

Assurance of Learning Report 2015-2016

College of Business Administration
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

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The Assurance of Learning (AOL) program within the College of Business Administration (CBA) has two main components or parts. The first of these two components manages the assurance of learning program for the CBA core curriculum while the second oversees student competency within the individual programs or majors in the CBA. The first part of this report provides information on assurance of learning in the core CBA program for the 2015-16 academic year while the second contains information on competency within the individual majors or programs.

I. Assurance of Learning in the Core CBA Program

A. Assurance of Learning Task Force

Assurance of learning in the CBA core curriculum continues to be guided and overseen by the Assurance of Learning Task Force (AOLTF). The on-going charge of the Task Force 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.” The AOLTF is comprised of seven members: a representative from each of the six academic departments within the CBA as well as the Assurance of Learning Coordinator. The members of the Task Force for the 2015-16 academic year (and the department they represented) were:

- Peter Haried (Information Systems), AOLTF Chair
- Laurie Miller, Assurance of Learning Coordinator
- Steve Thornburg (Accounting)
- Sheida Teimouri (Economics)
- Nilakshi Borah (Finance)
- Ana Iglesias (Management)
- Elizabeth Crosby (Marketing)

The Task Force experienced considerable turnover between the 2014-15 and the 2015-16 academic years. Representatives from the Accounting, Finance, and Management Departments were all new to the Task Force. Much of this lack of continuity stemmed from individuals taking positions at other institutions. The Dean and Associate Dean of the CBA continued to serve as administrative consultants to the Task Force. The AOLTF typically met twice each month to discuss assessment results, the assessment process, and activities sponsored by the Task Force to support faculty development and/or improvements in student learning. Minutes for each of these meetings can be found at <https://www.uwlax.edu/cba/assurance-of-learning/#tm-aol-minutes>.

Each of the twelve courses in the CBA core curriculum has a Core Course Coordinator. The Core Course Coordinators assist the AOLTF in fulfilling their charge by acting as a liaison between the AOLTF and the instructors of the core courses. In collaboration with these instructors the Core Course Coordinators develop assessment tools, ensure the administration of assessment tasks, and lead discussions of assessment results. The Core Course Coordinators for the 2015-16 academic year were:

- Adam Hoffer (ECO 110, *Microeconomics and Public Policy*)
- James Murray (ECO 120, *Global Macroeconomics*)
- Sergey Komissarov (ACC 221 *Accounting Principles I*)
- Steve Thornburg (ACC 222, *Accounting Principles II*)

- Mark Huesmann (BUS 205, *The Legal & Ethical Environment of Business*)
- Betsy Knowles (BUS 230, *Business and Economics Research and Communication*)
- David Annino (IS 220, *Information Systems for Business Management*)
- Christa Kiersch (MGT 308, *Behavior and Theory in Organizations*)
- Maggie McDermott (MKT 309, *Principles of Marketing*)
- Diana Tempski (FIN 355, *Principles of Financial Management*)
- Gail Gillis (MGT 393, *Production and Operations Management*)
- Ana Iglesias (MGT 449, *Administrative Policy Determination*)

In addition to its on-going charge, at the end of the spring 2015 semester the AOLTF set the following goals for the 2015-16 academic year:

- Request that the instructors of ACC 221 (*Accounting Principles I*) administer an assessment task in all sections of the course in either the fall 2015 or spring 2016 semester
- Request that the instructors of MGT 393 (*Production and Operations Management*) administer an assessment task in all sections of the course in either the fall 2015 or spring 2016 semester
- Request that the instructors of FIN 355 (*Principles of Financial Management*) administer an assessment task in all sections of the course in either the fall 2015 or spring 2016 semester
- Convene the Core Course Coordinators more often
- Coordinate meetings with core course instructors
- Increase faculty involvement in AOL/selling to faculty why this is important
- Compile an inventory of prerequisite skills for each core course (Integration Map)
- Create a resource for students containing links to videos or written material to enable them to review basic concepts from the core courses

All but two of these additional goals were addressed during the 2015-16 academic year. Specifically, meetings with AOLTF and the instructors of the core courses were not held and the vault of video resources for students was not developed, both due to time constraints. These remain on-going goals for the Task Force. Information on the other items in this list can be found in Part I, Section B, "Direct Measures of Student Learning", and Section E, "Other Assurance of Learning Activities".

In keeping with the primary charge of the AOLTF, the following section provides information on direct measures of student learning. It begins by reporting assessment results for the capstone course, MGT 449, and then presents assessment results for courses in the core curriculum outside of MGT 449.

B. Direct Measures of Student Learning

The learning goals and objectives for the College of Business Administration are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. CBA Program Learning Goals and Objectives

Learning Goal	Learning Objective(s)
Communication: Our students will be able to convey information and ideas effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will convey information and ideas in professional business reports. • Students will convey information and ideas in oral presentations.
Critical Thinking and Decision Making: Our students will be able to think critically when evaluating decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will evaluate alternatives and understand the ramifications of those alternatives within a given business context.
Global Context of Business: Our students will be prepared to serve others in a global environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will demonstrate the ability to integrate global perspectives in business decisions.
Social Responsibility: Students will demonstrate the role of social responsibility in business decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be able to identify and apply different frameworks of social responsibility to business problems and recognize the short- and long-term effects on stakeholders and society.
Competency in the Major: Our students will be proficient in the primary functional area of study.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will apply functional area concepts and decision-making techniques and tools appropriately while incorporating concepts from other functional business areas into the primary area.

The following two sections contain assessment data for the CBA core curriculum. The first section presents assessment results in the capstone course, MGT 449, where end-stream measures of student learning are gathered, while the second presents the results of assessment in CBA core courses outside of the capstone course.

1. Assessment in MGT 449

In keeping with the assessment schedule for the capstone course, MGT 449, written communication and social responsibility were assessed in the fall 2015 semester while the ETS Major Field Test in business was administered in the spring 2016 semester.

An assessment task was administered to all students in MGT 449 in the fall of 2015 to measure student learning with respect to the written communication learning objective as well as the social responsibility learning objective. Students were given an extensive case study just prior to the final exam period. During the exam they were asked to write a memo in response to a given prompt. While the assessment prompt asked students to analyze the case and make a recommendation concerning the future strategy of the business discussed in the case, it did not specifically prompt them to think about the problem in light of corporate social responsibility (CSR). Prior to this, a lack of prompting did not create a problem because the case contained fairly evident pieces related to CSR. For this particular case study, however,

the aspects of corporate social responsibility were rather difficult to discern, even for faculty tasked with scoring the student artifacts. Given this and other constraints, it was decided to forgo scoring this particular round of student artifacts.

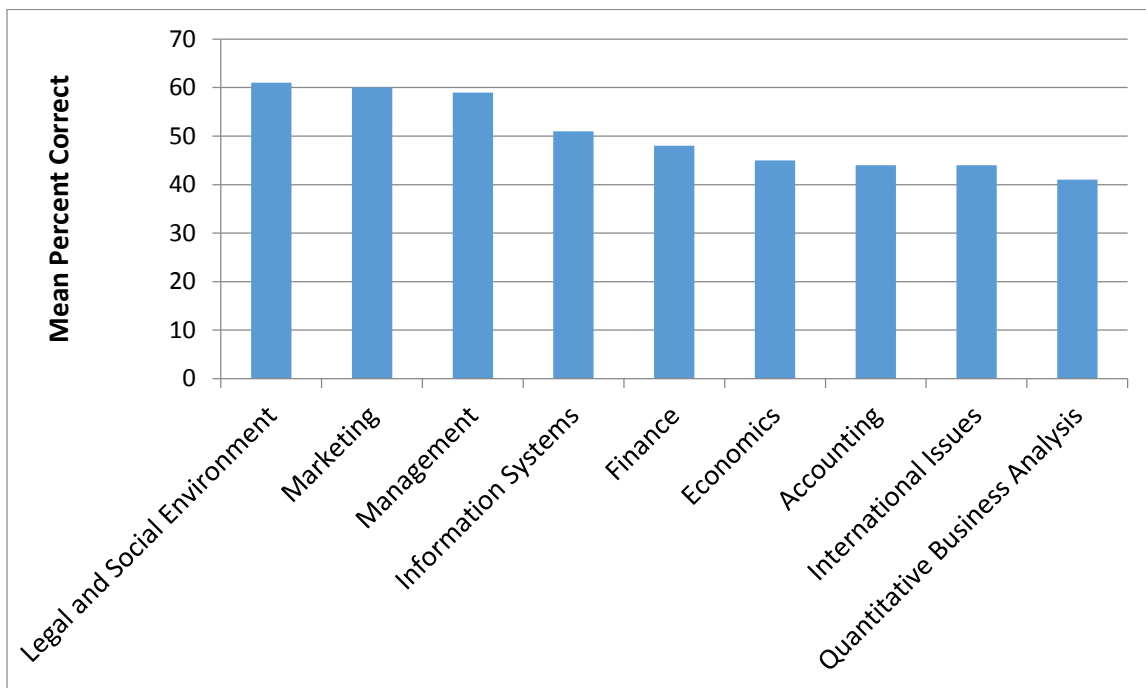
In the spring 2016 semester the ETS Major Field Test (MFT) in business was administered to all students in MGT 449. Table 2 contains the mean percentage of questions answered correctly for each of the nine assessment indicators while Figure 1 presents this same information but in descending order of performance.

