

Texas State University-San Marcos
Academic Program Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

Year 2008-2009
College/Division Business
Department/Unit Business
Program Name/Department Business Administration (MBA)
Program Code 550G MBA
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Mission Statement

The McCoy College MBA program is dedicated to providing students with the knowledge and skills that will prepare them for key management responsibilities in today's complex and dynamic global business environment. The program challenges students to develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to advance their professional objectives.

Students should be able to develop and demonstrate the following capacities: • Capacity to lead in organizations • Capacity to apply knowledge in new and unfamiliar circumstances through a conceptual understanding of relevant disciplines • Capacity to adapt and innovate to solve problems, to cope with unforeseen events, and to manage in unpredictable environments.

Evidence of Improvement

The MBA program underwent a major revision in 2007-2008. This revision was based on assessment data collected in the previous two years. The revised program was piloted in spring 2009. The entire revised program will be introduced in fall 2009. Because of this significant revision and the addition of new coursework, initial assessment of the new program was undertaken with the outcomes that were most consistent between the old and new programs.

As part of the program revision, student learning outcomes will be revisited to ensure that they reflect critical points of learning for the MBA students. Once learning outcomes are further clarified, the assessment plan will be updated and executed in fall 2009. All learning outcomes will be assessed each year.

Outcome Number 1

Knowledge of Fundamental Business Disciplines

Students will acquire and integrate knowledge of fundamental business disciplines to effectively manage domestic and global organizations in a dynamic environment (e.g., organizational structure and culture, discipline specific knowledge in accounting, finance, management, marketing, information systems and knowledge of how the disciplines interact through enterprise information systems).

Method 1

Students will demonstrate the acquisition of knowledge of fundamental business disciplines by demonstrating knowledge of organizational structure and culture. Performance will be measured in MGT 5314 (Organizational Behavior and Theory) through embedded questions in in-class quizzes and exams. It is expected that 85% of students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 80% overall on the relevant questions on the quizzes and exams.

Result 1

Outcome 1 will be assessed in fall 2009 under the assessment plan for the revised MBA program.

Method 2

Students will demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge of fundamental business disciplines in two courses:

1. In CIS 5318 (Information Technology in the Digital Economy), understanding enterprise information systems requires an understanding of the integration of fundamental business disciplines. Assessment in this class is accomplished through the use of class participation and a written case analysis. An in-class participation rubric is used as is a rubric for evaluating the quality of the case analyses. It is expected that 90% of students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 80% overall on class participation and the written case analysis.
2. MGT 5313 (Strategic Management) is the capstone course in the MBA program and requires both the explicit and implicit integration of knowledge learned in other more specialized courses. Assessment in this class is accomplished through a written essay exam, based on a complex business case. This exam satisfies the university's requirement for a comprehensive exam in our program. Exams are graded according to an established rubric. It is expected that 100% of the students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 80% overall on the relevant questions on the exam.

Result 2

Outcome 1 will be assessed in fall 2009 under the assessment plan for the revised MBA program.

Action Plan

Outcome 1 will be assessed in fall 2009 under the assessment plan for the revised MBA program.

Outcome Number 2

Integration of Information Technologies

Students will integrate appropriate information technologies for managing business data for decision making, enhancing productivity, and communicating with others.

Method 1

Students will demonstrate the integration of appropriate information technologies by understanding how IT enables new strategies and existing strategies, management issues surrounding the identification, selection, and effective deployment of IT, and how web-based IT applications enable business opportunities. Performance will be measured in CIS 5318 (Information Technology in the Digital Economy) through a written case analysis. A grading rubric will be used on the written case. It is expected that 90% of the students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 80% on the case analysis.

Result 1

Outcome 2 will be assessed in fall 2009 under the assessment plan for the revised MBA program.

Method 2

Students will demonstrate the integration of appropriate information technologies by identifying and utilizing technologies to acquire and analyze corporate financial data for decision making. Performance will be measured in FIN 5387 (Managerial Finance) through questions embedded in course quizzes and exams. It is expected that 80% of the students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 80% overall on the relevant questions on the quizzes and exams.

Result 2

Outcome 2 will be assessed in fall 2009 under the assessment plan for the revised MBA program.

Action Plan

Outcome 2 will be assessed in fall 2009 under the assessment plan for the revised MBA program.

