

**FCBE Assurance of Learning “Closing the Loop” Committee Report
MSBA Program**

Summary of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

**Fogelman College of Business and Economics
University of Memphis**

Committee Members:

**Thomas McInish
Richard Evans
Sandi Richardson
Thomas Meservy – Chair**

Submitted to:

**Lloyd Brooks, FCBE Director of Assessment
Jasbir Dhaliwal, FCBE Associate Dean of Academic Programs**

Spring 2012

This report consists of a summary of the experiences gained, lessons learned, and recommendations for future improvement. In addition, this report details specific findings, conclusions, recommendations, and comments. All data used by this committee can be found on the FCBE Assessment website: <http://www.fcbeassessment.net>. The committee was given a general charge as well as additional charges as follows:

General Charge to FCBE “Close the Loop” Committees

1. Review the assessment rubrics carefully for the degree program to assure a thorough knowledge of the goals and objectives established by faculty for the degree program.
2. Review data analysis and graphic representation for each objective to determine the degree that reasonable expectations were met. State the reason for your finding. If not met, what is needed to increase the likelihood that the objective will be met during a subsequent assessment—delete the objective, revise the objective wording, add specific assignments in courses, change in prerequisites, suggest a support activity, and so forth?
3. Include an appropriate statement for each objective to reflect findings that support your review comments so that a third reader can understand your reasoning and intentions.
4. Include specific review recommendations and/or comments for each learning goal for the rubric.
5. After all assessment data for the degree program have been reviewed. The committee should develop a team report in narrative form to summarize findings and conclusions. Be specific and relate conclusions and recommendations to specific findings.
6. Discuss the entire process with appropriate faculty in the MSBA faculty to assure input and that your recommendations represent MSBA faculty.

Degree Program: MSBA

Goal 1: Graduates will be competent in the use of technology.

Objective 1: Use typical business application software packages effectively. (MIS 7650)

Mean: 6.85

Rubric: 77% Exemplary

Findings: 49% of the MSBA students assessed were assessed at an 8 (on a 9-point scale) and 28% were assessed at a 7, both within the “Exemplary” range. 21% of students were found in the “Good” category and 2% were in the “Fair” category.

Objective 2: Use internet for business research tasks (MIS 7650)

Mean: 7.81

Rubric: 98% Exemplary

Findings: All but 2% of students were assessed in the Exemplary range for this objective. 13% were assessed at a 9, 75% at an 8, and 10% at a 7. The remaining 2% was assessed at a 3.

Conclusions: While none of the students demonstrated the highest level of assessment in either of these two objectives, it is clear that MSBA students are exposed to technology and in general are competent with its use, particularly in using the internet for business research tasks.

Recommendations: Based on the conclusions, we recommend a change to Objective 2. Rather than just focusing on the internet for business research tasks, we suggest the inclusion of additional technology/channels of information for doing a wider variety of tasks. Based on current and emerging trends, we suggest that graduates need to be familiar with social media and mobile applications. We suggest the following revised objective:

Objective 2: Demonstrate how to use social media to achieve business objectives

Goal 2: Graduates will be effective communicators.

Objective 1: State purpose: early, clearly, creatively, skillfully. (FIR 7155)

Mean: 7.58
Rubric: 78% Exemplary

Findings: The majority of students, 55%, were assessed at the highest level, a 9. An additional 23% of students were also assessed at the Exemplary level: 16% were assessed at an 8 and 7% at a 7. 99% of students were assessed at a 6 or higher.

Objective 2: Organize and develop: structure, connect, separate, flow. (FIR 7155)

Mean: 7.46

Rubric: 80% Exemplary

Findings: Similar to Objective 1, the majority of students, 51%, were assessed at the highest level with 80% of all students assessed as Exemplary. Again, 99% of students were assessed at a the highest level of the “Good” category (6) or in the Exemplary range.

Conclusions: The MSBA students met the objectives as currently stated.

Recommendations: Given that the MSBA students met the objectives as currently stated, it is clear that MSBA students are exposed to activities that require the development of both written and verbal communication skills. However, the committee felt that the current objectives were vague and recommends the addition of the following specific activities related to improvement of students’ communication skills:

Written communication:

- Ad hoc written communication demonstrated by activities such as being called on in class to produce a written answer to a question or concept included in a class discussion response (i.e., write an answer on the white board).
- Written reports.