Table 2. Mean Percentage of Questions Answered Correctly by ETS MFT Assessment Indicator ¹

Assessment Indicator Number	Assessment Indicator Title	Mean Percent Correct
1	Accounting	44
2	Economics	45
3	Management	59
4	Quantitative Business Analysis	41
5	Finance	48
6	Marketing	60
7	Legal and Social Environment	61
8	Information Systems	51
9	International Issues	44

⁽¹⁾ Results based on 212 MGT 449 students out of 216 total students registered for the course in spring of 2016

Figure 1. Mean Percentage of Questions Answered Correctly by ETS MFT Assessment Indicator



From the information provided in Figure 1 “international issues” and “quantitative business analysis” appear to be the weakest knowledge/skill areas for CBA students. This is troublesome because quantitative analysis skills are in high demand by employers and one of the six CBA learning objectives is global in nature. Delving deeper into the data, however, reveals that UWL students scored very comparably to other students across the nation. As can be seen in Table 3, a higher proportion of UWL students correctly scored eight of the thirteen questions within the quantitative business analysis domain compared to students from other institutions (as indicated by the yellow shading) and were very close on all others with the exception of one, times series forecasting. However, this is a content area that is not directly tied to one of our six learning objectives nor is it part of our core business curriculum.

Table 3. Comparative Data for the ETS MFT Quantitative Business Analysis Assessment Indicator

Percent Correct Institution	Percent Correct National ⁽¹⁾	Domain	Content Area	Sub-Content Area
52.8	39	Quantitative Business Analysis	Quantitative Operations and Management Techniques	Linear programming
18.9	19.5	Quantitative Business Analysis	Probability and Statistics	Counting rules
31.1	33.1	Quantitative Business Analysis	Probability and Statistics	Sampling and estimation
36.3	34.6	Quantitative Business Analysis	Quantitative Operations and Management Techniques	Statistical process control
29.2	17.4	Quantitative Business Analysis	Probability and Statistics	Hypothesis testing
47.2	50.7	Quantitative Business Analysis	Quantitative Operations and Management Techniques	Inventory modeling
53.3	59	Quantitative Business Analysis	Probability and Statistics	<i>Time series forecasting</i>
52.8	43.1	Quantitative Business Analysis	Probability and Statistics	Correlation and regression
33.5	34.4	Quantitative Business Analysis	Probability and Statistics	Conditional/joint probabilities
55.7	50.6	Quantitative Business Analysis	Quantitative Operations and Management Techniques	Project scheduling
20.8	17	Quantitative Business Analysis	Probability and Statistics	Distributions
53.6	50	Quantitative Business Analysis	Quantitative Operations and Management Techniques	Linear programming
54	48.9	Quantitative Business Analysis	Probability and Statistics	Measures of central tendency and dispersion

⁽¹⁾ Based on Comparative Data population for this test form. Data ranges in date from September 2013 thru June 2016.

A similar result emerges for the international issues assessment indicator as revealed in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Comparative Data for the International Issues Assessment Indicator

Percent Correct Institution	Percent Correct National ⁽¹⁾	Domain	Content Area	Sub-Content Area
45.8	34	Management	International and Cross Cultural Management	--
32.1	26.7	Economics	International Economics	Exchange rates
29.7	32.3	Legal and Social Environment	Business Relationships	Business Organizations
29.7	30.8	Management	International and Cross Cultural Management	--
71.7	67.6	Marketing	Serving Selected Markets	Marketing of social causes
58.3	64.8	Finance	International Finance	--
59.4	51.7	Marketing	International Marketing	--
14.2	19.6	Accounting	International Accounting	--
66	56.1	Economics	International Economics	International trade & policy
40.6	33.6	Marketing	International Marketing	--
75.5	69.2	Management	International and Cross Cultural Management	--
24.1	27.7	Economics	Basic Economic Concepts	Comparative advantage and specialization
27.4	29	Finance	International Finance	--

⁽¹⁾ Based on Comparative Data population for this test form. Data ranges in date from September 2013 thru June 2016.

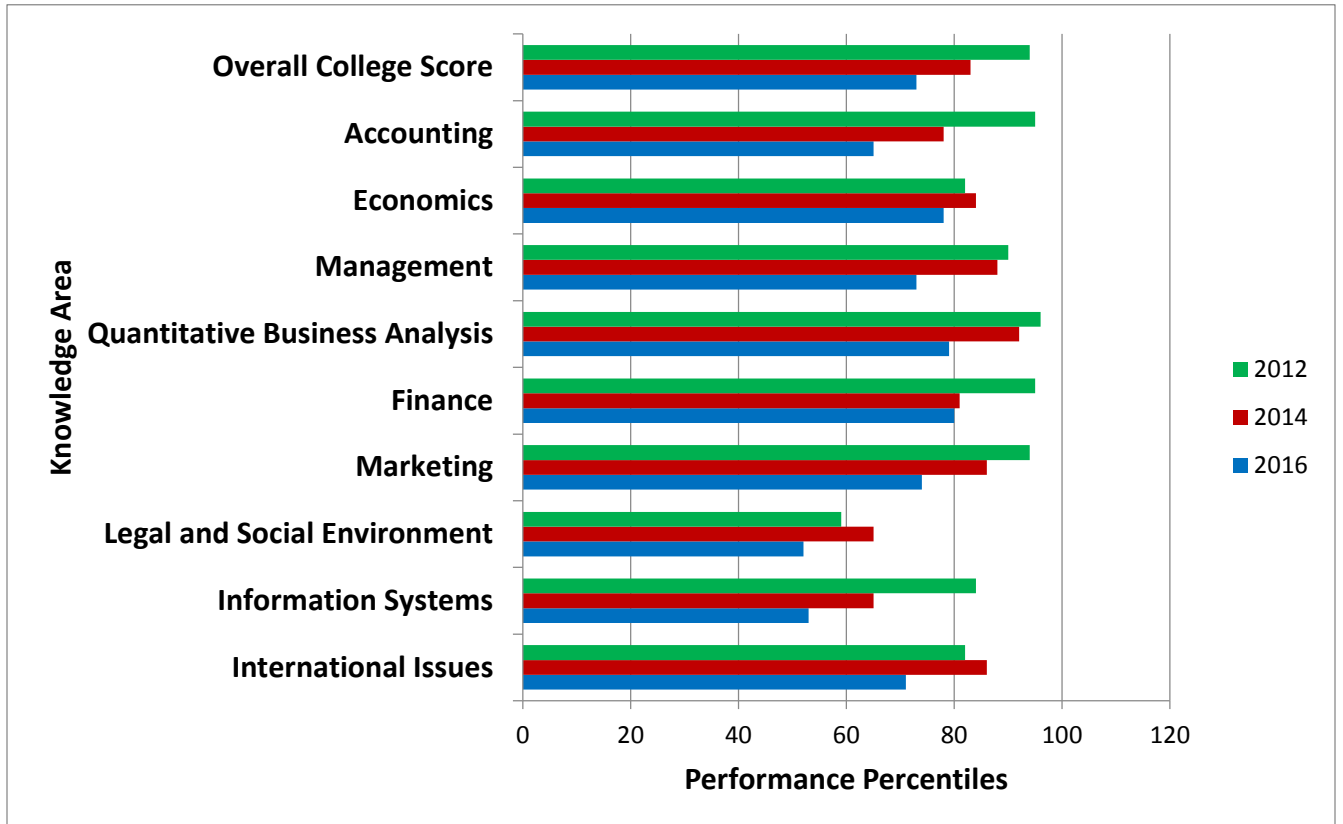
Performance on the ETS MFT was not as strong in 2016 as it was in 2014, although the differences are somewhat small and could be attributed to random fluctuations or the significant turnover in faculty experienced during this time period. Table 5 displays the mean percentage of questions answered correctly by ETS MFT assessment indicator for the years 2012, 2014 and 2016 while Figure 2 displays this same information in graphical form.

Table 5. Mean Percentage of Questions Answered Correctly by ETS MFT Assessment Indicator, 2012-2016¹

Assessment Indicator	2012	2014	2016
Accounting	56	47	44
Economics	50	47	45
Management	66	63	59
Quantitative Business Analysis	49	45	41
Finance	56	49	48
Marketing	67	63	60
Legal and Social Environment	58	63	61
Information Systems	56	54	51
International Issues	60	48	44

⁽¹⁾ All years are not strictly comparable. The ETS Major Field Test in business was revised in 2013; the 2010 and 2012 tests were identical as were the 2014 and 2016 tests.

Figure 2. ETS MFT Assessment Traits, 2012-2016¹



⁽¹⁾ All years are not strictly comparable. The ETS Major Field Test in business was revised in 2013; the 2010 and 2012 tests were identical as were the 2014 and 2016 tests.

ETS MFT results are also to benchmark against other institutions. The performance of CBA students in 2016 was consistent, and in some instances slightly higher, than that of other regional institutions as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Mean Percentage of Questions Answered Correctly by ETS MFT Assessment Indicator, UWL vs. Comparative Regional Institutions^{1,2}

Assessment Indicator Number	Assessment Indicator Title	Mean Percent Correct, UWL spring 2016	Mean Percent Correct, Comparative Institutions
1	Accounting	44	43.7
2	Economics	45	43.1
3	Management	59	57.3
4	Quantitative Business Analysis	41	39.6
5	Finance	48	45.5
6	Marketing	60	58.7
7	Legal and Social Environment	61	61.1
8	Information Systems	51	51.7
9	International Issues	44	43.3

⁽¹⁾ Comparative regional institutions: Carroll University, Minnesota State University, St. Mary’s University of Minnesota, Southwest Minnesota State University, University of Minnesota-Duluth, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, University of Wisconsin-Platteville, University of Wisconsin-River Falls, Viterbo University, and Winona State University

⁽²⁾ Data includes all seniors tested from September, 2013 to June, 2016, at institutions testing at least five students.

Care should be taken when interpreting these numbers. The number of students tested and sampling procedures vary from institution to institution. Given this, these numbers should not be considered representative of all students.