Outcome Number 3

Analytical Skills and Critical Thinking

Students will demonstrate analytical skills and critical thinking as applied to business decision making (e.g., analyzing economic data and determining best course of action, applying statistical techniques to business data for decision making, analyzing financial data to assess financial health of a firm).

Method 1

Students will demonstrate analytical skills and critical thinking by estimating product demand functions; determining optimal prices, production, advertising and employment under different industry environments; and using game theory to assess the effectiveness of different strategies when outcomes of firms are highly interdependent. Performance will be measured in ECO 5316 (Managerial Economics) through exams, problem sets, written case analyses and class presentations. Instructors teaching the course will utilize an established rubric to evaluate student performance on the written material. It is expected that 85% of students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 80% overall on the assignments.

Result 1

On the San Marcos campus in fall 2008 and spring 2009, 30 MBA students were assessed using problems and mini-case studies in order to measure students' ability to demonstrate analytical skills and critical thinking as applied to business decision making. The goal of ECO 5316 is to develop skills in the application of economic theory and logic to a variety of business problems. Analytical skills and critical thinking are central themes in the course, as students are confronted with problems that require knowledge of the foundations of economics and statistics to find solutions. Instructors of this course used an agreed upon rubric to grade written work in the course. A combination of problems and mini-cases were administered to assess student learning.

Results indicate that 80% of the San Marcos MBA students met or exceeded expectations by demonstrating the ability to analyze data and think critically about a business decision. Approximately 20% of the students failed to meet expectations.

At the RRHEC in fall 2008 and spring 2009, 31 MBA students were assessed using problems and mini-case studies in order to measure students' ability demonstrate analytical skills and critical thinking as applied to business decision making.

Results indicate that 90.3% of the RRHEC MBA students met or exceeded expectations by demonstrating the ability to analyze data and think critically about a business decision.

Overall for the two locations, 85.2% of the students met or exceeded expectations which is above the 85% performance goal for the course.

While the goal is currently being met, additional attention could be given to critical thinking problems that involve using relevant information to evaluate some business issue.

Method 2

Students will demonstrate analytical skills and critical thinking by correctly identifying and applying statistical techniques to accounting and business data for decision making. Performance will be measured through embedded methods in two courses:

1. In QMST 5334 (Advanced Statistical Methods for Business), assessment is conducted through class quizzes and exams. Over the course, 45 questions from in-class quizzes, 24 questions on the first exam and 24 questions on the final exam will be used to assess students' ability to identify and apply appropriate statistical techniques for business problems. It is expected that 80% of the students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 80% overall on the relevant questions on the in-class quizzes and exams.

2. In ACC 5361 (Accounting Analysis for Managerial Decision Making), each of 3 exams will contain embedded questions to assess student learning of analytical skills and critical thinking. Exam 1 will contain 12 questions, exam 2 will contain 5 questions and exam 3 will contain 3 questions. It is expected that 80% of the students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 80% on the embedded questions.

Result 2

QMST 5334:

In fall 2008 embedded quiz and exam questions were used to assess analytical skills and critical thinking of 59 MBA students in two sections of the course, one on campus in San Marcos and one at the RRHEC. Analytical skills and critical thinking are an integral part of this course as students are presented with an array of business problems to solve. Due to the nature of the course, at least 60% of all questions on quizzes and exams relate to this outcome. Results indicate that 93.8% of 32 students in San Marcos met or exceeded expectations set by instructors of

the course while only 70.4% of 27 students at the RRHEC met or exceeded expectations. Overall, 83.1% of students met or exceeded expectations.

In spring 2009, 23 MBA students on the RRHEC campus were assessed on their analytical skills and critical thinking through embedded quiz and exam questions. Results indicate that 74% of the students met or exceed expectations. Instructors noted a continued decrease in success rate of students at the RRHEC.

ACC 5361:

In fall 2008 on the San Marcos campus, 36 MBA students were evaluated on their ability to apply analytical skills and critical thinking in a management accounting context. Topics covered in the course support the need for and application of these skills. Each semester, assessment was in the form of 20 questions embedded in the 3 exams. Results indicate that 77.8% of the students met or exceeded the established expectation which is less than the 80% standard.

In spring 2009 at the RRHEC, 35 MBA students were evaluated on their ability to apply analytical skills and critical thinking in a management accounting context. Results indicate that 76% of the students met or exceeded the established expectation which is less than the 80% standard.

Overall, 76.1% of the MBA students met or exceeded expectations.