Oral communication:

- Extemporaneous oral presentations demonstrated by activities such as being called on to provide a verbal answer to a question or concept included in a class discussion.
- Prepared class presentations using tools such as PowerPoint slides and structured presentation techniques.

The committee suggests areas of improvement, including: 1) participation in Toastmasters activities, 2) participation in communication workshops;

Additional recommendations include: 1) benchmarking students' communication skills by conducting an early assessment to be compared to skills later in the process, and 2) increasing the frequency and consistency of presentations throughout multiple courses in the MSBA program.

Goal 3: Graduates will be aware of factors affecting business in a global society.

Objective 1: Identify relevant global factors. (MIS 7650)

Mean: 6.88

Rubric: 78% Exemplary

Findings: The percentage of students assessed at each level are: 9, 65%; 8, 9%; and 7, 4%. The remaining 22% of students are spread across the Fair (5%) and Good (17%) categories.

Conclusions: Graduates clearly meet the objective as currently stated.

Objective 2: Analyze relevant global factors. (MIS 7650)

Mean: 6.88

Rubric: 78% Exemplary

Findings: The findings for this assessment mirror the assessment of the previous objective for this same goal: 78% were found to be exemplary in analyzing relevant global factors while 17% were found to be Good and 5% Fair.

Conclusions: Graduates clearly meet the objective as currently stated.

Recommendations: The committee believes that Goal 3 as currently stated is not sufficiently demanding, requiring only simple awareness. Instead, the committee recommends that the goal be revised as follows:

Goal 3: Graduates will understand trends that are creating opportunities and threats to organizations in a global society.

This restated goal calls for student attainment of the knowledge needed to understand, rather than to simply be aware of, global trends.

Further the committee feels that the objectives as currently stated are too vague and recommends that the needed awareness be moved to the first objective (rather than in the goal as is currently the case). Moreover, the committee recommends providing a context by emphasizing the time dimension and that the objective is to understand how global factors affect organizations. Hence, the committee recommends that objective 1 be revised as follows:

Objective 1: Be aware of past, current and emerging global trends affecting organizations.

Going beyond awareness, the committee recommends that students should be able to keep abreast of global trends affecting organizations. Accordingly, the committee recommends that the second objective be revised as follows:

Objective 2: Identify sources of information to track global trends affecting organizations.

Finally, having become aware of global trends and possessing the tools for keeping abreast of global trends affecting organizations, the committee recommends that students should be able to analyze how these trends provide opportunities and present dangers to their organization. Hence, the committee recommends that a third objective be added as follows:

Objective 3: Analyze the opportunities and threats to organizations in a global society based on past, current and emerging trends.

Goal 4: Graduates will be problem solvers.

Objective 1: Apply theories/concepts and facts to solve problems. **(FIR 7155)**

Mean: 7.5

Rubric: 78% Exemplary

Findings: 97% of students assessed were found to be at the highest level of the “Good” category or higher. 78% were found to have an “Exemplary” ability to apply theories/concepts and facts to solve problems.

Conclusions: The objective needs continued emphasis.

Objective 2: Critically evaluate arguments, theories/concepts, and recommendations. (FIR 7155)

Mean: 7.38

Rubric: 78% Exemplary

Findings: Similar to objective 1, all but 3% were assessed to be at a 6 or above. 71% were assessed at the highest two categories of the Exemplary range demonstrating the ability to critically evaluate arguments, theories/concepts, and recommendations.

Conclusions: The objective needs continued emphasis.

Recommendations: Encourage faculty to continue to focus equally on students' ability: 1) to explain important theories and concepts, 2) to critically evaluate theories and concepts and the arguments surrounding them, and 3) to apply theories and concepts to solve problems.

The committee suggests revising and reordering the objectives as follows:

Objective 1: Explain important theories and concepts

Objective 2: Critically evaluate theories and concepts and the arguments surrounding them

Objective 3: Apply theories and concepts to solve problems

Student should be able to clearly explain these theories and concepts concisely and in an ad hoc manner.