

College of Business and Public Administration

MBA Business Program Assessment of Learning

Academic Year 2014-2015

The Assessment Committee was made up of the members of the MBA Curriculum Committee: Roberta Brooke (ex-officio), Justin Bucciferro, Chu Chen, Martine Duchatelet (ex-officio), Dean Kiefer (chair), William Martin, Beth Tipton, and Duanning Zhou.

Our AACSB approved assessment plan provides for the assessment of a subset of our program SLOs in each academic year. Instructors in designated courses are charged to assess one or more SLO in Fall and Spring or in Winter and Summer as appropriate during that academic year (say, year 1.) Note that each MBA course is taught twice within a year.

During the following academic year (year 2), the assessment committee discusses the assessment results of the previous year and generates whatever program adjustments might remedy any revealed weaknesses in the students learning relative to the targeted SLOs. These program adjustments may include curriculum changes, teaching delivery changes, pre-requisite changes, or other enhancements. The assessment committee discusses those changes with the relevant faculty and eventually with the entire faculty, as necessary. The assessment committee communicates the agreed upon adjustments widely to all concerned and assures that they are in place for the following academic year (year 3) when the targeted subset of SLOs are reassessed and another loop is closed on the adjustments put in place in year 2.

Meanwhile another subset of SLOs are assessed in Fall and Spring of year 2, to be followed in year 3 by reflection of the assessment results by the assessment committee and implementations of adjustments, etc. The cycle repeats itself indefinitely.

The table below seeks to detail the process.

| Learning Goal | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 | 2016-2017 | 2017-2018 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Oral Communication | X | | X | | X |
| Ethics | X | | X | | X |
| Leadership/Interpersonal | X | | X | | X |
| Critical Thinking | | X | | X | |
| Quantitative/Technical Reasoning | | X | | X | |
| Written Communication | | X | | X | |
| Ethical/ Global | | | | | |
| Core/Discipline Knowledge (Exam or Embedded Items) | | | | | |
| Master Field Test | X | X | X | X | X |
| Integrative Case/EWU exam/Course-Embedded items/Comprehensive Exam | | | | | |
| Indirect Assessment | X | X | X | X | X |

In 2018-2019 and following years the cycle is repeated.

According to our AACSB-approved comprehensive assessment plan, the academic year 2014-2015 was to be devoted to assessing the following SLOs: *Critical Thinking, Quantitative/Technical Skills, Written Communications, and Ethical and Global Considerations*. Our indirect assessment (annual alumni survey and debrief of graduating students) is ongoing.

The assessment of SLOs did not happen in all the courses according to the assessment plan. Because the number of MBA students was exceptionally small last year, not all core classes were actually taught twice during the year. There were also some instances of non-compliance or of individual assessment conducted that did not match the program assessment described in the approved plan. Wherever possible, the missing data points were collected or will be collected off-sequence during the winter and/or summer terms, and eventually in the next academic year.

The 2015-2016 Assessment Committee under the leadership of Dr. Morris Kalliny will assess the results collected in 2014-2015 in greater depth.

SLO: Critical Thinking

MBA students will be able to use relevant theories, concepts, perspectives, and facts to analyze business and economic issues and solve related problems.

- MBA students know the foundational knowledge of the business disciplines.
- MBA students understand, and can explain, apply, evaluate, and synthesize various theories, models, concepts, perspectives, and facts from the business disciplines for purposes of analyzing cases, responding to questions, creating investigatory reports, engaging in self-reflection, evaluating simulation results, creating plans, completing projects, and/or responding to designed exercises.
- MBA students can find, reference, appropriately use, and evaluate information for solving problems and analyzing issues, while using their own judgment and creativity where possible.
- MBA students can use analytical processes for solving problems described in conditions of uncertainty.
- MBA students can use information from various disciplines and apply it to evaluate businesses described in integrative case studies, simulations, or designed exercises.

This SLO was assessed in BADM 570 (Information Technology and the Environment) in Fall 2014. The assessment was only partial, so a make up assessment was conducted in Winter 2015 in BADM 515 (Managerial Economics.)

We used the following rubric.

MBA Critical Thinking

| Diagnosis of Current Situation and or Problem | Exceeds Expectations (4) | Meets Expectations (3) | Marginally Meets Expectations (2) | Does Not Meet Expectations (1) | Meets or Exceeds Expectations | |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------|
| | | | | | Fa '14 | W '15 |
| Can clearly use appropriate descriptive evidence and/or research to diagnose the current situation and/or problem | | | | | - | 60% |
| Research and/or understanding of information is complete | | | | | - | 40% |
| Information used as evidence is of high quality | | | | | - | 87% |
| Group/Personal biases are noted and explained and/or biases in the information found are noted | | | | | - | 53% |
| Unstated assumptions and uncertainties in the assignment prompt are | | | | | - | 47% |

