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To: College of Business Curriculum Committee
College of Business Department Chairs
College of Business Outcomes Assessment Task Force
College of Business MBA Core Faculty

From: Kay M. Palan
Associate Dean

Re. Results of Undergraduate and Graduate Alumni Assessment Surveys

In October 2004, I surveyed both undergraduate and graduate alumni who were graduated three to five years ago. An electronic survey was sent to 606 undergraduate alumni; the response rate was disappointingly low, 9% (52 of 606). A mail survey was sent to 220 graduate alumni with a response rate of 22% (48 of 220); because of the time frame of the survey and because there have been very few graduates in the MAcc, MS-IS, and MS-IA programs, only MBA graduates were surveyed. A higher response rate for the undergraduate survey might have been obtained with follow-up techniques or with a more traditional mail survey; it might be of benefit to repeat this survey during spring semester 2005, using a mail survey.

These surveys represent the second outcome assessment of our alumni; the first assessment was conducted in Fall 2001. Conducting such surveys every three years, using the same time frame will allow us to monitor how our graduates assess their educational experience in the College of Business. Future surveys of our graduate program alumni will include alumni in all of the graduate programs, not just the MBA program.

Attached are two reports, one for the undergraduate alumni and one for the graduate alumni. These reports contain quantitative data as well as respondent written comments. You are urged to share these with your faculty. (To save paper, you may want to distribute the quantitative data and retain the written comments for those who are interested.)

c: Labh Hira
Tony Hendrickson
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Graduate Programs Office

Undergraduate Alumni Survey Fall 2004

Summary of Results

Given the rating scale used in the survey (4-point scale), a goal of the college should be to achieve at least an average rating of "3" (good or somewhat satisfied) on each rated item. Using this as a criterion, results of the survey (See Table 1) of our undergraduate program alumni suggests that we do a particularly good job at developing an appreciation of the role of technology, the role of external forces, written communication, computer proficiency, and analytical skills. Moreover, alumni reported being satisfied with their overall education, job preparation and the impact of their education on their career. Items with average ratings below "3" include the role of ethics, global issues, the role of diversity, teamwork, and oral communication.

Results (Table 1) are also presented by major, although the sample sizes are too small to place much confidence in the results for those majors.

Finally, included in the alumni survey was a set of questions designed to assess alumni perceptions of their major coursework. These items, developed by each major, are identical to the items included in the annual survey of graduating seniors (with the exception of management, whose questions were revised last year and first used in the graduating senior survey in Spring 2004). Assuming our goal is to achieve at least an average rating of "3" on these items, faculty are encouraged to examine the results for each major (See Table 2) and determine (a) whether the items used are representative of the outcomes desired for their majors and, if so, (b) the implications of low ratings for a given curriculum. As noted above, results for majors with small sample sizes should be viewed with caution. A comparison of the 2001 and 2004 alumni data are presented in Table 3.

Comparison of Alumni Results with Graduating Senior and Recruiter Results

To put the results of this alumni survey into context, this section compares the alumni results with other assessment efforts; namely, the annual surveys of graduating seniors and recruiters, and the previous alumni survey conducted in 2001. As shown in Table 4, relative to the 2001 alumni survey, the current data suggest that an understanding of the ethics and teamwork has decreased; satisfaction measures are about the same as 2001. With respect to the graduating senior surveys, alumni tend to rate their skill development in written communication, computer proficiency, and analysis more consistently at or above "3" than do graduating seniors. In addition, alumni reported higher levels of satisfaction with their overall education and job preparation than do graduating seniors.

Finally, recruiters tend to report more favorable ratings for our students than students do for themselves.