Table 7 reports the ETS MFT results by major. Additional analysis by major can be found in Section II of this report.

Table 7. ETS MFT Assessment Indicators by First Major, 2016¹

		First Major							
		ACC	ECO	FIN	IB	IS	MGT	MKT	Total
		N=29	N=4	N=58	N=5	N=13	N=47	N=54	N= 210
Code	ETS MFT Indicator								
A1	Accounting	57.52	38.75	45.86	47.80	44.00	39.77	37.65	44
A2	Economics	50.00	55.25	50.40	48.80	43.46	41.55	39.65	45
A3	Management	58.86	57.25	57.52	65.60	61.46	59.79	59.96	59
A4	Quantitative Business Analysis	40.31	61.50	45.97	47.80	50.92	36.77	36.63	41
A5	Finance	50.72	44.75	63.59	54.20	48.92	36.55	36.87	48
A6	Marketing	54.72	61.75	59.38	69.40	56.92	57.40	64.96	60
A7	Legal and Social Environment	66.35	63.75	60.83	58.40	67.39	59.28	57.09	61
A8	Information Systems	57.24	44.00	51.66	40.00	72.39	48.34	46.96	51
A9	International Issues	39.76	48.25	44.29	69.20	40.85	46.26	41.94	44
	Total Score ²	159.00	157.00	158.76	159.20	159.62	150.51	150.56	155

⁽¹⁾ Individual cells contain the mean percentage of questions scored correctly for each assessment indicator.

⁽²⁾ Total score is based on a scale of 120-200.

2. Assessment in Other CBA Core Courses

One of the additional goals for the AOLTF for the 2015-16 academic year was to request that the instructors of ACC 221 (*Accounting Principles I*) administer an assessment task in all sections of the course in either the fall 2015 or spring 2016 semester. ACC 221 was selected as a location for assessment because at that time it had never participated in college-level assessment. In order to ensure that there is wide participation and engagement in the assessment process the AOLTF encourages all courses in the CBA core curriculum to conduct assessment in order to gather data on student learning for the college as a whole. While the Core Course Coordinator for ACC 221 and the AOLTF representative from the Accounting Department agreed to develop an assessment instrument to be administered in the spring 2016 semester, unfortunately they were unable to make it happen. Instead, this assessment activity has been moved to the 2016-17 academic year.

Similarly, MGT 393 was identified as a desirable location for assessment within the core curriculum. MGT 393 currently maps to the first five CBA learning objectives. Given this, and its location in the core curriculum, collecting assessment data in this course could provide valuable insights into the level of skills and knowledge of CBA students as they approach their final semester.¹ An assessment task was administered in MGT 393 to measure critical thinking skills in the spring 2016 semester. However, the

¹ CBA students typically take MGT 393 either late in their junior year or early in their senior year.

task was administered outside of class and was not well-designed to capture critical thinking skills. Given this, the task was not scored.

Assessment data was successfully collected in FIN 355 with respect to critical thinking; the results of this assessment activity will be presented later in this report.

Oral Communication

BUS 230 (Business and Economic Research and Communication)

In the fall of 2015 oral presentations for students in BUS 230 were recorded by university IT services with video of both the students speaking and their slides. These videos were used to assess the oral communication learning objective. Table 8 presents a summary of the results by individual trait in the CBA common oral communication rubric, while Figure 3 displays the percentage of students who either met or more than met expectations by rubric trait. Students were evaluated individually for the first five traits in the rubric but received the same score as their other group members for the remaining five traits. The benchmark for performance is seventy percent of students either meeting or more than meeting expectations. As can be seen in the table and figure, that benchmark was met for each trait in the rubric.

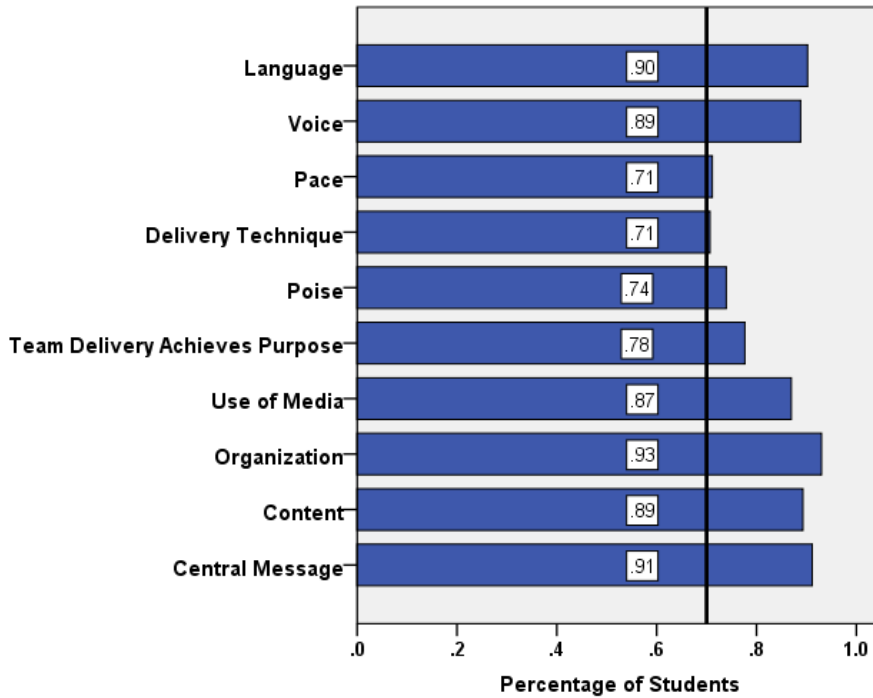
Areas of high performance for student teams include the organization of the presentation, its content, and whether or not the audience walked away with a clear understanding of the central message of the presentation. Individual students scored relatively high on the use of appropriate language and the tone of their voice when delivering the message. Areas for improvement include the pace of the presentation as well as the physical aspects of the delivery—all traits associated with individual students as opposed to the team as a whole. For a more thorough analysis of the data as well as a copy of the oral communication rubric please see Appendix A.

Table 8. Summary of Results by Rubric Trait for All Students in Sample, Oral Communication, BUS 230, fall 2015¹

Trait:	Percent that did not meet expectations (Score = 1)	Percent that met expectations (Score = 2)	Percent that more than met expectations (Score = 3)	Percent that met or more than met expectations (Score=2 or 3)
<i>Language</i>	9.7	83.8	6.5	90.3
<i>Voice</i>	11.1	60.6	28.2	88.9
<i>Pace</i>	28.7	48.6	22.7	71.3
<i>Delivery Technique</i>	29.2	57.9	13.0	70.8
<i>Poise</i>	25.9	60.2	13.9	74.1
<i>Team Delivery Achieves Purpose</i>	22.3	64.7	13.0	77.7
<i>Use of Media Helps to Deliver Ideas</i>	13.0	61.6	25.5	87.0
<i>Organization is Logical</i>	6.9	58.3	34.7	93.1
<i>Content and Ideas are Developed</i>	10.6	59.3	30.1	89.4
<i>Central Message is Conveyed</i>	8.8	60.6	30.6	91.2

¹ Results are for a sample of 216 students out of 219 (98.6%) CBA majors enrolled in BUS 230 in the fall of 2015.

Figure 3. Percentage of Students Who Met or More than Met Expectations by Rubric Trait, Oral Communication, BUS 230, fall 2015¹



¹ Results are for a sample of 216 students out of 219 (98.6%) CBA majors enrolled in BUS 230 in the fall of 2015.

MKT 309 (*Principles of Marketing*)

In the spring of 2016 oral presentations for students in MKT 309 were recorded by university IT services with video of both the students speaking and their slides. These videos were used to assess the oral communication learning objective. Table 9 presents a summary of the results by individual trait in the common CBA oral communication rubric, while Figure 4 displays the percentage of students who either met or more than met expectations by rubric trait. As was the case with BUS 230, students were evaluated individually for the first five traits in the rubric but received the same score as their other group members for the remaining five traits. The benchmark for performance is seventy percent of students either meeting or more than meeting expectations. As can be seen in the table and figure, that benchmark was met for each trait in the rubric with the exception of “team delivery achieves purpose”.

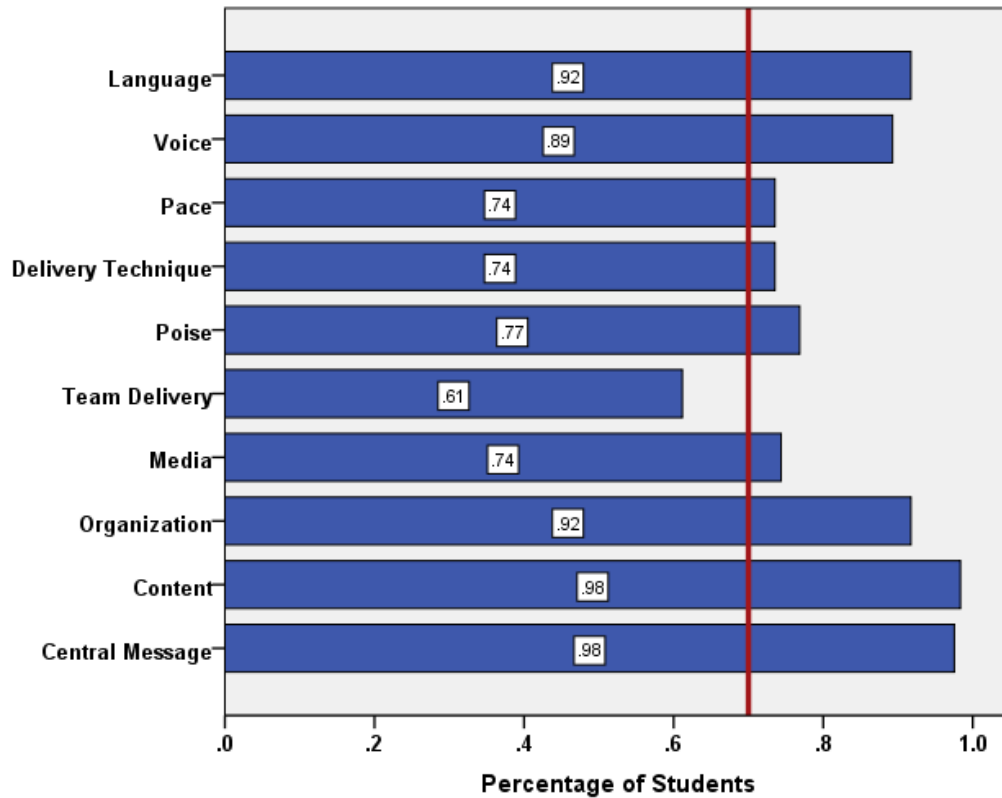
Areas of exceptionally high performance for student teams include the organization of the presentation, its content, and whether or not the audience walked away with a clear understanding of the central message of the presentation. Individual students scored relatively high on the use of appropriate language and the tone of their voice when delivering the message. Areas for improvement at the individual student level include the pace of the presentation and the physical aspects of the delivery, while for the group as a whole the interactions between team members is an area which calls for significant improvement. For a more thorough analysis of the data as well as a copy of the oral communication rubric please see Appendix B.

