

2014 Degree Program Assessment

College of Business

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The Assessment Review Committee in the College of Business—Janet Bailey, Department of Business Information Systems; David Gilliam, Department of Marketing; Bruce Lindeman, Department of Economics and Finance; Tom Tudor, Department of Management; and Robert Mitchell, assessment coordinator—evaluated the degree program assessment reports, which documented assessment activities conducted during 2014. The reviews were based on the evaluation checklists provided at the UALR Assessment Central site. Eleven programs (7 undergraduate and 4 graduate) in the College of Business were assessed. All evaluated program assessment reports meet expectations.

The following conclusions were drawn regarding degree program assessment in the College of Business:

1. The programs have workable program assessment plans.
2. Valid data collection is evident with analysis based on detailed rubrics: undergraduate program assessment builds upon the undergraduate business core assessment required by AACSB; graduate program assessment likewise is directed by AACSB assurance of learning standards.
3. Programs should itemize specific curricular changes based on assessment over the past few years and resulting changes in student performance.
4. Limited involvement of stakeholders beyond faculty members continues to be indicated on most reports.
5. The assessment process is at a stage that departments should identify areas of lower performance (an area of performance that could differentiate student achievement) and develop strategies to address them, rather than performing the same assessment activities each year.

BBA/BS in Accounting (meets expectations)

Two learning goals were addressed this year: (1) Possess professional and technical knowledge and (2) Possess effective communication skills. The learning outcomes/objectives for these goals:

- 1.1 Demonstrate competence in topics covered in principles of accounting.
- 1.2 Demonstrate competence in each of the functional areas of accounting (auditing, accounting information systems, financial, tax, governmental, managerial, and advanced financial accounting).
- 2.1 Demonstrate effective written communication skills (assessed in the fall of even numbered years).
- 2.2 Demonstrate effective oral communication skills.

Assessment activities reported are linked to the assessment goals and objectives. Data came from the yearly Major Field Test (MFT) in business to assess the accounting program objectives, assessment

results obtained from business core assessments related to accounting, and from a comprehensive assessment exam given in the accounting capstone course (ACCT 4311). Assessment results are shared with faculty and students and discussed.

Methods used for assessment were extensive and thorough. Findings were complete. Stated that faculty will meet in September to discuss outcomes.

Recommendation:

- That initial discussions take place before the assessment report is written so that more feedback and possibly additional curricular recommendations can be included in the report.

BBA in Business Information Systems (meets expectations)

Two learning goals were addressed: (1) Develop skills in solving real world and/or simulated business problems and (5) Demonstrate effective communication skills. Learning outcomes/objectives for these goals:

- 2.1 Demonstrate the use of technology to create value in a business environment.
- 5.1 Demonstrate effective written communication skills.

Goal 2 was assessed through student projects in the capstone BIS course; goal 5 was assessed through writing projects from BINS 3380. A complete analysis is provided, with identified student performance on each factor in each rubric. Recommendations for curricular revision were provided. Data were shared with BIS advisory board.

Recommendation:

- That curricular changes be tracked in relation to impact on student performance.

BBA in Economics (minimally meets expectations)

Two learning goals were address this year: (3) Understand economic relationships between countries and (4) Understand the use, methodology, and application of statistical techniques. Learning outcomes/objectives for these goals:

- 3.1 Understand exchange rate/Balance of Payments determinants.
- 3.2 Understand trade theories.
- 4.1 Collect, organize, analyze, and present economic data as it pertains to course-specific topics, and to forecast/model economic activity.

Assessment took place using two exams in ECON 4320 International Economics, two ECON 4320 projects, and a presentation. Data also came from the Major Field Test (MFT) exam taken in the MGMT 4380 capstone course using questions related to economics.

There was no evidence of stakeholder involvement (faculty or students) as far as sharing or discussing results. Findings were reported with little analysis.

Recommendation:

- Provide detailed analysis, with levels of learning noted and implications for curriculum design identified.

