

# Outcomes Assessment and Program Improvement

## Master of Business Administration

### ***SECTION 1 – PAST ASSESSMENT RESULTS***

The MBA is a terminal professional degree primarily for those entering or pursuing a career in management, in sales, or in investing. The two main components of the curriculum are (as defined by the MBA Program Planning for Managerial and Operational Issues Document, and modified by the approved Proposal for the MBA Curriculum document) the first-year core and the second-year concentrations. The first-year core provides every student the opportunity to develop a fundamental understanding of business principles as well as to develop and hone interpersonal communication and team skills for application in a rapidly changing technological environment. Then, the second-year concentration, which is chosen by the student from among an approved list determined by the College of Business, provides the opportunity for a more focused study of (1) the functional areas of business and (2) the integration of those areas into a strategic perspective of the discipline.

### ***SECTION 2 – REVISED ASSESSMENT PLAN***

#### 1. Plan Development Process

Beginning in 2005, the Director of Assessment met with the Associate Dean of the MBA Program and the Academic Director of the MBA Program to discuss the program learning goals and objectives. Over the ensuing year, on-going meetings were held with the Academic Director to refine the plan and to ensure that it reflected and adequately measured the desired goals.

In 2005 the program hired a professor to focus in oral and written communication skills as well as to develop and apply evaluation rubrics to assess desired learning outcomes over time. These rubrics were tested originally on 98 students. Since the initial trail, the rubrics have been modified and two additional cohorts of MBA students have been assessed.

## 2. Desired Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the degree, all MBA graduates of this program will have:

- developed a fundamental understanding of the principles of business;
- developed a keen awareness of major challenges facing contemporary businesses;
- developed, improved, or honed team skills;
- developed, improved, or honed communication skills;
- demonstrated effective leadership skills.

The MBA Program curriculum program goals and learning outcomes are:

- Cross-Disciplinary Integration & Strategic Perspective (Develop a fundamental understanding of the principles of business).

Students should be able to conceptualize, organize, and resolve complex business problems or issues by using the resources available under their discretion.

- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving (Develop a keen awareness of major challenges facing a contemporary business).

Students should be able to apply the perspective of their chosen concentrated area of study to develop fully-reasoned opinions on such contemporary issues as the need for innovation, integrity, leading and managing change, globalization, and technology management.

- Teamwork (Develop, improve, or hone team skills).

Students should be able to determine the effectiveness with which goals are defined and achieved in team environments, to assess the contributions made by themselves as well as by their peers within those environments, and to identify and resolve conflicts.

- Communication Skills (Develop, improve, hone communication skills).

Students should be able to demonstrate the ability to listen and to read attentively, and to express ideas with clarity in both oral and written communications.

- Leadership Skills (Develop effective leadership skills)

Students should be able to document their participation in, and contribution to, student organizations, business or consulting projects, internship opportunities, or other MBA-sanctioned initiatives.

### 3. Measures and Methods Used to Measure Outcomes

#### □ Cross-Disciplinary Integration & Strategic Perspective

Course embedded assessment: Instructors and evaluators rate team performance using the Integrative Capstone Experience rubric # MBA502ABP-T & MBA503ABP-T.

This assessment is performed twice. The first assessment is at the conclusion of the Applied Business Perspectives Integrated Capstone Experience. This is an intensive one week exercise that occurs in December of the first year of the program. The second assessment is at the conclusion of the Global Tycoon Integrated Capstone Experience. This again is an intensive one week exercise; it occurs in March of the first-year of the program.

#### □ Critical Thinking & Problem Solving

Course embedded assessment: Instructors and evaluators rate team performance using the Integrative Capstone Experience rubric # MBA503SIM

This assessment is at the conclusion of the Global Tycoon Integrated Capstone Experience, which is an intensive one week exercise in March of the first-year of the program. This exercise is characterized by a dynamic computer simulation in which students apply fundamental business principles synthesized throughout their course work to develop and implement a strategic plan for managing a simulated business in a competitive industry.

#### □ Teamwork and Leadership Skills

At the completion of each core course module, students evaluate their group members anonymously on teamwork and leadership skills.

This assessment is performed twice in the fall of the first year of the program, using rubric MBA502-TEAMEVAL, and once in the spring of the first year of the program using rubric MBA503-TEAMEVAL

#### □ Communication Skills

Course embedded assessment: As part of the first-year core, all students are required to take a course sequence comprising two half-semester, graded modules in professional communications.

This assessment is performed twice by the course instructor. The first assessment is in October of the first-year of the program and uses rubric MBA501PCOMM-I; the second is in December of the first year using rubric MBA502PCOMM-I.

**SECTION 3 – PROCESS FOR USING THE RESULTS**

1. Plans for Using Results

Faculty in each of the first-year courses (MBA 501 – MBA 504) meet before, during, and after their teaching to discuss feedback and outcome results they receive. The goal is continuous monitoring of, and continuous improvement in, student learning.

The collected information also is used for formative purposes to improve the curriculum. The MBA program is unique in the college in that its teaching faculty belong to the academic departments, not the program. As such, it is important that this assessment plan is shared with the departments and administrators of the college. Consistent with that, learning outcomes will continue to be gathered, reviewed, and shared with the department heads and chairs, as well as with the College of Business Associate Dean of Faculty.

2. Timeline for Implementation

The measurement instruments were developed in early 2005 and implemented in fall 2006. Modifications and fine-tuning have been made over time, but the instruments now have been in continuous use for three consecutive years.

**MBA Student Learning Assessment  
Schedule**

STANDARD >= 80%	Assessment 1	Assessment 2
Cross-Disciplinary Integration & Strategic Perspective	MBA502ABP-T	MBA503ABP-T
Critical Thinking & Problem Solving (STANDARD >= 75%)	X	MBA503SIM
Teamwork & Leadership	MBA502-TEAMEVAL	MBA503-TEAMEVAL
Communication Skills * Written	MBA501PCOMM-I	MBA502PCOMM-I
* Oral	X	MBA 503 presentation

### 3. Results to date

#### MBA Student Learning Assessment

Results	Cohort FA2005		Cohort FA2006		Cohort FA2007	
	No. of Students = 98		No. of Students = 104		No. of Students =	
STANDARD >= 80%	Assessment 1	Assessment 2	Assessment 1	Assessment 2	Assessment 1	Assessment 2
Cross-Disciplinary Integration & Strategic Perspective	100%	100%	90.3%	100%	100%	100%
Critical Thinking & Problem Solving (STANDARD >= 75%)		89.7%		80.6%		100%
Teamwork & Leadership	95.9%	99.0%	92.3%	93.2%	97.0%	100%
Communication Skills						
* Written	74.4%	65.3%	83.2%	55.3%	77.7%	98.0%
* Oral		100%		100%		100%