Table 9. Summary of Results by Trait for All Students in Sample, Oral Communication, MKT 309, Spring 2016¹

Trait:	Percent that did not meet expectations (Score = 1)	Percent that met expectations (Score = 2)	Percent that more than met expectations (Score = 3)	Percent that met or more than met expectations (Score=2 or 3)
<i>Language</i>	7.9	89.7	2.4	92.1
<i>Voice</i>	11.1	61.1	27.8	88.9
<i>Pace</i>	27.8	57.1	15.1	72.2
<i>Delivery Technique</i>	28.0	56.8	15.2	72.0
<i>Poise</i>	24.4	49.6	26.0	75.6
<i>Team Delivery Achieves Purpose</i>	40.3	52.4	7.3	59.7
<i>Use of Media Helps to Deliver Ideas</i>	25.0	59.7	15.3	75.0
<i>Organization is Logical</i>	8.1	68.5	23.4	91.9
<i>Content and Ideas are Developed</i>	1.6	78.2	20.2	98.4
<i>Central Message is Conveyed</i>	2.4	64.5	33.1	97.6

¹ Results are for a sample of 126 students out of 161 (78.3%) CBA majors enrolled in MKT 309 in the spring of 2016.

Figure 4. Percentage of Students Who Met or More than Met Expectations by Rubric Trait, Oral Communication, MKT 309, spring 2016¹



¹ Results are for a sample of 126 students out of 161 (78.3%) CBA majors enrolled in MKT 309 in the spring of 2016.

The strong student performance in both BUS 230 in the fall semester and MKT 309 in the spring semester reflects a concerted effort on the part of the BUS 230 instructors to improve students' oral communication skills. In the fall of 2014 some of the BUS 230 instructors invited a CST 110 instructor to come into their class and offer a 55-minute refresher workshop on oral communication.² This workshop included a mix of instructional content on important verbal and physical presentation skills and how to deal with the anxiety experienced when public speaking, as well as an opportunity for students to speak in front of the class with some individual constructive feedback. Having received positive feedback from students on this initial pilot, more faculty worked this refresher workshop into their course such that by the fall of 2015 all BUS 230 instructors had added this workshop to their course curriculum.

Tables 10 and 11 contain a comparison of student scores with respect to each trait in the oral communication rubric for both BUS 230 and MKT 309 before and after the curricular change in BUS 230. Ironically, for some rubric traits students actually scored statistically lower after the intervention than before; however, there was considerable improvement in some areas, most noticeably the team or group traits. When asked to reflect on these results, some of the faculty felt that student performance

² CST 110, Communicating Effectively, is a general education course required of all students at UWL. While not a prerequisite for BUS 230, the vast majority of students have taken this course or its equivalent prior to enrolling in BUS 230.

had noticeably improved but perhaps their expectations had more than likely increased over time as well.

Table 10. Comparison of Student Scores by Rubric Trait, Oral Communication, BUS 230, fall 2013 and fall 2015

Trait:	Percent that met or more than met expectations, fall 2013 (Score=2 or 3)	Percent that met or more than met expectations, fall 2015 (Score=2 or 3)
<i>Language</i>	87.0	90.3
<i>Voice</i>	95.0	*88.9
<i>Pace</i>	70.5	71.3
<i>Delivery Technique</i>	59.8	*70.8
<i>Poise</i>	68.9	74.1
<i>Team Delivery Achieves Purpose¹</i>	N/A	77.7
<i>Use of Media Helps to Deliver Ideas</i>	63.3	**87.0
<i>Organization is Logical</i>	89.7	93.1
<i>Content and Ideas are Developed</i>	69.2	**89.4
<i>Central Message is Conveyed</i>	76.0	**91.2

¹ This trait was added to the oral communication rubric in March of 2014.

* Statistically significant at a 5 percent level of significance.

**Statistically significant at a 1 percent level of significance.

Table 11. Comparison of Student Scores by Rubric Trait, Oral Communication, MKT 309, spring 2014 and spring 2016

Trait:	Percent that met or more than met expectations, spring 2014 (Score=2 or 3)	Percent that met or more than met expectations, spring 2016 (Score=2 or 3)
<i>Language</i>	94.0	92.0
<i>Voice</i>	95.0	*89.0
<i>Pace</i>	78.0	72.0
<i>Delivery Technique</i>	72.0	72.0
<i>Poise</i>	87.0	**76.0
<i>Team Delivery Achieves Purpose</i>	81.0	***60.0
<i>Use of Media Helps to Deliver Ideas</i>	71.0	75.0
<i>Organization is Logical</i>	83.0	**92.0
<i>Content and Ideas are Developed</i>	83.0	***98.0
<i>Central Message is Conveyed</i>	80.0	***98.0

* Statistically significant at a 10 percent level of significance.

** Statistically significant at a 5 percent level of significance.

***Statistically significant at a 1 percent level of significance.

Critical Thinking

FIN 355 (*Principles of Financial Management*)

In the spring 2016 semester an assessment task was administered to all students in FIN 355 to measure critical thinking skills. Table 12 presents a summary of the results by individual trait in the CBA common critical thinking rubric. The benchmark for performance is seventy percent of students either meeting or more than meeting expectations. As can be seen in the table, the benchmark of seventy percent was met for only the first trait in the rubric, *identifies the problem or the question*. For the remaining rubric traits at least 65 percent of students either met or more than met expectations.

It should be noted here that regardless of the class rank of the student the rubrics are interpreted in the exact same way. More specifically, when scoring student work faculty do not mentally adjust their expectations up or down depending upon whether a student is at the freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior level. Rather, each student is scored with the same level of expectations. Given this, FIN 355 students performed at an adequate level as the vast majority of these students were either sophomores or juniors. For a more thorough analysis of the data as well as a copy of the assessment task and rubric please see Appendix C.

Table 12. Summary of Results by Rubric Trait for All Students in Sample, Critical Thinking, FIN 355, spring 2016¹

Trait:	Percent that did not meet expectations (Score = 1)	Percent that met expectations (Score = 2)	Percent that more than met expectations (Score = 3)	Percent that met or more than met expectations (Score = 2 or 3)
<i>Identifies the problem or question (a)</i>	22.8	39.2	38.0	77.2
<i>Identifies relevant variables (b)</i>	31.6	45.6	22.8	68.4
<i>Develops relevant alternative approaches or solutions by integrating positions or perspectives (d)</i>	35.4	40.5	24.1	64.6
<i>Evaluates or draws conclusions about the potential impact of alternatives (e)</i>	35.4	32.9	31.6	64.5

¹ Results are for a sample of 79 students out of 163 (48.5%) CBA majors enrolled in FIN 355 in the spring of 2016.

Social Responsibility

BUS 205 (Legal and Ethical Environment of Business)

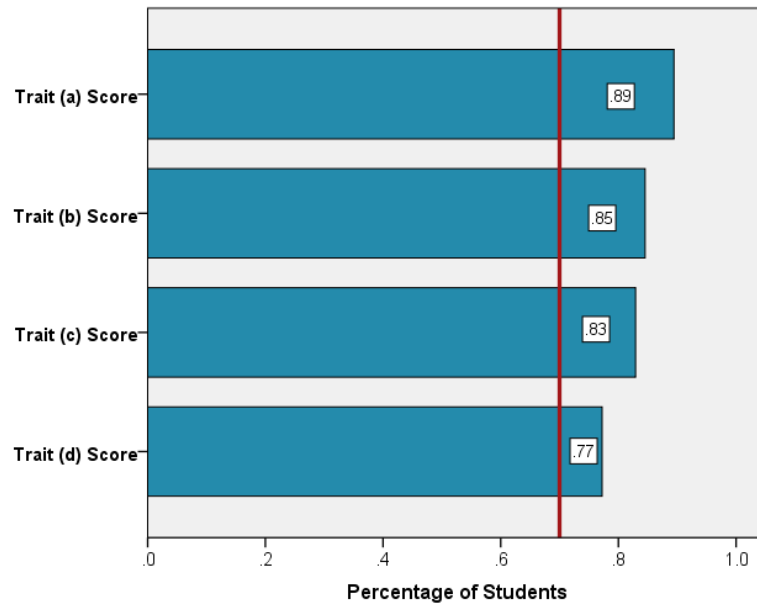
In the spring 2016 semester an assessment task was administered to all students in BUS 205 to measure their knowledge of social responsibility. Table 13 presents a summary of the results by individual trait in the common social responsibility rubric, while Figure 5 displays the percentage of students who either met or more than met expectations by rubric trait. The benchmark for performance is seventy percent of students either meeting or more than meeting expectations. As can be seen in both the table and the figure this benchmark was achieved for all traits in the rubric. Students scored the highest with respect to the first trait in the rubric, with the percentage of students who met or more than met expectations declining for each subsequent trait in the rubric. For a more thorough analysis of the data as well as a copy of the assessment task and rubric please see Appendix D.

