco, Intuit. You name it; they're pretty much interacting with us. But we also have companies such as Dropbox, Box, Facebook, LinkedIn. These companies are coming to campus as well for on-campus recruiting. We have an internship program with a similar list of companies. Those companies come to recruit on campus in the winter, so in January for internships. And that's our structured approach. We put on several company networking nights where

these companies will come and basically mingle and interact with students, get to know them. Students can engage with those companies and understand what opportunities both full-time and internship-wise they can pursue with those companies.

In addition to that, we also host a number of career treks. So we organize trips. One of them is called a tech crawl. So, envision we call them, for those of you in the U.S., you may be familiar with a pub crawl or a progressive-style dinner where students will be on a bus and go from company to company and meet at their offices in San Francisco. Student clubs also organize similar treks. So our Entrepreneurship Club, as well as our High Tech Club, and a number of others, will organize treks to companies around the Bay Area as well as other locations.

So in the last two years, students have organized a trek to Austin for South by Southwest, where there is basically thousands of companies to meet. And the CMC, the Career Management Center, also hosts an event called Fewer Than 300, or ST3, as we have abbreviated it, in which we invite specifically about 30 companies, which students have indicated of interest to kind of have a funky "Silicon Valley Stanford GSB" feel event.

So we've had some pretty amazing start-ups come to that event and we've had some pretty amazing decorations and fun interaction where students have actually sourced full-time jobs and internships. So there's a whole slew of opportunities with which to engage with companies.

Allison Davis: Now for joint degree students, who would have two summers between their three years, would they then be able to do a summer internship again?

Becky Charvat: Absolutely. Well, I guess from the GSB side, definitely.

Katy Klemme: Absolutely. I mean our students are very much encouraged right from the get-go to start planning for that summer internship after their first year. It would absolutely be the case after that second year.

And I think Becky really hit the point well that for our students oftentimes the companies are coming here to Stanford. And the Stanford students really have a great representation up there in the sense that they're great students, and these companies are really coming to find our students. They're seeking our students out. Our students aren't going out there and seeking out these internships.

But really a lot of the opportunities are coming to them. I think that was something for me that was really interesting to see was to see these big companies like Google and Apple showing up and really sort of wining and dining our students to see them for internships, which often turn into those full-time positions.

Allison Davis: Right. Yeah, I think there are many opportunities. And in a way, the challenge is to figure out what you want to do. And I think our career center does a great job of helping you figure out what it is you want to do, not just in terms of your job, but how your job fits into your life. Would you say, Becky?

Becky Charvat: Absolutely. Yes, so we have a number of programs, two in particular. One is called Career Design, which first-year students at the GSB will pursue. It takes place in the first six weeks of your time as a first-year student here at the GSB. And it basically allows you to take some time to think about what it is that you're interested in, what you're passionate about, what gets you going. What do you want to do from a short-term and a long-term perspective?

We have a program also called Career and Life Vision, or CLV, and this has a similar approach. It's kind of a program within the program that allows you to not only engage with our career advisors who can help you plan out your career and life vision, but let's say you think you know what you want to do, but you really need someone to talk through that process with. We have plenty of people that are wonderful support staff to help you with that. So there's a lot of opportunities to explore.

Allison Davis: And the career center is not only helping you figure out what you want to do, but prepare for your job search and interviewing skills all the way to when you get an offer and how to negotiate that salary all the way to the end of the process.

In terms of social life for joint- and dual-degree students, as I mentioned, we have several other joint and dual degree programs here, so we do have a lot of experience with, Mary in particular, with working with joint degree students.

So, Mary, can you comment on what it is like for a joint degree student in terms of social life? Do they sort of feel like they're affiliated more with one school or another?

Mary Oleksy: That's a great question. I think, first of all, it depends on what program you start with. You're going to build relationships with

the cohort that you're connected to. So if you start at the GSB, I think you're going to feel most connected to MBA students. If you start in electrical engineering, you're first going to build up kind of your sense of community with those electrical engineering students.

But what I have seen happen in other programs is as students start progressing through and doing blended quarters, they start to build up kind of a social relationship in the other program, and then they have what I like to call the first-world problem of having to balance the relationships at both schools, and then all of the events and activities that are happening all across Stanford.

We're certainly not at a loss of things to do, events to go to, food to eat, music to hear, both here at Stanford and just in general in the Bay Area. So I think students find a really rich social life and sometimes part of the draw for wanting to stay for an extra year is being able to take advantage of everything that the Bay Area and Stanford University has to offer.

Oh, and I also want to add once you are enrolled in a joint degree program...let's say you start at electrical engineering, but you've been accepted to the MBA program. You do have access to GSB student activities and events, and so you are very welcome to come here and to sign up for clubs and to attend lectures, activities, whatever you'd like. So really the limitations are personal of what you feel comfortable with pursuing or not pursuing at your first year here.

Allison Davis: And, Katy, are extracurricular activities and clubs at engineering open to business school students in the same way?

Katy Klemme: Absolutely. I think it depends on what you're most interested in, but we have a number of different clubs that are specific to the research areas within the EE. We also have a group called Graduate Students in Electrical Engineering [<http://gsee.stanford.edu/>], and I know that they would more than welcome students outside of electrical engineering. They do happy hours and they do workshops with our faculty, so students that are interested in getting engaged within EE would certainly be more than welcome to join them.

Allison Davis: All right. We only have a couple of minutes left, and so I'm going to ask each of you if you have any advice for our prospective applicants out there, either about preparing for the program or once they're a student here. Katy?