Table 1
College of Business Outcome Assessment
Undergraduate Alumni Survey, Fall 2004
Overall Assessment of Program
(N=52)

Assessment Dimension	Total (n=52)	Acct (n=7)	Finance (n=9)	Mgmt (n=3)	MIS (n=11)	MKT (n=13)	POM (n=1)	TrLog (n=8)	
The COB helped you understand...									
Role of Ethics	2.85	3.14	3.00	3.00	2.36	2.92	4.00	2.75	
Global Issues	2.65	2.71	3.00	2.33	2.91	2.23	3.00	2.62	
Role of Technology	3.13	3.29	3.00	3.00	3.73	2.85	4.00	2.75	
Role of External forces	3.23	3.14	3.67	2.67	3.27	3.15	4.00	3.00	
Role of Diversity	2.58	2.86	2.78	3.00	2.36	2.46	2.00	2.50	
Teamwork	2.83	2.60	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.71	-----	2.83	
Oral Communication	2.87	2.71	2.89	3.00	3.18	2.77	3.00	2.63	
Written Communication	3.10	3.00	3.11	3.67	3.27	2.92	3.00	3.00	
Computer Proficiency	3.44	3.14	3.33	4.00	3.82	3.38	4.00	3.13	
Analytical Skills	3.21	3.14	3.44	3.00	3.36	3.23	3.00	2.87	
1-4 Scale: 1= poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=excellent									
Satisfaction with...									
Overall Education		3.38	3.71	3.22	3.67	3.36	3.23	3.00	3.50
Job Preparation	3.10	3.29	2.89	3.67	3.36	3.00	2.00	2.88	
Impact on Career		3.15	3.43	3.00	3.33	3.27	3.31	3.00	2.63
1-4 Scale: 1=very dissatisfied, 2=somewhat dissatisfied, 3=somewhat satisfied, 4=very satisfied									

Table 2
College of Business Outcome Assessment
Undergraduate Alumni Survey, Fall 2004
Assessment of Major

How well has your coursework in _____ helped in your understanding of:
(1-4 scale: 1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=excellent)

Accounting (N=7)

	How accounting information is used in the decision making process	
3.14	Basic tax concepts	2.71
	Basic auditing concepts	2.71
	Accounting information systems	2.71
	Cost concepts and analysis	3.14
3.14	Preparation & interpretation of financial statements	

Finance (N=9)

	How to apply tools & techniques for financial analysis.	
3.11	Investments and portfolio analysis	
2.89	The operation of financial markets	
3.00	The role of financial institutions in the economic system	3.00

Management (Entrepreneurship & Strategy) (N=3)

	Employee attitudes and behaviors	
3.33	Competitive strategy and advantage	3.33
	Strategy and challenge of international business	2.00
	Human resource practices	
3.00		

MIS (N=11)

	Existing & emerging information technologies	2.73
	How to analyze business processes & their information needs	
3.09	Develop technical specifications & project plans for IS solutions	3.10
	Develop IS applications using modern programming languages	2.45
	Data base systems for business applications	
3.20	Data communications & networking technologies	2.36

Marketing (N=13)

	Consumer needs, attitudes and behaviors	3.08
	Market segmentation and targeting	
2.85	Market positioning	3.00
	Brand management	2.77
	Role of the sales force	2.69

Customer satisfaction	3.00
Marketing research tools & methods	2.54

Table 2
Assessment of Major: continued

How well has your coursework in _____ helped in your understanding of:
(1-4 scale: 1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=excellent)

Production Operations Management (N=1)

	Implementation & evaluation of manufacturing information software	
2.50	Forecasting, planning & forecast control	3.00
	Capacity planning (e.g., RRP, CRP)	
4.00	Bills of material structures, bar coding, & EDI	4.00
	Manufacturing and enterprise resource planning	3.00
	Lean manufacturing (e.g., JIT production)	4.00
	Theory of constraints	4.00
	Inventory management	4.00

Transportation and Logistics (N=8)

	Transportation management	2.87
	Inventory management	2.88
	Warehousing management	2.38
	Purchasing & materials management	2.38
	Cost concepts & analysis	2.50
	International logistics	2.38

Table 3
College of Business Outcome Assessment
Comparison of Undergraduate Alumni Survey Results by Major
Fall 2004 & 2001