Table 13. Summary of Results by Rubric Trait for All Students in Sample, BUS 205, spring 2016¹

Trait:	Percent that did not meet expectations (Score = 1)	Percent that met expectations (Score = 2)	Percent that more than met expectations (Score = 3)	Percent that met or more than met expectations (Score = 2 or 3)
<i>Demonstrate an awareness of social and ethical responsibilities to various stakeholders (a)</i>	10.6	59.3	30.1	89.4
<i>Recognize the importance of standards of ethical business conduct (b)</i>	15.4	58.5	26.0	84.5
<i>Recognize the ecological, social, and economic implications of business decisions (c)</i>	17.1	56.1	26.8	82.9
<i>Analyze the ecological, social, and economic implications of business decisions (d)</i>	22.8	61.0	16.3	77.3

⁽¹⁾ Results are for a sample of 123 students out of 185 (66.5%) CBA majors enrolled in BUS 205 in the spring of 2016.

Figure 5. Percentage of Students Who Met or More than Met Expectations by Rubric Trait, Social Responsibility, BUS 205, spring 2016¹



⁽¹⁾ Results are for a sample of 123 students out of 185 (66.5%) CBA majors enrolled in BUS 205 in the spring of 2016.

C. Curricular Changes

Assessment of the written communication learning objective in the spring of 2013 and the fall of 2014 revealed significant weaknesses in students' written communication skills. More specifically, in the spring of 2013 students achieved the benchmark performance level of 70 percent of students either meeting or more than meeting expectations for only one out of the six traits in the written communication rubric. A year and a half later students achieved the benchmark performance level for two out of the six traits in the written communication rubric, with improvement in some areas but worse performance in others. Prior assessment of written communication skills revealed a similar pattern. A survey of CBA faculty in 2011 indicated strong faculty support for the addition of a business communications course to the core CBA curriculum.³ In response to poor assessment results and faculty support of a business communications course, in the summer of 2012 a task force comprised of faculty from the CBA and the English department developed a proposal for the addition of a business communications course to the CBA core curriculum. In the fall of 2013 a few sections of the business communications course were offered for the first time; however, limited resources prevented full adoption of the course at that time.

With still very constrained resources, in the fall of 2015 the college Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) discussed the exact placement of the course in the core curriculum. The UCC

³ Faculty were asked to rate their level of agreement with the following statement: The CBA should require a Business Communications course in its CORE curriculum. Nearly 71 percent of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

recommended to the faculty to make the class a 300-level course but not have admission to the CBA as a prerequisite, such that most students would take the course at the end of their sophomore or beginning of their junior year. Placing the course at this level helps to ensure that students who do not remain CBA majors do not take up valuable seats in the course. In the spring of 2016 the CBA faculty voted to make MGT 301, *Business Communication*, a requirement for all CBA students. Newly-admitted students in the fall of 2016 will be the first cohort for which this course is a requirement.

D. Improvements in the Assessment Process

Two major improvements to the assessment process were implemented in the spring of 2016. Both of these changes were designed to improve the quality of the end-stream measures of student learning gathered in MGT 449. A relatively high rate of turnover among the faculty teaching MGT 449 had led to inconsistency in the administration of assessment tasks. In particular, it appeared that at least one instructor was giving the assessment task as a take-home assignment. In the fall of 2015 a new faculty member was appointed to the position of Core Course Coordinator for MGT 449; this individual has been very instrumental in standardizing assessment in this course. First, there been a convergence in terms of the conditions under which the tasks are administered. Second, all instructors have agreed to assign an equal grade weight, five percent of the total course grade, to the assessment task. In the past, this has varied considerably by instructor, raising concerns about the consistency of assessment data across instructors.

E. Other Assurance of Learning Activities

International Faculty Panel

In November of 2015 the AOLTf sponsored an event during Global Initiatives Week, a week-long event in the La Crosse community designed to increase global awareness. This was the second year the Task Force held an event during Global Initiatives Week. The event, entitled “Reaching Across Cultures: A Conversation with International Faculty”, featured international faculty from the College of Business Administration sharing their personal experiences about life in their home countries and life in the United States through the eyes of a non-native. The purpose of the event was to support the CBA’s global context of business learning objective by increasing awareness and improving understanding of cultural differences.



Approximately 100 individuals, both faculty and students, attended the event. The panel featured the following faculty:

- Gregory Liyanarachchi, Accounting
- Wahhab Khandker, Economics
- Sheida Teimouri, Economics
- Ana Elisa Iglesias, Management
- Matias Maffei, Marketing

Spring 2016 CBA All-College Meeting

At the spring 2016 all-college meeting the CBA went back to the basics of assurance of learning. With so many new faculty in the college the meeting provided the opportunity to introduce them, in an in-depth and hands-on way, to CBA assurance of learning processes as well as refresh assessment concepts for more seasoned faculty. The meeting began with a presentation by the Assurance of Learning Coordinator entitled: *Assurance of Learning 101: Everything You Never Knew You Always Wanted to Know About Assessment*. This was followed by a curriculum mapping exercise in which faculty were asked to think about the primary courses they teach in the CBA and the learning objectives for those courses. Using their course learning objectives as a guide, faculty were then asked to select which of the college's six learning objectives they felt their courses mapped to. Faculty were also asked to provide a list of the skills or knowledge they wanted students to have when they entered each of their primary courses. (Please see Appendix E for a copy of the questionnaire given to faculty.) The purpose of this exercise was to map all CBA courses to the college's six learning objectives and to determine if these skills and knowledge areas are sufficiently covered and scaffolded throughout the curriculum. The meeting also included a norming exercise to familiarize new faculty with the CBA common rubrics, assessment tasks and scoring student artifacts. During lunch the Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning at UWL gave a presentation on developing effective assignments.

Critical Thinking Brown Bag Lunches

As a follow-up to the discussion that occurred at the January all-college meeting, the AOLTF sponsored two brown-bag lunch events on critical thinking. The conversation was organized around these questions:

- What does critical thinking look like in your discipline? What is the structure or the nature of the problems students face in your discipline?
- When it comes to critical thinking what do you feel are weak areas for our students?
- Do you ask students to work through problems that contain some aspect of ambiguity?
- What tools, techniques, or assignments have you found to be particularly effective in developing critical thinking skills?
- Where do you think students acquire critical thinking skills?
- Is there a way for us to coordinate our efforts across disciplines?

Twenty-two faculty attended either one or the other of these two brown-bag lunch events.

Social Responsibility Discussion with Core Course Coordinators

When the CBA core curriculum map was updated in the spring of 2015 it revealed something interesting. The majority of the Core Course Coordinators whose courses mapped to the social responsibility learning objective indicated that their students were at a “beginning” skill level; this included the Core Course Coordinators for MKT 309, MGT 308, and FIN 355. In theory, students should exhibit a “beginning” skill level in lower level courses and gradually move to “proficient” by the time they reach MGT 449. To explore this further, the AOLTF brought together seven of the nine Core Course Coordinators whose courses map to the social responsibility learning objective.

The meeting revealed that the concept of social responsibility varies considerably by discipline or core course. For example, in BUS 230, *Business and Economics Research and Communication*, social responsibility takes the form of ethical treatment of human subjects in research and the ethical use of data, whereas in FIN 355, *Principles of Financial Management*, the emphasis is on the difference between stockholders and stakeholders as well as the triple bottom line. The discussion also revealed very little use of common terminology. Because of these differences, individual instructors are, in essence, introducing new aspects of social responsibility throughout the core curriculum. In this sense, the designation of a “beginning” skill level is accurate.

Professional Development Activities

The AOLTF sponsored two professional development activities for CBA faculty during the fall 2015 semester. Both of these events focused on ways in which faculty can improve the learning experience for particular groups of students. The first of these two events was entitled *Working with Students with Disabilities*. The presentation, given by Deb Hoskins, CATL Inclusive Excellence Coordinator, and Andrew Oliver, Assistant Director, ACCESS Center, provided information on the most prevalent types of disabilities on the UWL campus, the services the ACCESS center provides for students, and inclusive teaching pedagogies faculty can use in their classrooms. The second event, *Working with English Language Learners*, featured Bryan Kopp, University Writing Programs Coordinator, and Deb Hoskins, CATL Inclusive Excellence Coordinator. This presentation provided faculty with different strategies to help non-native students improve their communication skills.

II. Competency in the Major

The academic programs within the CBA are on a two-year assessment cycle. Assessment data is gathered during the first year of the cycle; in the second year assessment instruments are developed and curricular changes are implemented. The 2015-16 academic year is year two of the most recent two-year program assessment cycle such that the majors within the CBA did not report assessment data for this year. The results of the ETS Major Field Test in business, however, provide information on the individual programs within the CBA that can be used to measure competency in the major. The following sections contain these results by major as well as the learning objectives for the program.

