

# Model Curriculum Research—Graduate Degree Specializations in Project Management

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Our research introduces a model for colleges or universities designing a graduate curriculum in project management. It is based on our experience with implementing concentrations at Boston University and involvement by faculty in national curriculum standards. The research methodology involved researching several dozen project management programs, as well as research papers dealing with standards to create a base model of MS PM programs and specialization. We evaluated seventy-three available programs for the following general attributes: Where it is housed, Degree Label offered, Number of semester hours, Accreditation if any, Undergraduate pre-requisite, Full-Time Faculty and Research, Courses in the core, Courses in the electives, Opportunities for a graduate certificate specialization. Initial results reveal that different models for PM specialization exist today. Different labels exist at various colleges for the same program, no standard curriculum exists, and curriculum gravitates around the Project Management Institute's Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) even though it is not deep in scope for graduate level work. Upon abstraction of quality programs, and from our personal experience, we have proposed a pyramid of curriculum elements. Programs must satisfy these curriculum elements – Project Management Foundation, Technology & Management Theory and Concepts, and Specialization. The specialization block includes capstone courses and career track electives. A minimum foundation of pre-requisite knowledge and practical experience is also needed. A practical illustration of the model would be the Boston University PM core – covering the following courses: Project management (PM foundation), Project cost and risk management, Communications Management Program (Technology & Management) and Program & Portfolio management (Specialization). The University of Maryland Graduate Certificate in Project Management for Engineers also fits the model: Introduction to Project Management (PM foundation), Project Cost Accounting, Finance & Risk Management (Technology & Management), and one of either Legal Aspects of Engineering Design & Construction or Project Performance Measurement (Specialization).



*Figure: Elements for Project Management Model Curriculum*

*Keywords: Project Management, Graduate Curriculum, IT Project Management, Engineering Project Management*