

2012 Degree Program Assessment

College of Business

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The Assessment Review Committee in the College of Business—Bruce Lindeman, Department of Economics and Finance; Robert Oliva, Department of Accounting; Tom Tudor, Department of Management; and Robert Mitchell, assessment coordinator—evaluated the degree program assessment reports, which documented assessment activities conducted during 2012. The reviews were based on the evaluation checklists provided at the UALR Assessment Central site. All programs in the College of Business were assessed: seven undergraduate and eight graduate programs. Fourteen (93 percent) assessment progress reports were rated as either “meets expectations” or “exceeds expectations.”

The program of assessment in the college was reviewed during an AACSB accreditation visitation in February, 2013. The assessment culture in the college, including involvement of faculty throughout all programs and use of data for curricular evolution, was highly rated. The undergraduate core assessment measures knowledge and skill development of all undergraduate majors related to five goals and eight objectives. The undergraduate program assessments complement this assessment.

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

1. The programs either have workable program assessment plans or are revising plans based on program changes.
2. Overall valid data collection is evident with analysis based on detailed rubrics.
3. Improvement is observed in programs collecting data aligned to objectives being assessed.
4. Increased programmatic changes are indicated in comparison to previous years.
5. Limited involvement of stakeholders beyond a few program faculty members continues to be indicated on most reports.

Degree Program Assessment Reports Reviewed

BBA (BS) in Accounting (meets expectations)

Two goals, four objectives were assessed. Goals and objectives are clearly stated. Several assessment methods were used: Major Field Test (to assess Principles of Accounting I and II) and an exam administered in the capstone course. Multiple assessment outcomes were provided, and actions based on these outcomes were stated. These limited results are due partly to the implementation in 2012 of a revised assessment plan.

- In comparing 2011 and 2012 results, consideration should be given to the fact that the 2012 evaluation process of some objectives involved two or three faculty while in 2011 evaluations were made only by the instructor.

- No stakeholder involvement was identified.

Recommendations:

1. Provide more extensive interpretation of assessment results and action plans resulting from the analysis.
2. Implement more comprehensive stakeholder involvement in the assessment process.

BBA in Economics (meets expectations)

Two learning goals, three objectives were assessed; outcomes from this assessment were identified. Analysis of results indicated students have substantially improved skills in identifying relevant data and analyzing the data appropriately. (This skill development was particularly challenging this year as the databases were new and institutional knowledge of the databases was relatively low).

- Assessment conclusions need to be supported with details data/analysis.
- Assessment findings were very positive, yet a number of changes to be made were identified. How do changes relate to assessment findings?
- Limited involvement of stakeholders in the assessment process is indicated.

Recommendations:

1. Clarify assessment data collected, results, and metrics of achievement (unacceptable, acceptable, etc.). Include data/analysis in the assessment report.
2. Assure more comprehensive involvement of stakeholders in assessment process, including students and faculty at minimum.

BBA in Finance (meets expectations)

All goals and objectives defined for this program were assessed. The Bloomberg Assessment Tool (BAT), a very broad overarching assessment method, was used to assess student performance. UALR student performance is compared to that of a global sample; performance can be tracked over time. Only two administrations of the exam have been given, so longitudinal data is in the collection process. Student strengths/weaknesses have been identified with analysis of programmatic reasons.

- How is the Finance program aligned to the BAT? Can the exam results provide specifics for needed curricular changes?
- What are the reactions of faculty and other stakeholders to the results?

Recommendations:

1. Align parts of the BAT to specific program components, assessment objectives.

2. Consider parallel assessment techniques matched to parts of the BAT to validate using the BAT. Identify how the BAT can provide curricular specific data for change.
3. Identify specific outcomes and needed curricular changes based on faculty and other stakeholder input.

BBA in International Business (does not meet expectations)

Two goals, three objectives were assessed. Only the ETS Majors Fields Test, a standardized national measure, was used for assessment. Questions on the exam were matched to specific program components. Concerns: Learning goals/objectives are very broad, and specific performance on the MFT is difficult to directly tie to curricular components. The issue of instability in the program and assessment process was addressed.

- Does the MFT exam mirror the program curriculum and match the objectives? Should more focused assessment tools be used to supplement the MFT?
- On what specific content did students perform well or poorly?

Recommendations:

1. Consider more specific goals with clearly defined objectives so focused assessment measures could be used.
2. Identify specific programmatic content assessed and the results. Identify needed curriculum changes to improve student performance. Draw specific conclusions/actions.
3. Assure more comprehensive involvement of stakeholders in assessment process.

BBA in Management (meets expectations)

Two goals, four objectives assessed. (Oral communication data not included.) 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.

Recommendation:

1. Identify direct use of assessment findings.

BBA in Management Information Systems (exceeds expectations)

Two goals, four learning objectives assessed. Multiple assessment tools were used: ETS major field exam, exam essays, and case analysis. Process is consistent with assessment plan. Conclusions and actions are consistent with findings. Results communicated to appropriate stakeholders.