Action Plan

In terms of these critical thinking and analysis performance measures, students seemed to perform best on problems that involve using a given set of relevant firm data to arrive at optimal decisions, and interpreting those decisions. Students seemed to perform more poorly on problems that involve evaluating a mix of outcome data (some relevant and some not), determining what actions are best for firms, and detailing the intuition for their answers.

In the future, we will focus more on critical thinking problems that involve the identification of relevant information, using that information to determine the best action, and effectively defending decisions with appropriate economic logic. Moreover, this type of problem solving, which adds an element of uncertainty from the student's perspective, is more realistic in the business world and thus is more crucial to the student's skill set upon graduation.

While the goal in ECO 5316 is currently being met, additional attention will be given next year to critical thinking problems that involve using relevant information to evaluate business issues.

While the goal in QMST 5334 was met overall for the period, instruction over the material is being improved to better prepare students to analyze business problems that are more comprehensive and complex. Special emphasis is being applied to sections of the course offered at the RRHEC. The fact that the students at RRHEC are older and have been out of school longer, suggests that they may not be as prepared for an advanced statistics course as students on the San Marcos campus. Revisions in the MBA program and this course which will be effective fall 2009 will address this issue. We will continue to monitor the situation.

While the result in ACC 5361 fell short of the desired 80% performance standard set by the instructors, plans are in place to use more numerical examples in class and discuss more quantitative homework problems. This should improve the level of student performance. The questions used to assess this outcome will be under continual monitoring and evaluation.

Improvement planned in these three courses should greatly improve the students' understanding of and ability to apply analytical skills and critical thinking to business decision making.

Outcome Number 4

Ethical Leadership

Students will evaluate the issues associated with ethical leadership and conducting business in an ethical, legal, and socially responsible manner (e.g., demonstrating ethical sensitivity and judgment in decision making, understanding ethical and social issues in the use of information technology in organizations).

Method 1

Students will evaluate issues associated with ethical leadership by describing why marketing ethics is a strategic consideration in organization decisions, understanding issues in managing marketing ethics, identifying and resolving ethical dilemmas, and understanding the relationship between organizational performance and ethical decisions. Performance will be measured in MKT 5321 (Marketing Management) through written case analyses. Instructors teaching the course will utilize an established rubric to evaluate student performance on the case analyses. It is expected that 85% of students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 80% overall on the case analyses.

Result 1

In fall 2008 and spring 2009, MBA students from the San Marcos campus and the RRHEC were assessed using a case analysis and related questions to evaluate students' understanding of the ethical and social responsibilities of marketing management in organizations and society. The planning and execution of marketing tactics and strategies require an awareness of and sensibility to ethical and social issues.

Instructors of this course used an agreed upon rubric to grade the case analysis. Results indicate that the 84.5% of the 52 MBA students on the San Marcos campus met or exceeded expectations by demonstrating an understanding of ethical leadership issues in marketing decision making. On the RRHEC campus, 85.4% of 41 students met or exceeded expectations. Overall, 85% of the MBA students met or exceeded expectations.

Method 2

Students will evaluate issues associated with ethical leadership and conducting business in an ethical, legal, and socially responsible manner by understanding information as a strategic resource in organizations, and recognizing the ethical, social, and legal issues surrounding the collection, security, and use of confidential information in organizations. Performance will be measured in CIS 5318 (Information Technology in the Digital Economy) through essay questions embedded in the final examination in the course. An established rubric will be used to grade the essay questions. Performance will also be measured through a written case analysis which will also be graded through an established rubric. It is expected that 80% of the students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 85% overall on the relevant questions on the exam and case analysis.

Result 2

In fall 2008 at the RRHEC, the ability of 37 MBA students to evaluate issues associated with ethical leadership as relating to organization-wide information resources was assessed. Assessment was conducted through essay questions embedded in the final exam and through a case analysis with related questions. Established rubrics were used to grade each assignment.

Results for this RRHEC group indicate that 83.8% of the students met or exceeded expectations by demonstrating an understanding of ethical leadership issues in information technology. This is higher than the established standard of 80% meeting or exceeding performance standards.

In spring 2009 on the San Marcos campus, the ability of 23 MBA students to evaluate issues associated with ethical leadership as relating to organization-wide information resources was assessed. Assessment was conducted through essay questions embedded in the final exam and through a case analysis with related questions. Established rubrics were used to grade each assignment.

