

UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
LA CROSSE

August 28, 2009

To: College of Business Administration

From: Bill Colclough, Dean, College of Business Administration
Bruce E. May, Associate Dean, College of Business Administration

RE: Appointment of Assurance of Learning Task Force

The College of Business Administration takes pride in its students, faculty and programs. In order to maintain a high quality learning experience for our students and comply with AACSB International accreditation standards, it is vitally important that program learning outcomes are articulated and processes are in place for the college to measure its level of success in accomplishing these educational goals.

AACSB International standards state that "each degree program should be systematically monitored to assess its effectiveness and should be revised to reflect new objectives and to incorporate improvements based on contemporary theory and practice." Under the AACSB definition of a "program", the CBA has two programs, the undergraduate bachelor's degree program and the graduate MBA program.

AACSB International also states that the outcomes assessment process should include:

1. Definition of student learning goals and objectives
2. Alignment of curricula with the adopted goals
3. Identification of instruments and measures to assess learning
4. Collection, analyzing, and dissemination of assessment information, and
5. Using assessment information for continuous improvement including documentation that the assessment process is being carried out in a systematic, ongoing basis. (AACSB Assessment Resource Center, 2007)

Up to this point, the CBA has relied on the faculty, departments, college committees, and the dean's office to monitor and engage in course, major and program assessment. However, the Dean and the CBA Steering Committee¹ believe the formation of an "Assurance of Learning Task Force" to conduct the undergraduate program level assessment will provide a more

¹ The Steering Committee consists of all CBA department chairs, all CBA directors, the dean, and associate dean.

cohesive and efficient process to ensure that systematic monitoring of program level effectiveness is taking place.

The Task Force will be responsible for AACSB Assurance of Learning compliance for the CBA undergraduate program with a focus on steps 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the AACSB outcomes process listed above. Because individual majors, minors and concentrations within the undergraduate program are not considered separate degree programs, the assessment of learning within specific majors and courses will continue to be the primary responsibility of the appropriate CBA committees, departments and individual faculty members. However, it is recognized that because the goals of majors and courses align with the CBA program goals, some assessment tasks may overlap.

Scope of Duties

The Task Force will aid the curriculum management efforts by assessing the undergraduate program learning goals and providing evaluation and feedback. The graduate learning outcomes will be evaluated by a separate process. The CBA departments, faculty, and the Undergraduate and Graduate curriculum committees will retain the curriculum management tasks and authority.

Charges

The charge is to develop systematic and on-going processes to develop, monitor, and evaluate the substance and delivery of the curricula of the undergraduate degree program and to assess the impact of the curricula on learning. Specifically, the task force will:

- Develop and refine new and existing tools and measurements to directly assess learning.
- Assess at least two learning goals from the undergraduate program annually.
- Conform the assessment cycle to AACSB-International standards.
- Maintain appropriate records to document the processes and evaluations.
- Prepare an annual summary report (typically no more than 3-5 pages) that will be shared with faculty by email and at college meetings.
- Make recommendations to the UCC and Graduate Committee for implementation of changes resulting from assessment to effectively “close the loop”.

Guiding Documents

The guiding documents for the Task Force are the university and CBA mission, CBA learning objectives and goals, the AACSB Accreditation Standards for Business Accreditation, the AACSB White Paper “AACSB Assurance of Learning Standards: An Interpretation” and related documents.

Timeline

The Task Force will assume their duties commencing with the Fall 2009 semester. For reference purposes the next AACSB accreditation visit is scheduled for the 2012-2013 academic year. The CBA mission was revised in 2005, the CBA objectives were revised in 2008. The CBA undergraduate curriculum goals are currently undergoing revision and are expected to be finalized by January 2010.

Task Force Membership and Terms

The task force will consist of members appointed by the Dean in consultation with members of the Steering Committee. To facilitate a sustained process, the term shall be three years. The task force will consist of a mixture of instructional academic staff, probationary and tenured faculty who have a background in assessment and have the interest and energy to take on this important responsibility and make it successful. Equal representation from all departments is not considered material to the formation of the task force, as the task force will focus on the overall undergraduate program learning goals and not on major, department or specific course learning goals. A minimum of two members will be required to attend the AACSB assurance of learning workshop. Very strong efforts will be made to fund attendance for all members.

The Task Force members are:

- Kathryn Birkeland-Assistant Professor, Economics Department
 - Economics Department Assessment Committee
 - General Education Economics Assessment Committee
- Jim Finch-Professor, Marketing Department
 - Internet MBA Assessment Committee
 - Member of ad hoc assessment committee for the MBA program.
 - Instructor: BUS 790 Assessment
- Betsy Knowles-Senior Lecturer, Economics Department
 - Attendee at AACSB Assurance of Learning workshop
 - Economics Department Assessment Committee
 - General Education Ad Hoc Assessment Committee
 - CATL Advisory Group
 - SOTL grant recipient
- Tom Krueger-Professor, Finance Department,
 - Chair of Graduate Committee
 - Member of ad hoc assessment committee for the MBA program.
- Kim Lyons, Lecturer, Accountancy Department
 - Department of Accountancy Curriculum Committee
 - Coordinator of ACC 221
- Bruce May, Associate Dean and MBA Director.
- Keith Sherony-Task Force Chair
 - Chair of the Economics Department

Please provide you full support and cooperation to the Task Force in order to make the assessments efforts successful.