A. Accounting Program

The learning objectives for the accounting program are:

- Identify and solve unstructured business problems in unfamiliar settings
- Understand the determining forces in a situation, such as management style or authoritative accounting and tax guidance, and predict their effects
- Effectively present, discuss, and defend views effectively through formal and informal communications
- Apply accounting knowledge to solve business problems

Table 14 presents the ETS Major Field Test scores for accounting majors vs. non-accounting majors with respect to each MFT assessment indicator. As can be seen in the table, the score for the accounting assessment indicator is statistically higher for accounting majors than that of all other CBA students. Accounting majors also showed strong performance in the areas of legal and social environment and information systems relative to all other CBA majors.

**Table 14. Mean Percentage of Questions Answered Correctly by Assessment Indicator:
Accounting Majors vs. Non-Accounting Majors**

		Mean Score: ACC Majors N=29	Mean Score: Non-ACC Majors N=181
Code	ETS MFT Indicator		
A1*	Accounting	57.52	41.59
A2	Economics	50.00	44.46
A3	Management	58.86	59.34
A4	Quantitative Business Analysis	40.31	41.54
A5	Finance	50.72	46.87
A6	Marketing	54.72	60.69
A7*	Legal and Social Environment	66.35	59.78
A8*	Information Systems	57.24	50.39
A9	International Issues	39.76	44.63

*Statistically significant at .05

B. Economics Program

The learning objectives for the economics program are:

Critical Thinking Skills

- Apply economic reasoning to explain social and economic events.
- Predict the impact of private and public proposals and changing market conditions on social welfare using economic models.
- Compare the models' strengths and weaknesses in explaining outcomes.

Problem Solving Skills

- Identify and analyze a problem within the framework of economic models.
- Evaluate, critique, and formulate solutions to an identified problem.

Communication Skills

Communicate effectively the results of economic research and analysis to colleagues and decision-makers through written reports and oral presentations.

Table 15 presents the ETS Major Field Test scores for economics majors vs. non-economics majors with respect to each MFT assessment indicator. As can be seen in the table, the score for the economics assessment indicator is higher for economics majors than that of all other CBA students. Unfortunately, the small number of majors prohibits further testing for statistical significance. Based on the descriptive statistics, economics majors also showed strong performance in the area of quantitative business analysis relative to all other CBA majors.

**Table 15: Mean Percentage of Questions Answered Correctly by Assessment Indicator:
Economics Majors vs. Non-Economics Majors**

		Mean Score: ECO Majors N=4	Mean Score: Non-ECO Majors N=206
Code	ETS MFT Indicator		
A1	Accounting	38.75	43.89
A2	Economics	55.25	45.03
A3	Management	57.25	59.31
A4	Quantitative Business Analysis	61.50	40.98
A5	Finance	44.75	47.45
A6	Marketing	61.75	59.83
A7	Legal and Social Environment	63.75	60.63
A8	Information Systems	44.00	51.48
A9	International Issues	48.25	43.87

*Note that the small number of Majors makes any conclusions about statistical significance suspect.

C. Finance Program

The learning objectives for the finance major are:

Regarding basic skills, the students will:

- a) read and interpret data from tables, charts, graphs, financial statements, annual reports, and analyst narratives.
- b) apply basic financial concepts such as time value of money, risk and return, and valuation.
- c) effectively communicate financial concepts and ideas, both in written form and orally.

Students will acquire the following intermediate skills:

1. Regarding the flow of funds within the financial system, the students will demonstrate knowledge of:
 - a) the major financial institutions which operate within the system.
 - b) the major financial markets and the determinants of financial equilibrium.
 - c) the factors which influence rates of return/costs of capital.
 - d) trends which will affect the financial system.
2. Regarding the risk and return characteristics of the major types of financial instruments, the students will:
 - a) perform return and security price calculations for both money market and capital market instruments.
 - b) estimate investment risk, including standard deviation, systematic risk, and duration.
 - c) apply technical and fundamental factors in security selection.
3. Regarding the goals and operating environment of managerial finance, the students will:
 - a) analyze a firm's current financial situation.
 - b) demonstrate an understanding of the components of working capital and the techniques of short-term financial management.
 - c) analyze and select long-term investments by applying capital budgeting techniques
 - d) forecast a firm's external financing requirements.
 - e) demonstrate an understanding of the impact of cost of capital, leverage, and capital structure on firm value.

Table 16 displays the ETS Major Field Test scores for finance majors vs. non-finance majors with respect to each MFT assessment indicator. As can be seen in the table, the score for the finance assessment indicator is statistically higher for finance majors than that of all other CBA students. Finance majors also showed strong performance in the areas of economics and quantitative business analysis relative to all other CBA majors.

**Table 16: Mean Percentage of Questions Answered Correctly by Assessment Indicator:
Finance Majors vs. Non-Finance Majors**

		Mean Score: FIN Majors N=58	Mean Score: Non-FIN Majors N=152
Code	ETS MFT Indicator		
A1	Accounting	45.86	43.00
A2*	Economics	50.40	43.25
A3	Management	57.52	59.94
A4*	Quantitative Business Analysis	45.97	39.62
A5*	Finance	63.59	41.22
A6	Marketing	59.38	60.05
A7	Legal and Social Environment	60.83	60.63
A8	Information Systems	51.66	51.22
A9	International Issues	44.29	43.83

* Statistically significant at .05

D. International Business Program

The learning objectives for the international business program are:

Global Comparative Analysis: Graduates will demonstrate an understanding of the interconnected elements comprising a “global perspective,” (for example, geographic, social, cultural, historic, business and economic concerns.)

Global Functional Analysis: Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the performance of the major functional areas of business internationally.

Modern Language: Students will show a basic command of one modern language other than their own (measured by completion of, at a minimum, 202-level passing grades.)

Intercultural Learning: Students will have demonstrated intercultural skills in a culture other than their own (measured by a successful out-of-country experience of at least three weeks’ duration.)

Table 17 presents the ETS Major Field Test scores for international business majors vs. non-international business majors with respect to each MFT assessment indicator. As can be seen in the table, the score for the international issues indicator is quite a bit higher for international business majors compared to that of all other CBA students. Unfortunately, the small number of majors prohibits further testing for statistical significance.

**Table 17: Mean Percentage of Questions Answered Correctly by Assessment Indicator:
International Business Majors vs. Non-International Business Majors**

		Mean Score: IB Majors N=5	Mean Score: Non-IB Majors N=205
Code	ETS MFT Indicator		
A1	Accounting	47.80	43.69
A2	Economics	48.80	45.14
A3	Management	65.60	59.12
A4	Quantitative Business Analysis	47.80	41.22
A5	Finance	54.20	47.23
A6	Marketing	69.40	59.63
A7	Legal and Social Environment	58.40	60.74
A8	Information Systems	40.00	51.62
A9	International Issues	69.20	43.34

*Note that the small number of Majors makes any conclusions about statistical significance suspect.

E. Information Systems Program

The learning objectives for the information systems major are:

Program Objectives

In addition to possessing solid knowledge in all business functional areas, the IS graduates are expected to achieve competency in three main program areas: 1) problem solving; 2) data communications; and 3) systems development. With these competencies, the IS graduates will be able to develop effective business solutions through the use of information and information technology.

Learning Outcomes of the Main Program Area

- **Problem solving:** Demonstrate an ability to understand and analyze complex business problems correctly, develop effective solutions, and implement them using appropriate information technologies.
- **Data Communications:** Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental technical characteristics of data communications and business networking including Internet technologies. Acquire pertinent knowledge of computer networking technologies to support the design and management of business data communication networks.
- **Systems Development:** Demonstrate the ability to be a productive team member in a business systems development project requiring analysis and design, project management and implementation skills customized to the businesses architecture.

Table 18 presents the ETS Major Field Test scores for information systems majors vs. non-information systems majors with respect to each MFT assessment indicator. As can be seen in the table, the score for the information systems indicator is substantially higher for information systems majors compared to that of all other CBA students. Unfortunately, the small number of majors prohibits further testing for statistical significance.

**Table 18: Mean Percentage of Questions Answered Correctly by Assessment Indicator:
Information Systems Majors vs. Non-Information Systems Majors**

		Mean Score: IS Majors N=13	Mean Score: Non-IS Majors N=197
Code	ETS MFT Indicator		
A1	Accounting	44.00	43.78
A2	Economics	43.46	45.34
A3	Management	61.46	59.13
A4	Quantitative Business Analysis	50.92	40.74
A5	Finance	48.92	47.30
A6	Marketing	56.92	60.06
A7	Legal and Social Environment	67.39	60.24
A8	Information Systems	72.39	49.95
A9	International Issues	40.85	44.16

*Note that the small number of Majors makes any conclusions about statistical significance suspect.

F. Management Program

The learning objectives for the management program are as follows:

Management Principles Learning Objective: Analyze and recommend solutions for business problems using management concepts and theories.

Global Learning Objective: Summarize and evaluate the ways in which management practices influence, and are influenced by, the global context of business.

OB/HR Learning Objective: Explain the complex interaction of individual, group and organizational factors that are relevant to organizational effectiveness.

CSR Learning Objective: Evaluate management practices with regard to social responsibility and ethics.

Table 19 displays the ETS Major Field Test scores for management majors vs. non-management majors with respect to each MFT assessment indicator. As can be seen in the table, management majors did not perform statistically higher than all other CBA students with respect to the management assessment indicator. This could be attributed to the fact that all CBA majors take three management courses over the course of their junior and senior year as part of the CBA core curriculum.