Results for this San Marcos group indicate that 95.7% of the students met or exceeded expectations by demonstrating an understanding of ethical leadership issues in information technology. This is higher than the established standard of 80% meeting or exceeding performance standards.

Overall, 88.3% of the MBA students met or exceeded expectations on this outcome which is above the 80% performance goal..

Action Plan

While the goal in MKT 5321 is currently being met, additional improvements are being considered. For example, the timing of the case assignment could have been better since it was assigned at one of the busiest times of the semester. More attention to theoretical issues pertaining to ethical decision making in marketing may also reduce the percentage of students who fail to meet expectations.

While the goal in CIS 5318 is currently being met, additional improvements are being implemented to enhance student learning. The class readings and cases being used will be reviewed to ensure that the students are getting the best exposure to the issues. The exam questions will be reviewed for improvements.

Steps to be taken in these two courses should greatly improve the level of understanding of issues associated with ethical leadership and conducting business in an ethical, legal, and socially responsible manner.

Outcome Number 5

Communication Skills

Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, in new and unfamiliar circumstances (e.g., class presentations (planned and impromptu), class participation, written case analyses, written marketing plan, essay questions on exams).

Method 1

Students will demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate orally by preparing and delivering class presentations and participating in class discussions. Performance will be measured in two courses:

1. In MGT 5313 (Strategic Management), students' ability to effectively communicate orally will be assessed through class participation in class discussions. A grading rubric will be used to consistently assess class participation. It is expected that 95% of the students will meet or exceed expectations in class participation by scoring at least 80%.
2. In CIS 5318 (Information Technology in the Digital Economy) students' ability to effectively communicate orally will be assessed through class participation in case analyses and class discussions. A grading rubric will be used to consistently assess class participation. It is expected that 90% of the students will meet or exceed expectations in class participation by scoring at least 80%.

Result 1

Outcome 5 will be assessed in fall 2009 under the assessment plan for the revised MBA program.

Method 2

Students will demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate in writing by preparing written case analyses and by performance on essay questions embedded in exams. Performance will be measured in two courses:

1. In CIS 5318 (Information Technology in the Digital Economy), students' ability to communicate effectively in writing will be assessed through written case analyses. A grading rubric will be used on the written case analyses. It is expected that 90% of the students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 80% overall on the case analysis.
2. In MKT 5321 (Marketing Management) students will develop a structured and research-driven marketing plan. The plan will be evaluated using an established rubric. It is expected that 85% of students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 80% overall on the written marketing plan.

Result 2

Outcome 5 will be assessed in fall 2009 under the assessment plan for the revised MBA program.

Action Plan

Outcome 5 will be assessed in fall 2009 under the assessment plan for the revised MBA program.

Outcome Number 6

Leadership Skills

Students will understand the skills needed to effectively lead and will contribute to dynamic workgroups. In order to satisfy this outcome, students must understand key leadership issues and must learn to effectively participate in structured team settings.

Method 1

Students will understand the skills needed to effectively lead workgroups through analysis of key leadership issues such as group dynamics, leadership styles, conflict resolution, and consensus building. Performance will be measured in MGT 5314 (Organization Behavior and Theory) through embedded questions in in-class quizzes and exams. It is expected that 85% of students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 80% on the embedded questions.

Result 1

Outcome 6 will be assessed in fall 2009 under the assessment plan for the revised MBA program.

Method 2

Students will effectively contribute to dynamic workgroups by participating in structured teams. Performance will be measured in two courses:

1. In QMST 5334 (Advanced Statistical Methods for Business), students will contribute to dynamic workgroups by participating in a semester long group project designed to analyze a business problem, collect and analyze data, and make recommendations. A grading rubric is utilized to assess performance in the project. It is expected that 80% of the students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 80% on the project.

2. In ECO 5316 (Managerial Economics), students will contribute to dynamic workgroups by participating in a project consisting of an economic analysis of a business strategy of some related issue. A grading rubric is utilized to assess performance in the project. It is expected that 85% of the students will meet or exceed expectations by scoring at least 80% on the project.

Result 2

Outcome 6 will be assessed in fall 2009 under the assessment plan for the revised MBA program.

Action Plan

Outcome 6 will be assessed in fall 2009 under the assessment plan for the revised MBA program.

Chair Outcomes Status	Dean Outcomes Status	Chair Results Status	Dean Results Status
✓	✓	✓	✓