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| noted | | | | | | |
| Information is correct and factual unless otherwise noted as an opinion of importance for the analysis | | | | | - | 73% |
| A variety of quality research sources is referenced if that is the nature of the assignment | | | | | - | 73% |
| A bibliography is included in APA format | | | | | 63% | 93% |
| Knowledge and Application of Information for Problem Analysis and Solution Formulation. | | | | | | |
| Chooses appropriate information and/or theories, concepts, perspectives, formulae, tools, and facts to solve the problem or explain the situation | | | | | 100% | 53% |
| Provides illustrative examples of how information, theories, concepts, perspectives, formulae, tools, and facts apply to the specific problem or situation | | | | | 0% | 87% |
| Evaluates the usefulness of the information, theories, concepts, perspectives, formulae, tools, and facts used | | | | | 0% | 53% |
| Can use evidence to support analysis | | | | | 75% | 40% |
| Explains theories, concepts, perspectives, formulae, tools, and facts relevant to the analysis | | | | | 0% | 73% |
| Understands alternative viewpoints or perspectives as part of the analysis | | | | | 0% | 47% |
| Consideration and Evaluation of Meaningful Alternatives | | | | | | |
| Articulates realistic alternatives available as solutions or evaluates characteristics associated with the situation under study | | | | | 0% | 60% |
| Evaluates advantages and disadvantages of alternative solutions or evaluates alternative courses of action | | | | | 0% | 20% |
| Solutions, Conclusions, and Recommendations | | | | | | |
| Makes recommendations and/or reaches conclusions which are supported by diagnosis, analysis, and | | | | | 100% | 93% |

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| evaluation | | | | | | |
| States what potential concerns or limitations are associated with the recommendations and conclusions. | | | | | 75% | 63% |

This SLO is not satisfied. The 2015-2016 Assessment Committee will have to close an improvement loop as soon as feasible.

SLO: Quantitative/Technical Skills

MBA students will be able to apply appropriate technical and quantitative skills related to business.

- MBA students know mathematical operations and demonstrate functional knowledge of how to solve quantitative business problems.
- Using a comprehensive case or designed exercises, MBA students are able to apply an analytic framework for solving quantitative problems and demonstrate reasoning through interpretation and evaluation of results,
- MBA students understand data, how to evaluate its usefulness, and how to use it.
- MBA students know how to use software applications, calculators, and other tools to solve quantitative problems.

This SLO was assessed in BADM 530 (Corporate Finance) in Fall 2014. We used the following rubric.

MBA Quantitative Reasoning Rubric

| | Exceeds Expectations (4) | Meets Expectations (3) | Marginally Meets Expectations (2) | Does Not Meet Expectations (1) | Meets or Exceeds Expectations (Fall 2014) |
|---|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Identification of the appropriate quantitative technique(s) | | | | | |
| Chooses the appropriate quantitative technique(s) used for the assignment | | | | | 86% |
| Clearly explains the appropriate quantitative techniques used for the assignment. | | | | | - |
| Understands the data requirements of each technique. | | | | | 0% |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|------|
| Fully understands the underlying assumptions of each technique | | | | | - |
| Perform (compute) the appropriate analyses with the use of appropriate tools. | | | | | |
| Produce results that are accurate | | | | | 29% |
| Produce results that are relevant | | | | | 86% |
| Can produce results that are appropriate to an understanding of the indicated problem(s). | | | | | 43% |
| Interpretation of the results. | | | | | |
| Correctly interprets the results in the context of the assignment | | | | | 86% |
| Correctly explains the results in the context of the assignment. | | | | | 100% |
| Draw conclusions or makes recommendations. | | | | | |
| Clearly communicates conclusions which are supported by the results. | | | | | 100% |
| Explains the analytical basis for making recommendations regarding alternatives. | | | | | - |
| Limitations. | | | | | |
| Understands the limitations involved in the analysis, results, and recommendations. | | | | | - |
| Articulates the limitations involved in the analysis, results, and recommendations. | | | | | - |

This SLO is not satisfied. The 2015-2016 Assessment Committee will have to close an improvement loop as soon as feasible.

SLO: Written Communications (a part of the Communications SLO)

MBA students will be able to demonstrate competency in both written and oral business communications skill.

- MBA students are able to write professional papers and make appropriate choices about content, fluency, organization, structure, and convention when writing.
- MBA students are able to make professional oral presentations using appropriate content, graphics, elocution, style, and conventions.
- MBA students use software application appropriately.

Written Communications was assessed in BADM 540 (Marketing Management) in Fall 2014. It was assessed again in BADM 570 (Information Technology and the Organization) in Spring 2015. A case was assigned with responses that demanded approximately 3 to 5 pages of written analysis. The course instructor graded the paper for content, a different instructor scored the SLO rubric in Spring 2015.

We used the following rubric to evaluate written communication.