BBA in Finance (meets expectations)

Report states that all learning outcomes were assessed but does not identify goals and objectives. Assessment took place in Finance 4395 (capstone finance course) using the Bloomberg Assessment Test (BAT). The BAT comprehensively examines finance topics and allows comparison to scores from students across the country. The faculty and students were apprised of the results but the feedback from these stakeholders is not documented.

The positive attributes of the assessment cycle were:

- Assessment instrument was strong and allowed comparison to outside students.
- All learning goals were assessed.
- Actions based on prior assessments and student improvement indicate closing of loop.

Recommendations:

- Include learning goals in the assessment with illustration of how BAT measures these.
- Increase documentation of feedback loop from faculty and students.

BBA in International Business (minimally meets expectations)

Two learning goals were addressed: (1) Understand and be conversant on the nature of international business and (2) Understand major trends in international trade and investments patterns between and among major groups of nations and be able to use extant theories to explain these patterns. Learning outcomes/objectives for these goals:

- 1.1 Demonstrate understanding of marketing, management, economic, and financial issues in international business.
- 2.1 Understand exchange rate/Balance of Payments determinants.
- 2.2 Demonstrate understanding of trade theories.

Results from questions addressing international issues in the Major Field Test and “results” from four multidisciplinary courses, “when available” were evaluated. The report indicates the average number of correct answers in the relevant areas for all UALR business majors as well as all business majors taking the test nationwide. Increased international opportunities in the form of an international trip to Costa Rica were identified.

Recommendations:

- Incorporate stakeholder involvement and report feedback.
- Consider collecting assessment data from a course required of the International Business BBA and not all majors to better evaluate performance of international business majors.

BBA in Management (meets expectations)

Three learning goals were assessed: (2) Students will be skilled in solving real world and/or simulated business problems; (4) Students will have a global perspective and an understanding of cultural issues, and (5) Students will demonstrate competence in business knowledge. Learning outcomes/objectives for these goals:

- 2.2 Students will synthesize information and concepts from multiple disciplines.
- 4.1 Students will demonstrate knowledge of the issues involved in conducting business in a diverse, global environment.
- 5.1 Students will demonstrate competence in each of the functional areas of business.

Assessment data collected from COB core courses required for all BBA degrees. Process and results are clearly stated and parallel assessment plan. Conclusions are based on findings. Plans for using results in curricular revision/strategic planning are stated. Involvement of stakeholders is identified.

Recommendations:

- Identify potential curricular adjustments to be made for the successive year based on assessment findings.
- Collect assessment data from a course required of the Management BBA and not all majors to better evaluate performance of management majors.

BBA in Marketing (meets expectations)

Four learning goals were addressed: (1) Develop knowledge in the major functional areas of marketing management; (2) Develop the conceptual and analytical skills required to identify, analyze, and evaluate potential target markets; (3) Develop the conceptual and analytical skills necessary for acquiring and using marketing information; (4) Develop the conceptual and analytical skills required to manage the marketing function of organizations and successful marketing programs. Learning outcomes/objectives for these goals:

- 1.1 Demonstrate an understanding of product development and management (questions 31-40).
- 1.2 Demonstrate an understanding of developing and managing pricing strategies and policies (questions 61-70).
- 1.3 Demonstrate an understanding of promotional strategies, methods, and management (questions 51-60).

- 1.4 Demonstrate an understanding of the methods for developing and managing marketing logistics (questions 41-50).
- 2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of concepts and techniques of market segmentation (questions 1-20).
- 2.2 Demonstrate an ability to evaluate and select target markets. (Questions 1-10 on the assessment exam)
- 2.3 Demonstrate an understanding of buyer behavior (questions 21-30).
- 3.1 Demonstrate an ability to identify marketing information needs and of the sources of needed marketing information (questions 11-20).
- 3.2 Demonstrate and understanding of the methods for the data collection, analysis, and dissemination of marketing information (questions 11-20).

An exam given in Marketing 4385 is used to assess student performance. Performance has been tracked from year to year with identification of improved student performance and areas of weakest student performance. Changes implemented in the fall of 2014 will be monitored in future exams.

Recommendations:

- Identify curricular changes based on the analysis.
- Provide question analysis in low performing areas.