Katy Klemme: Sure. I have two little pieces of advice. One would be to start planning early and to get organized early if that's possible. And then my second piece of advice is something that I actually recommend to anyone that's applying to graduate school.

And that's to do informational interviews with people that are in your dream job, your dream field, your dream career path, and find out how they got to that position, what degrees they have. Also, take a look at what they would be looking at in terms of hiring somebody for that position now just to find out exactly what it is you do need. Do you need the dual degree? Do you need the MBA? Do you need a Ph.D., or do you need an MS degree?

And that, again, is something that I would recommend to anyone that's applying to graduate school so you really hone in on what it is that you need to achieve your career goals.

Allison Davis: Great. Mary?

Mary Oleksy: Well, I think Katy already said it really well. But what I would add is that I think there's a lot of exciting options at Stanford, and it's easy to get overwhelmed. And so any work you can do to get clear on where you want to go, what you want to do using some of the strategies that Katy's already mentioned, I think are going to come in really handy. I find that students who come in with a vision – and that vision may change – but hence they have a vision. I think they get more out of their overall experience because they already have a sense of focus of what they want to say 'yes' to, and equally important, what they should be saying 'no' to because there's just so many things that you could be doing to support your education. So I would just say take that time to really try to get clear even if it's a general vision, but to have some type of vision, because the programs don't necessarily help you find the vision. The programs help you get to your vision.

Allison Davis: Thank you. Becky?

Becky Charvat: So I totally agree with what Mary and Katy have said. I'm actually going to talk about the informational interviews with people in your dream job as well. So I'll get a little more tactical on that front. So this may seem obvious to some of you, and for others, it may seem a little daunting, but I would say in order to identify those people in your dream job role, if you haven't done so already, take advantage of LinkedIn.

Go ahead and plug in a company where you want to work or a function that you want to pursue at those companies. You can go into your advanced search in LinkedIn, and just plug those things in and see who comes up. You can plug it in by region. So if you're specific to a location, you can add that. And, obviously, it's great to have these meetings in person. But if you can't, Google Hangouts or Skype even just 15-20 minutes of someone's time. Be sure when you go into those informationals, if it's over the phone or in person, have questions prepared in advance.

Be really thoughtful about what you want to ask. The worst thing that we see is when students ask for an informational with a great contact and they show up and they haven't prepared or they haven't done any research. So we know none of you will do that, but make sure you have those questions ready to go.

Keep your requests short and sweet, one to two, max three sentences about what you want to ask for. And then send a thank you. So if you engage with these people who have given you their time, be sure to send a follow-up thank you note. Again, even if it's just three sentences max wrapping up, filling them in on where you're at in your process. They'll really appreciate that.

Allison Davis: Jack.

Jack Edwards: I think for the financial aid perspective, you can figure it out after you've decided what's the best pursuit: whether it's just an MBA, just an MSEE, or doing the joint degree.

Allison Davis: And if we haven't made it clear earlier, you can apply to these before you arrive for the joint degree program, but you could if you only wanted to apply for the MBA, you could apply to the engineering school as a first-year MBA student, or if you end up starting in engineering, you could apply for the MBA and add it as a first-year engineering student. So you do have that chance to take some time to think about it.

Well, I want to thank all of you for your time this afternoon. I hope that it's been helpful to learn about the program. And whatever you decide, I wish you all the best.

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Interview with Brad Bonney, MSEE '07, MBA '14, Head of Shared Services, Trust & Safety, Airbnb



1) Why did you want to pursue an MBA after getting a degree in Electrical Engineering?

I did not want to be a "lab monkey" for the rest of my life. I enjoyed "turning knobs" during the MSEE program, but realized building teams, developing others, and being responsible for more than just whether or not the technology worked was more important to me. I wanted to be more highly involved in strategy and vision setting, not just involved in the execution of ideas. Without an MBA degree, the advancement path for me was "Engineering Manager" which was much more narrow than I wanted.

2) What are you doing post Business school?

I am working as the head of operations support for Airbnb's Trust and Safety Team. I have 6 direct reports (many of whom have teams of their own) across functions of training and process development, business analytics, quality assurance, and project management. I am responsible for all support functions for our operational teams dealing with trust and safety issues that may arise at Airbnb. The TnS team is comprised of 130 people - by the end of 2015 I will have 18 staff. It is a great operational management role that relies on the ability to combine people management with technical prowess.

3) Do you think your EE degree helped you get your job or is helping you pursue the path you wanted?

Yes. Data science and data analytics are everywhere. The MSEE instilled in me a way of approaching data. An analytic mindset is necessary for any manager in a technical industry. Data-driven decision making is critical to success. It goes beyond simply understanding how to look at data and interpret it—it requires deeply critical reasoning skills and the ability to understand underlying data structures, specific queries, and results in order to fully comprehend the results.

4) How do you think a joint graduate degree program in EE/MBA is beneficial?

The clear benefit is understanding quantitative decision-making, algorithm development, and data analysis. The combination of high-level, strategic thinking with the deep-dive, technical mindset is largely unstoppable in today's job market.

5) Any other thoughts regarding the joint EE/MBA?

The MSEE program is difficult. It is time consuming and intense. Expect to take 6-9 credits and having 20-30 hours per week of outside homework/project work. You will

learn more than you thought possible, but you will work to get there. Others who are not joint degree students will work hard to master every subject; you will need to work harder (or be comfortable not being #1) in order to compete. You will undoubtedly sacrifice on many of the social experiences of the MBA program in order to do justice to the MSEE degree. Depending on your personal career goals, it could be incredibly worthwhile.

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