How well has your coursework in _____ helped in your understanding of:
(1-4 scale: 1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=excellent)
2004 2001

Accounting (2004 N=7; 2001 N=44)

2.91	How accounting information is used in the decision making process?		3.14
	Basic tax concepts.	2.71	2.89
	Basic auditing concepts.	2.71	3.09
	Accounting information systems.	2.71	2.52
	Cost concepts and analysis.	3.14	2.93
3.02	Preparation & interpretation of financial statements.		3.14

Finance (2004 N=9; 2001 N=30)

2.90	How to apply tools & techniques for financial analysis.		3.11
2.67	Investments and portfolio analysis.		2.89
2.87	The operation of financial markets.		3.00
	The role of financial institutions in the economic system.	3.00	3.07

Management (Entrepreneurship & Strategy) (2004 N=3; 2001 N=14)

n/a	Employee attitudes and behaviors		3.33
	Competitive strategy and advantage	3.33	2.50
	Strategy and challenge of international business	2.00	n/a
2.14	Human resource practices		3.00

Management (Entrepreneurship & Strategy) (2001 N=14)

2.36	Identifying and assessing new business opportunities		n/a
	Developing a business plan.	n/a	2.07
	Growing & managing new businesses.	n/a	2.43
2.79	Assessing & solving entrepreneurial & management problems		n/a

Management (Human Resources) (2001 N-7)

2.57	People as employees, how they are different & how they should be managed		n/a
2.71	Issues involved in attracting the right people.		n/a
	Developing an organization's human resources.	n/a	2.14

2.43	The role of leadership & motivation in managing employees.	n/a
2.71	The legal environment surrounding the HR function.	n/a

MIS (2004 N=11; 2001 N=41)

3.17	Existing & emerging information technologies.	2.73	2.78
	How to analyze business processes & their information needs.		3.09
	Develop technical specifications & project plans for IS solutions.	3.10	2.90
	Develop IS applications using modern programming languages.	2.45	2.63
	Data base systems for business applications.	3.20	2.83
	Data communications & networking technologies.	2.36	2.29

Table 3
Comparison of Undergraduate Alumni Survey Results by Major
Fall 2004 & 2001 continued

How well has your coursework in _____ helped in your understanding of:
(1-4 scale: 1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=excellent)
2004 2001

Marketing (2004 N=13; 2001 N=45)

	Consumer needs, attitudes and behaviors.	3.08	3.27
3.09	Market segmentation and targeting.		2.85
	Market positioning.	3.00	3.07
	Brand management.	2.77	2.96
	Role of the sales force.	2.69	2.98
	Customer satisfaction.	3.00	3.13
	Marketing research tools & methods.	2.54	2.98

Production Operations Management (2004 N=1; 2001 N=14)

	Implementation & evaluation of manufacturing information software.		2.50
2.36	Forecasting, planning & forecast control.	3.00	3.21
	Capacity planning (e.g., RRP, CRP)		4.00
3.07	Bills of material structures, bar coding, & EDI	4.00	2.86
	Manufacturing and enterprise resource planning.	3.00	3.07
	Lean manufacturing (e.g., JIT production)	4.00	3.43
	Theory of constraints.	4.00	3.07
	Inventory management.	4.00	3.43

Transportation and Logistics (2004 N=8; 2001 N=38)

	Transportation management.	2.87	3.18
	Inventory management.	2.88	3.18
	Warehousing management.	2.38	3.00
	Purchasing & materials management.	2.38	2.85
	Cost concepts & analysis.		2.50
2.93	International logistics.	2.38	2.70

Table 4
Comparison of Undergraduate Alumni Results Fall 2004
With Graduating Senior and Recruiter Survey Results