Master of Science in Business Information Systems (meets expectations)

Four learning goals were addressed: (1) Apply technical competencies in business applications development; (2) Leverage information technology for business solutions at the strategic, tactical, and operational levels in a global environment; (4) Apply an ethical framework in decision making; (5) Develop an integrated understanding of the IT field. Learning outcomes/objectives for these goals:

- 1.2 Students will demonstrate data manipulation language skills.
- 1.3 Students will apply project management techniques in systems development
- 2.1 Student will leverage the use of information systems to solve a business problem or capitalize on an opportunity.
- 4.1 Students will evaluate business decisions within an ethical framework.
- 5.1 Students will demonstrate knowledge of select knowledge areas of IT.

The report lists technical competencies, leverage information, and ethics as the focus of assessment. BINS 7305 was assessed via exam, BINS 7350 via case and project, and BINS 7353 via project, and there was a comprehensive program review exam. Multiple reviews with rubrics and an emphasis on inter-rater reliability served as analysis. The report does a nice job of detailing the student achievement and ties it to earlier actions in the assessment loop. An action plan was also used to further close the loop in the future.

The positive attributes of the assessment cycle were:

- Very elaborate detailed report
- Evidence of closing the loop

Recommendation:

- Provide a summary section to make digesting the report easier for faculty

Graduate Certificate in Business Information Systems (meets expectations)

Two learning goals were addressed: (1) Apply technical competencies in business applications development; (4) Apply an ethical framework in decision making. Learning outcomes/objectives for these goals:

- 1.2 Students will demonstrate data manipulation language skills.
- 4.1 Students will evaluate business decisions within an ethical framework.

Data manipulations, project management, leveraging systems, and ethics formed the focus of assessment. Assessment occurred in the following courses: BINS 7305, 7350, and 7353. Assessment findings were well cataloged but evidence of earlier actions could be improved. Future actions are detailed.

The positive attributes of the assessment cycle were:

- Very detailed report.
- Assessment being adjusted as new evidence comes in.

Recommendations:

- Provide a summary section to make digesting the report easier for faculty
- Identify more evidence of closing the assessment cycle loop

MBA (Meets expectations)

All three learning goals were addressed: (1) Develop an understanding of the strategically interrelated functional areas of business; (2) Develop understanding of the strategically interrelated functional areas of business; (3) Develop effective teamwork, critical thinking, and presentation skills. Learning outcomes/objectives for these goals:

- 1.1 Students will demonstrate knowledge of the functional areas of business.
- 1.2 Students will use effective reasoning and synthesis skills to demonstrate the interrelated functional areas of business.
- 2.1 Students will analyze the impact of cultural diversity issues on management situations.
- 2.2 Students will analyze the impact of global issues on business.
- 2.2 Students will analyze the impact of global issues on business.
- 3.1 Students will demonstrate ability to collaborate in collective tasks.

- 3.2 Students will demonstrate rational thinking when confronting complex business problems.
- 3.3 Students will demonstrate ability to design and deliver persuasive oral presentations.

All goals and objectives were assessed for the MBA using an extensive and organized assurance of learning plan. Results were clearly stated and conclusions were based on the results. Members of the Graduate Assessment Committee along with three separate MBA assessment subcommittees (that dealt separately with cultural, global, and ethics assessments) analyzed data, reported findings, and made recommendations. Strong documentation of rubrics used. Assessment took place in multiple courses and some assessment take place throughout the program using pre-tests and post-tests.

Recommendation:

- Hold a yearly meeting with all graduate business faculty to share results, discuss them, and get more feedback for any change recommendations.

Graduate Certificate in Management (meets expectations)

One learning goal was addressed: Demonstrate understanding of the principles of human resources management. Learning outcome/objective for these goals:

- Students will apply the principles of human resource management in critically evaluating a human resource problem.

Process is clear and results are clearly stated and parallel assessment plan. Conclusions are based on findings. Assessment data collected from MGMT 7341 Strategic Human Resource Management. Involvement of stakeholders is identified. Sample size acknowledged as “small.”

Recommendations:

- Consider collecting data from more than one course if possible when sample size is small to assist with determination of potential curricular enhancements.