BBA in Marketing (meets expectations)

Four learning goals, nine objectives were assessed using a competency exam (multiple-choice exam developed by the department). Since results have been collected over 8 years, longitudinal performance can be viewed. Consistent performance is evident relating to performance on most objectives, with substantial improvement relating to the “distribution” category, the low-score area. Programmatic changes enacted in 2010 to increase student performance have not yet significantly impacted assessment scores, as noted in the report.

- How do faculty interpret the findings? What specific conclusions can be drawn?
- Are other changes planned to respond to the consistently low scores in areas such as “product strategy” and “pricing”?

Recommendations:

1. Provide more specific conclusions relating to scores.
2. Address the minimal changes in scores and possible needed action to improve scores.
3. Assure more comprehensive involvement of stakeholders in assessment process, involving students and faculty at minimum.

MBA (meets expectations)

All goals, objectives were assessed and are consistent with assessment plan. Results clearly stated; conclusions based on results. Clearly reported use of results. Involvement of stakeholders consistent with plan.

Recommendation:

1. Continue to show triangulation of results by using multiple assessment tools.

MS in Accountancy (meets expectations)

Three goals, five objectives assessed; the process for assessment was clearly identified/explained. Rubric-based evaluation was conducted, as suggested last year. Data-based conclusions were drawn.

- A number of curricular implications (for both undergraduate and graduate curricula) were identified based on student performance. Have all faculty been involved in the assessment discussions? What follow-up will assure needed changes are made?
- Concern is expressed over the wording of learning objectives which are based on “will use”? Should they be restated so they are directly measurable? (Can answer to exam questions measure “use of” standards.)

Recommendation:

1. Reevaluate wording of learning objectives.
2. Assure more comprehensive involvement of stakeholders in assessment process.

Note:

If this program's assessment plan (or others) has been revised, please submit it to the Assessment Review Committee for review/comment.

MS in Taxation (meets expectations)

Three goals, five objectives were assessed. Program goals and objectives are clearly stated. Several assessment measures were used: objective exam questions and case/problem analysis. Student outcomes for 2012 were generally unsatisfactory, but the small number (5) of students involved in the assessment process suggests that caution should be used when evaluating assessment results. Since the assessment process was redesigned for 2012, no comparisons to previous years are available.

Recommendations:

1. Assure that assessment methodology and rubrics are appropriate for the small population of students being evaluated.
2. Seek to implement more comprehensive stakeholder involvement in the assessment process.

Graduate Certificate in Accountancy (meets expectations)

One goal, one objective were assessed. Rubric-based analysis was conducted, with stated conclusions.

- No statement provided regarding level of satisfaction with results.
- No specific action plan is suggested based on the results.
- Concern is expressed over the wording of learning objective 1.1: is it measurable? Should it be restated so it is measurable? (Can answer to exam questions measure "use of" standards.)

Recommendations:

1. Revise learning objective 1.1.
2. Identify needed curricular changes.
3. Seek to implement more comprehensive stakeholder involvement in the assessment process.

Graduate Certificate in Taxation (meets expectations)

One goal, one objective were assessed. The goal/objective are clearly stated. An exam was used as the data collection instrument. Conclusions based on results were identified. No specific action plan appears to have been suggested based on the positive results.

Recommendations:

1. Assure that assessment methodology and rubrics are appropriate for the small population of students being evaluated.
2. Seek to implement more comprehensive stakeholder involvement in the assessment process.

MS in Management Information Systems (meets expectations)

Four goals, eight objectives assessed, using varied tools (capstone exam, presentations, reports, projects) and rubrics) for evaluation. Team skill development will be assessed in next cycle. Excellent triangulation in assessment methods exhibited. Appropriate conclusions stated; use of results indicated. Involvement of stakeholders is consistent with plan.

Recommendation:

1. Show year-to-year comparative data as available.

Graduate Certificate in Management (meets expectations)

Two goals, two objectives were assessed. Process is clear; conclusions are based on data. Case analysis and rating of a team experience were used to assess student performance. Results were identified, proposed actions indicated. Future involvement of stakeholder groups was identified.

- Concern: data were collected from Mgmt 7380, a course not taken by certificate students.

Recommendations:

1. Restrict certificate data collection/analysis to certificate classes. Consider whether the identified collection of data from revised MBA program is relevant to certificate students.
2. Involve a wider group of stakeholders in the analysis/dissemination process.

Graduate Certificate in Management Information Systems (meets expectations)

Both goals, objectives were assessed, using varied tools (exam questions, projects, and case analysis) and rubrics for evaluation. Process is clearly explained. Actions based on assessment are indicated. Involvement of stakeholders is consistent with plan.

Recommendations:

1. Show year-to-year comparative data as available.