Assessment Dimension	Alumni Survey		Graduating Senior Surveys			Recruiter Surveys		
	2004 (n=52)	2001 (N=30)	2004 (n=269)	2002 (n=321)	2001 (N=95)	2004 (n=41)	2003 (n=32)	2002 (n=36)
The COB helped you understand...								
Role of Ethics	2.85	3.54	2.88	2.82	2.87	3.17	3.16	3.36
Global Issues	2.65	2.77	2.90	2.87	2.88	2.90	2.73	2.61
Role of Technology	3.13	3.26	3.30	3.15	3.34	3.34	3.13	3.22
Role of External forces	3.23	2.88	3.05	2.98	3.04	2.93	2.81	2.84
Role of Diversity	2.58	2.92	2.80	2.66	2.89	2.93	2.87	2.97
Teamwork	2.83	3.56	3.32	3.32	3.18	3.41	3.38	3.53
Oral Communication	2.87	3.22	3.07	2.97	2.98	3.22	3.11	3.06
Written Communication	3.10	3.13	2.93	2.93	2.97	3.27	3.10	3.03
Computer Proficiency	3.44	3.29	3.05	3.00	2.96	3.44	3.38	3.42
Analytical Skills	3.21	2.96	2.98	2.97	3.06	3.15	3.03	3.03

1-4 Scale: 1= poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=excellent

Satisfaction with...

Overall Education	3.38	3.46	3.13	3.08	3.19
Job Preparation	3.10	3.21	2.85	2.82	2.96
Impact on Career	3.15	3.30	n/a	n/a	n/a

1-4 Scale: 1=very dissatisfied, 2=somewhat dissatisfied, 3=somewhat satisfied, 4=very satisfied

2003 data not collected for Graduating Seniors

Graduate Alumni Survey Fall 2004

Summary of Results

Table 1 shows the results of the 2004 survey of alumni of our MBA program who have been out of school 3-5 years. Results are shown for the total sample of 48 responses plus a breakdown of responses by whether the alumni were enrolled in the full or part time program (primarily the Saturday MBA) and whether they completed a "specialization" as part of their degree program or opted for a general MBA. Three general observations stand out. (Please note that these data are on a 1-5 scale as opposed to the undergraduate survey's 1-4 scale.)

First, while only one average response for the total sample falls below the neutral rating of "3" (the importance of international business to their career), only several ratings surpassed a "4" on the five point scale, including teamwork, analytical skills, the lock-step program, quality of instruction, overall education, impact on career, and the importance of business strategy to their career.

Second, a comparison of responses between the full-time and part-time programs shows consistent perceptions across many categories. One noticeable difference is that the part-time students seem to appreciate the lock-step program more than the full-time students. Par-time students also perceived coursework in accounting, organizational behavior, and operations management as more important, relative to the full-time students. Full-time students perceived higher skill development in teamwork, computer proficiency, and analysis; full-time students also believe their degree had more impact on their career than did part-time students (this is not a surprising result, given that many part-time students plan to stay in their current positions).

Third, students pursuing the a specialization in their MBA degree, as opposed to obtaining a general MBA, reported greater skill acquisition with respect to quantitative and analytical skills and oral communication, greater satisfaction with all aspects of the program, and found nearly all the coursework more important to their careers.

Comparison of Graduate Alumni Results with Yearly Exit Survey Data

Table 2 provides a comparison of the average responses of the 2004 and 2001 alumni of our MBA program with data collected from students as they graduate from our program (exit surveys). While the yearly exit surveys include data from all graduate programs (e.g., MS in Business), the vast majority of these responses are from graduates of our MBA programs. With respect to the two alumni surveys, the 2004 alumni reported higher levels of skill acquisition, satisfaction, and importance of coursework for nearly every item. In reflecting back on their education after 3-5 years, the 2004 alumni reported higher levels of skill development and were more satisfied with nearly every aspect of their MBA than were students responding to the same issues as they completed the graduate program. However, the 2004 alumni, in general, reported the coursework as less important than reported on the exit surveys.