Table 19: Mean Percentage of Questions Answered Correctly by Assessment Indicator: Management Majors vs. Non-Management Majors

		Mean Score: MGT Majors N=47	Mean Score: Non-MGT Majors N=163
Code	ETS MFT Indicator		
A1*	Accounting	39.77	44.95
A2*	Economics	41.55	46.28
A3	Management	59.79	59.12
A4*	Quantitative Business Analysis	36.77	42.70
A5*	Finance	36.55	50.53
A6	Marketing	57.40	60.57
A7	Legal and Social Environment	59.28	61.09
A8	Information Systems	48.34	52.20
A9	International Issues	46.26	43.29

* Statistically significant at .05

G. Marketing Program

The five learning objectives for the marketing program are:

L.O. 1: Marketing and Its Role in Society

Students will be able to define the concept of marketing and explain how marketing impacts, and is impacted by, individuals, organizations, and society over time.

L.O. 2: Markets

Students will be able to explain the decision making process and factors that influence the decision making process across markets.

L.O. 3: Marketing Strategy

Students will be able to apply marketing concepts, frameworks and analyses to create appropriate marketing strategies and assess the benefits and consequences associated with alternate strategies.

L.O. 4: The Marketing Mix

Students will be able to explain and apply marketing principles and frameworks to make sound decisions related to the marketing mix.

L.O. 5: Marketing Research

Students will understand the role market research plays in marketing strategy; explain the research process; identify appropriate methods for obtaining information; and identify and apply critical metrics that support managerial decision-making.

Table 20 displays the ETS Major Field Test scores for marketing majors vs. non-marketing majors with respect to each MFT assessment indicator. As can be seen in the table, the score for the marketing assessment indicator is statistically higher for marketing majors than that of all other CBA students.

**Table 20: Mean Percentage of Questions Answered Correctly by Assessment Indicator:
Marketing Majors vs. Non-Marketing Majors**

		Mean Score: MKT Majors N=54	Mean Score: Non-MKT Majors N=156
Code	ETS MFT Indicator		
A1*	Accounting	37.65	45.92
A2*	Economics	39.65	47.15
A3	Management	59.96	59.03
A4*	Quantitative Business Analysis	36.63	43.01
A5*	Finance	36.87	51.05
A6*	Marketing	64.96	58.10
A7*	Legal and Social Environment	57.09	61.93
A8*	Information Systems	46.96	52.85
A9	International Issues	41.94	44.65

* Statistically significant at .05

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Course Assessment Report

Oral Communication

BUS 230, fall 2015

Course Assessment Report

Course: BUS 230

Learning Objective: Oral Communication

Term: fall 2015

Methodology

BUS 230, Business and Economic Research and Communication, is an introductory research methods course that maps to the CBA undergraduate curriculum oral communication learning objective: “Students will convey information and ideas in oral presentations”. In BUS 230 students work in teams of approximately four students on a semester-long research project that culminates at the end of the semester with an oral presentation of the results to the entire class. These oral presentations are typically 10-15 minutes in length.

The presentations were recorded by university IT services with video of both the students speaking and their slides. The links for the videos were provided to the Assurance of Learning Task Force, and the name of each student presenter was identified. The videos were evaluated using the CBA common rubric for oral communication (please see Appendix A). Nine faculty members from the departments of economics, information systems, management and marketing scored the oral presentations. Of these nine, three are BUS 230 instructors. Given the high level of faculty turnover in the CBA over the past several years, only two of the raters had participated in scoring oral presentations in the past. The group as a whole, however, did norm to the oral communication rubric before scoring began.

Faculty evaluated all traits in the rubric. The first five traits (language, voice, pace, delivery technique and poise) were evaluated for each individual speaking. The remaining five traits were evaluated on the basis of the overall performance of the group, and the individuals in each group received the same group score. It should be noted that three significant changes were made to the oral communication rubric since the previous assessment of presentations in BUS 230 in the fall of 2013. These changes were made following the review of BUS 230 videos in the fall 2013, and the explanations for the changes can be found in the course report for oral communication in BUS 230 for that semester. First, the trait concerning “team delivery” was added to the rubric. Second, the trait of “pace” was defined as “pace is natural”. Finally, faculty further developed the trait definitions in order to improve inter-rater reliability.

In the fall of 2015, 219 students were enrolled in BUS 230. The presentations of 216 students were evaluated using the common rubric.

Results

Table 1 presents a summary of the results by individual trait in the rubric, while Figure 1 displays the percentage of students who either met or more than met expectations by rubric trait. The benchmark for performance is seventy percent of students either meeting or more than meeting expectations. As can be seen in the table and figure, that benchmark was met for each trait in the rubric. Areas of high

Table 1. Summary of Results by Trait for All Students in Sample¹

Trait:	Percent that did not meet expectations (Score = 1)	Percent that met expectations (Score = 2)	Percent that more than met expectations (Score = 3)	Percent that met or more than met expectations (Score=2 or 3)
<i>Language</i>	9.7	83.8	6.5	90.3
<i>Voice</i>	11.1	60.6	28.2	88.9
<i>Pace</i>	28.7	48.6	22.7	71.3
<i>Delivery Technique</i>	29.2	57.9	13.0	70.8
<i>Poise</i>	25.9	60.2	13.9	74.1
<i>Team Delivery Achieves Purpose</i>	22.3	64.7	13.0	77.7
<i>Use of Media Helps to Deliver Ideas</i>	13.0	61.6	25.5	87.0
<i>Organization is Logical</i>	6.9	58.3	34.7	93.1
<i>Content and Ideas are Developed</i>	10.6	59.3	30.1	89.4
<i>Central Message is Conveyed</i>	8.8	60.6	30.6	91.2

¹ Results are for a sample of 216 students out of 219 (98.6%) CBA majors enrolled in BUS 230 in the fall of 2015.

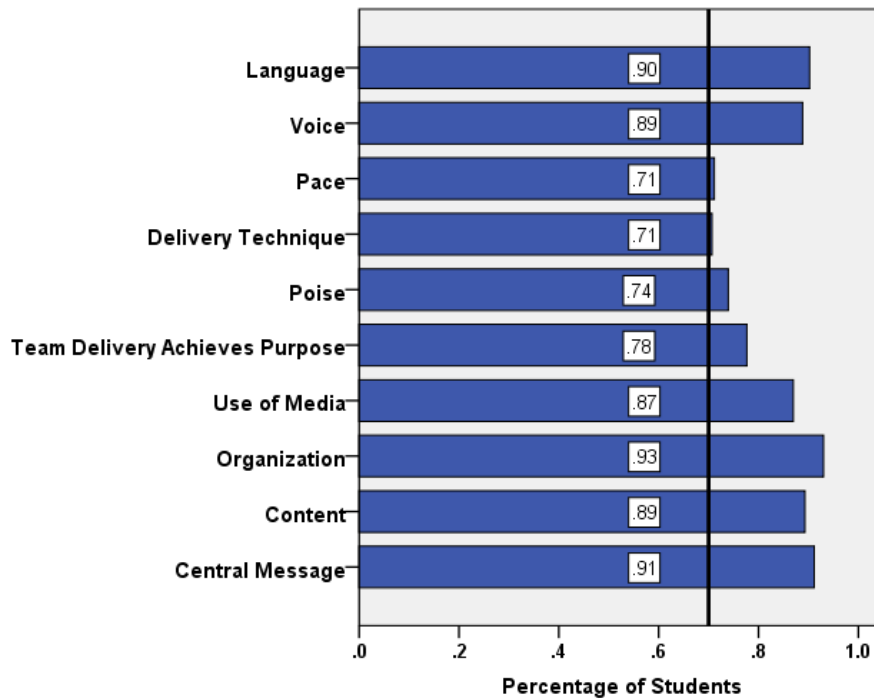
performance for student teams include the organization of the presentation, its content, and whether or not the audience walked away with a clear understanding of the central message of the presentation. Individual students scored relatively high on the use of appropriate language and the tone of their voice when delivering the message. Areas for improvement include the pace of the presentation as well as the physical aspects of the delivery—all traits associated with individual students as opposed to the team as a whole.

These results were echoed by the faculty who scored the presentations during a reflection meeting after the scoring was completed. Faculty noted that students are doing well on the team aspects of the presentation—putting together information, organizing it, and creating slides—but seem to be lacking on the individual traits. For example, faculty noted that students appeared to be doing quite a bit of reading off the screen and their delivery was permeated by “ums”. They felt the two biggest areas for improvement were pace and delivery, which is consistent with the results above. Faculty did, however, observe that students seemed to have a better idea of what to do with their hands during the

presentation. Some faculty questioned whether or not individual scores should be given for the trait “team delivery achieves purpose”, as performance with respect to this trait often varied by student.

Downstream users felt that students had improved over time but that further improvement might be achieved by asking students to video themselves giving their presentation before the actual presentation in class. This provides students with the opportunity to critique themselves and improve their performance prior to the delivery in class.

Figure 1. Percentage of Students Who Met or More than Met Expectations by Rubric Trait¹



¹ Results are for a sample of 216 students out of 219 (98.6%) CBA majors enrolled in BUS 230 in the fall of 2015.

Closing the Loop

Oral communication was assessed in BUS 230 in both the fall of 2013 and the fall of 2015. Between these two assessments of student learning the BUS 230 instructors made some changes to their courses with respect to oral communication. First, all instructors made a concerted effort to give students opportunities to practice their “informal” communication skills. In prior conversations, faculty noted that much of business communication happens in more informal settings among smaller groups of people. The formal presentation, infused throughout the CBA core curriculum, can oftentimes be the exception rather than the norm. The exact form of this practice varied by instructor, with some having student teams present their research proposal to a client while others asked students to provide brief oral updates on their research project at different points throughout the semester.

Second, the BUS 230 instructors collaborated with the CST 110 instructors to improve students' formal presentation skills.⁴ In the spring of 2014, the BUS 230 instructors coordinated a meeting with some of the CST 110 instructors in order to gain a better understanding of the knowledge and skills students should have upon completing that course. The main goal of this meeting was to solicit information that would allow the BUS 230 faculty to better build upon the foundational skills acquired by students in CST 110. Something much larger came out of this meeting, however.