MBA Written Communications Rubric

| Content Category | Exceeds Expectations (4) | Meets Expectations (3) | Marginally Meets Expectations (2) | Does Not Meet Expectations (1) | Meets or Exceeds Expectations | |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------|
| | | | | | Fa. '14 | Sp.' 15 |
| Content and Organization | | | | | | |
| Demonstrates knowledge of the topic | | | | | 69% | |
| Provides accurate and concise detail | | | | | 77% | |
| Logically develops topic | | | | | 62% | |
| Provides supporting evidence | | | | | 85% | |
| Develops clear and focused paragraphs | | | | | 46% | |
| Fluency | | | | | | |
| Sentences enhance meaning | | | | | 62% | |
| Sentences vary in length and structure | | | | | 92% | |
| Paragraphs have thoughtful transitions | | | | | 62% | |
| Paragraphs are structured to reinforce sound organization | | | | | 38% | |
| Paragraphs include complete thoughts | | | | | 62% | |
| | | | | | | |

| Word Choice | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|-------------|
| Demonstrates awareness of audience | | | | | 100% |
| Word choices allow for precise and brief narrative | | | | | 77% |
| Conventions | | | | | |
| Accurate punctuation | | | | | 62% |
| Uses correct English grammar | | | | | 42% |
| Free of spelling errors | | | | | 85% |
| Utilizes appropriate referencing | | | | | 54% |
| Avoids unnecessary use of passive voice | | | | | 85% |
| Uses parallel sentence construction | | | | | 92% |
| Uses appropriate format | | | | | 69% |

A large percentage of students met or exceeded expectations. However, there is clearly room for improvement. A new loop will be opened: MBA entering students will be taught a short session on Business Written Communication in the MBA Orientation Weekend at the start of Fall 2015. This orientation will give students a few pointers and attract their attention to the rubric by which their work will be evaluated. The loop will be closed with the Fall 2015 assessment.

SLO: Ethical and Global Considerations

MBA students will be able to incorporate ethical and global considerations into business activities.

- MBA students know foundational knowledge related to ethics, law, social responsibility, sustainability, and international business.
- MBA students know complex ethical frameworks and models/theories of international strategy and culture.
- Using case studies, designed exercises, work experiences, or investigatory reports, MBA students are able to use analytical processes to evaluate ethical behaviors and defend their choices for solving ethical dilemmas.
- Using case studies, designed exercises, work experiences, or investigatory reports, MBA students are able to use analytical processes by applying models and theories to evaluate international differences/conditions/situations, and solve problems.

This SLO was assessed in the MBA capstone course, BADM 590, in Winter 2015. We used the following rubric.

MBA Global Analysis Rubric

| Identification and Explanation of Global Factors | Exceeds Expectations (4) | Meets Expectations (3) | Marginally Meets Expectations (2) | Does Not Meet Expectations (1) | Meets or Exceeds Expectations |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Identifies relevant “macro” factors in the international environment affecting the business (political, economic, historical, infrastructural, financial, etc.) | | | | | 92% |
| Identifies relevant “micro” factors in the local environment affecting the business (local tastes, daily practices, cultural preferences, etc.) | | | | | 100% |
| Explains or describes characteristics of each factor identified | | | | | 77% |
| Strategies, Practices, and Cultural Norms | | | | | |
| Uses strategic models to demonstrate understanding of different international strategies | | | | | 92% |
| Uses models of cultural differences to demonstrate understanding of different cultural norms | | | | | 100% |
| Demonstrates an understanding of choices open to firms engaged in international business | | | | | 100% |
| Recognizes differences in beliefs and practices necessary for success in international markets and businesses | | | | | 100% |
| Analysis of International Environment and Strategic Choices | | | | | |
| Provides evidence for which choice or position best fits the international situation | | | | | 100% |
| Application of Analysis to Specific Management Situation | | | | | |
| Lists alternatives and evaluates possible results or consequences | | | | | 85% |
| Makes a recommendation or takes a position about business performance in the specific international situation | | | | | 100% |

This SLO was met. It will be re-assessed in Fall 2015 in BADM 580 (International Business Environments.)

SLO: Foundational Business Knowledge Assessment & Assessment of Ability of Students to Integrate Foundational Discipline Knowledge for Decision Making

This SLO is supposed to be assessed in 2015-2016. We have been dissatisfied for years with the MFT (Master Field Test) produced and normed by ETS (Educational

Testing Service). The test does allow us to compare our students to other MBA students across the U.S., but it does not allow for diagnostic of any perceived weakness. In that sense, it is really useless to us as we strive for continuous improvements in the learning of our students. We have not reach a decision in 2014-2015 about doing away with administering the MFT and adopting an integrative case (from a case database or written in-house) or purchasing a suitable assessment exam for this SLO.

Indirect Assessment: Annual Survey of Recent Alumni and Dean's Debrief of Graduating MBA Students

Both these instruments ask a question relative to what topics or areas the respondent wished had been part of the MBA curriculum. Responses ranged from "Negotiations", "Human Resource Management", "Employment Law", "more Finance", and "Business Communications."

When asked what topics could have come out of the curriculum because of an unclear view of their applicability, the most common response was "Information Technology", distantly followed by "Managerial Economics."

These perceptions of alumni and graduating students suggest a desire for more challenging core courses that do not repeat concepts acquired elsewhere, fewer required courses and more flexibility in the choice of electives. The MBA Curriculum Committee has taken these observations into consideration. The committee has been preparing a curriculum reform to be submitted for a vote in Fall 2015 that would shrink the core and introduce more room for electives, or even for concentrations by selection of electives with a common disciplinary focus.