Table 1
College of Business Outcome Assessment
Graduate Alumni Survey, Fall 2004
(N=48)

Assessment Dimension	Total	Full-time Program	Part-Time Program	Specializ-	General ation in
MBA Degree	(N=48)	(N=23)	(N=25)	(N=36)	(N=12)
The COB helped you Acquire skills in ...					
Quantitative skills	3.73	3.83	3.64	3.83	
3.42					
Oral Communication	3.92	3.91	3.92	4.00	3.67
Written Communication	3.90	3.91	3.88	3.86	4.00
Leadership	3.75	3.83	3.68	3.75	3.75
Teamwork	4.15	4.30	4.00	4.08	4.33
Computer Proficiency	3.90	4.00	3.80	3.83	4.08
Analytical Skills	4.02	4.17	3.88	4.11	3.75
Satisfaction with...					
Use of Teams	3.88	3.91	3.84	3.89	3.83
Lock-step	4.06	3.83	4.24	4.08	3.92
Quality of Instruction	4.04	4.17	3.96	4.08	4.00
Overall Education	4.17	4.22	4.12	4.28	
3.83					
Impact on Career	4.08	4.22	3.96	4.14	
3.92					
Importance of coursework To your career...					
Business Strategy	4.08	4.09	4.08	4.17	3.83
Accounting	3.63	3.39	3.84	3.83	3.00
Finance	3.77	3.74	3.80	3.97	3.17
Org. Behavior	3.67	3.43	3.88	3.72	3.50
Operations Mgmt	3.29	2.78	3.76	3.44	
2.83					
MIS	3.50	3.43	3.56	3.61	3.17
Marketing	3.83	4.00	3.68	3.78	4.00
International Business	2.90	3.09	2.72	2.97	2.67
Ethics/Soc. Responsibility	3.46	3.61	3.32	3.36	
3.75					
Economics	3.67	3.74	3.60	3.81	3.25
Statistics	3.58	3.70	3.48	3.78	3.00

1-5 Scale:

- 1=not effective; very dissatisfied; not important
- 2=somewhat ineffective; dissatisfied; slightly important
- 3=neutral; neutral; moderately important
- 4=somewhat effective; satisfied; important
- 5=very effective; very satisfied; very important

Table 2
Comparison of Graduate Alumni with Yearly Exit Surveys

Assessment Dimension	Grad Alumni Fall 04 (N=48)	Graduate Alumni Fall 01 (N=59)	Exit '02-03 (N=53)	Exit Survey '01-02 (N=72)	Exit Survey
The COB helped you					
Acquire skills in ...					
Leadership	3.75	3.81	3.81	3.87	
Teamwork	4.15	3.92	3.98	4.14	
Oral Communication	3.92	3.83	3.92	3.91	
Written Comm.	3.90	3.75	3.94	4.07	
Computer Proficiency	3.90	3.32	3.13	3.24	
Analytical Skills	4.02	3.98	3.79	3.61	
Satisfaction with...					
Overall Education	4.17	4.03	3.45	3.38	
Impact on Career	4.08	3.83	n/a	n/a	
Use of Teams	3.88	3.86	3.92	3.99	
Lock-step	4.06	4.02	4.04	4.04	
Quality of Instruction	4.04	3.90	3.87	3.85	
Importance of coursework					
To your career...					
Business Strategy	4.08	3.90	4.38	4.39	
Accounting	3.63	3.22	3.85	3.64	
Finance	3.77	3.53	4.08	4.13	
Org. Behavior	3.67	3.64	3.82	3.71	
Operations Mgmt	3.29	3.36	3.65	3.28	
MIS	3.50	3.33	3.19	3.70	
Marketing	3.83	3.68	4.06	3.78	
International Business	2.90	2.59	3.35	3.51	
Ethics/Soc. Respons	3.46	3.46	3.52	3.26	
Economics	3.67	3.49	3.92	4.01	
Statistics	3.58	3.31	3.65	3.91	

1-5 Scale:

- 1=not effective; very dissatisfied; not important.
- 2=somewhat ineffective; dissatisfied; slightly important.
- 3=neutral; neutral; moderately important.
- 4=somewhat effective; satisfied; important
- 5=very effective; very satisfied; very important