In the fall of 2014 some of the BUS 230 instructors invited a CST 110 instructor to come into their class and offer a 55-minute refresher workshop on oral communication. This workshop included a mix of instructional content on important verbal and physical presentation skills and how to deal with the anxiety experienced when public speaking, as well as an opportunity for students to speak in front of the class with some individual constructive feedback. Having received positive feedback from students on this initial pilot, more faculty worked this refresher workshop into their course such that by the fall of 2015 all BUS 230 instructors had added this workshop to their course curriculum. Since all business students must take BUS 230 and most students take it late sophomore or early junior year they are being exposed to an oral communication refresher midway through their academic career.⁵

Table 2 compares the scores with respect to each trait in the oral communication rubric for fall of 2013 and fall of 2015. Results appear to be somewhat mixed. The oral communication workshop focuses primarily on improving the first five traits in the rubric. Of these five only two statistically changed between 2013 and 2015, with performance on one of the traits actually becoming worse over this time period. In contrast, performance on three of the team attributes significantly improved over this time period, two of these moving from below the benchmark of seventy percent to above.

When asked to reflect on these results, some of the faculty felt that student performance had noticeably improved but that their expectations had more than likely increased over time. Another instructor, however, noted the following:

“In the workshop, students are typically asked to speak briefly about a topic that is of interest to them (they talk about themselves and describe things they like to do, etc.), and/or they speak briefly using a notecard prompt with a quote. Neither of these methods mirrors what they need to do for formal presentations in the classroom, where they speak about more complex material that they are likely much less comfortable and familiar with. It is fairly easy to deliver a one-liner as you review and practice a few "best practices" in public speaking, but it is much more difficult to describe research purpose, methods, results, and analysis all while incorporating the public speaking skills we want them to demonstrate.”

This instructor intends to experiment with an oral communication refresher workshop of their own design.

⁴ CST 110, *Communicating Effectively*, is a general education course required of all students at UWL. While not a prerequisite for BUS 230, the vast majority of students have taken this course or its equivalent prior to enrolling in BUS 230.

⁵ In the fall of 2015, 184 students enrolled in BUS 230 (84 percent) were either sophomores or juniors.

Table 2. Comparison of Student Scores by Rubric Trait, fall 2013 and fall 2015

Trait:	Percent that met or more than met expectations, fall 2013 (Score=2 or 3)	Percent that met or more than met expectations, fall 2015 (Score=2 or 3)
<i>Language</i>	87.0	90.3
<i>Voice</i>	95.0	*88.9
<i>Pace</i>	70.5	71.3
<i>Delivery Technique</i>	59.8	*70.8
<i>Poise</i>	68.9	74.1
<i>Team Delivery Achieves Purpose¹</i>	N/A	77.7
<i>Use of Media Helps to Deliver Ideas</i>	63.3	**87.0
<i>Organization is Logical</i>	89.7	93.1
<i>Content and Ideas are Developed</i>	69.2	**89.4
<i>Central Message is Conveyed</i>	76.0	**91.2

¹ This trait was added to the oral communication rubric in March of 2014.

* Statistically significant at a 5 percent level of significance.

**Statistically significant at a 1 percent level of significance.

Appendix A. Oral Communication Common Rubric

Goal: Our students will be able to convey information and ideas effectively.

Objective: Students will convey information and ideas in oral presentations.

Trait	Does not meet expectations	Meets expectations	More than meets expectations
Verbal delivery achieves purpose (a) Language (b) Voice (c) pace	Language is inappropriate for the audience; Voice is inaudible or lacks expression; Pace is halting or too fast to understand	Language is appropriate for the audience; Voice is generally audible with some expression; Pace is natural	Voice is always audible and appropriately expressive; Pace flows and maintains interest
Physical delivery achieves purpose (e.g. mannerisms, eye contact) (d) delivery technique (e) poise	Physical delivery detracts from the presentation; Speaker appears uncomfortable.	Physical delivery makes the presentation understandable; Speaker appears comfortable	Physical delivery makes the presentation interesting; Speaker appears confident.
Team delivery achieves purpose (if applicable) (f)	Transitions or interactions between team members detract from presentation.	Transitions or interactions between team members make the presentation understandable.	Transitions or interactions between team members enhance the presentation.
Use of media helps to deliver information/ideas (g)	Visual aids are sometimes irrelevant and/or fail to convey information which improves understanding of the content	Visual aids are relevant and convey information which improves understanding of the content	Visual aids are relevant, clear, and generate interest and understanding of the content
Organization of ideas and content is logical (introduction, transitions, conclusions) (h)	Organizational sequence is not clear, and/or presentation feels disjointed	Organizational sequence is clear with only minor transitional problems.	Organizational sequence is clear and creates a cohesive presentation.
Content and ideas are developed (i)	Information is insufficient to support the ideas presented <u>or</u> irrelevant content is presented	Information is generally sufficient to support the ideas presented and minimal irrelevant content is presented	Information is relevant, supports the ideas presented and lends credibility to conclusions
Central message is conveyed (j)	Central message is absent or not explicitly stated.	Central message is basically understandable.	Central message is clear and consistent.

Revised March 2014: continued with trait definitions

Definitions of traits:

In order to clarify and/or provide examples of each trait, these definitions are provided to improve inter-rater reliability.

- (a) **Language:** appropriate language means that language is not overly verbose to the point of being distracting; appropriate language does not contain slang or phrases like “you guys” and is not overly casual.
- (b) **Voice:** rubric sufficiently defines
- (c) **Pace:** Pace which does not meet expectations is so fast that it is difficult to understand content, or so slow that it is distracting. The latter usually includes many pauses, and sometimes excessive “ums”. If it becomes distracting, then the purpose of the material is not conveyed.
- (d) **Physical delivery technique:** Physical delivery which does not meet expectations includes characteristics like the failure to make any eye contact, reading from the screen or notes constantly, hands in pockets, inappropriate dress (caps), nervous habits like rocking, and failure to remain engaged while team members are talking. Students that have no gestures typically receive “meets”, whereas students who point to slides without continually focusing on them are typically scored as “more than meets”.
- (e) **Poise:** Besides looking at student comfort, excessive giggling distracts from purpose. Excessive “ums” may be considered here as well as in “pace”
- (f) **Team Delivery:** This is a team score which considers both the interaction and transitions between team members.
- (g) **Media:** To be considered “relevant” students should have considered whether what is on slide contributes to understanding or not. Visuals should be readable to convey information, including the key. Students should also consider whether numbering schemes are meaningful to the listener or only important for internal organization.
- (h) **Organization:** Typically “future directions” would be at end of presentation.
- (i) **Content/ideas developed:** Relevancy is key. A student “does not meet” if conclusions are inappropriate or incorrect.
- (j) **Central message:** Central message means the sense of a “wrap” of the entire story – the “take-away” or memorable message.

Appendix B. Proportion of Students with Required Course Work Completed or In-progress¹

Course	Proportion of students with course complete or in-progress
Non CBA pre-core courses:	
ENG110 or 112	.73
CST 110	.81
MTH145	.82
MTH175 ²	.72
MTH207 ²	.07
CBA Pre-core courses:	
ACC 221	.90
ACC 222	.97
BUS 205	.95
BUS 230	1.00
ECO 110	.85
ECO 120	.86
IS 220	.98
MGT 300	.21
CBA Core :	
FIN 355	.75
MKT 309	.79
MGT 308	.81
MGT 393	.36

¹ Figures do not include students who transferred credit for these courses to UWL.

² Students need to complete either MTH 175 or MTH 207, but not both.

Appendix B

Course Assessment Report

Oral Communication

MKT 309, spring 2016

Course Assessment Report

Course: MKT 309

Learning Objective: Oral Communication

Term: spring 2016

Methodology

MKT 309, Principles of Marketing, maps to the CBA undergraduate curriculum oral communication learning objective: “Students will convey information and ideas in oral presentations”. In MKT 309 students work in teams of approximately three to four students to develop a marketing plan for a local business or an existing company. Near the end of the semester this marketing plan is presented to both clients and all students in the course. These oral presentations are typically 15-20 minutes in length.

The presentations were recorded by university IT services with video of both the students speaking and their slides. The links for the videos were provided to the Assurance of Learning Task Force, and the name of each student presenter was identified. The videos were evaluated using the CBA common rubric for oral communication (see Appendix A). Ten faculty members from the departments of accounting, economics, finance, management and marketing scored the oral presentations. Of these ten, six had scored oral presentations in the past. The group as a whole also normed to the oral communication rubric before scoring began.

Faculty evaluated all traits in the rubric. The first five traits (language, voice, pace, delivery technique and poise) were evaluated for each individual speaking. The remaining five traits were evaluated on the basis of the overall performance of the group, and the individuals in each group received the same group score.

In the spring of 2016, 161 CBA students were enrolled in MKT 309. The presentations of 126 of these students were evaluated using the common rubric.

Results

Table 1 presents a summary of the results by individual trait in the rubric, while Figure 1 displays the percentage of students who either met or more than met expectations by rubric trait. The benchmark for performance is seventy percent of students either meeting or more than meeting expectations. As can be seen in the table and figure, that benchmark was met for each trait in the rubric with the exception of “team delivery achieves purpose”. Areas of exceptionally high performance for student teams include the organization of the presentation, its content, and whether or not the audience walked away with a clear understanding of the central message of the presentation. Individual students scored relatively high on the use of appropriate language and the tone of their voice when delivering the message. ***Areas for improvement at the individual student level include the pace of the presentation and the physical aspects of the delivery, while for the***

Table 1. Summary of Results by Trait for All Students in Sample¹

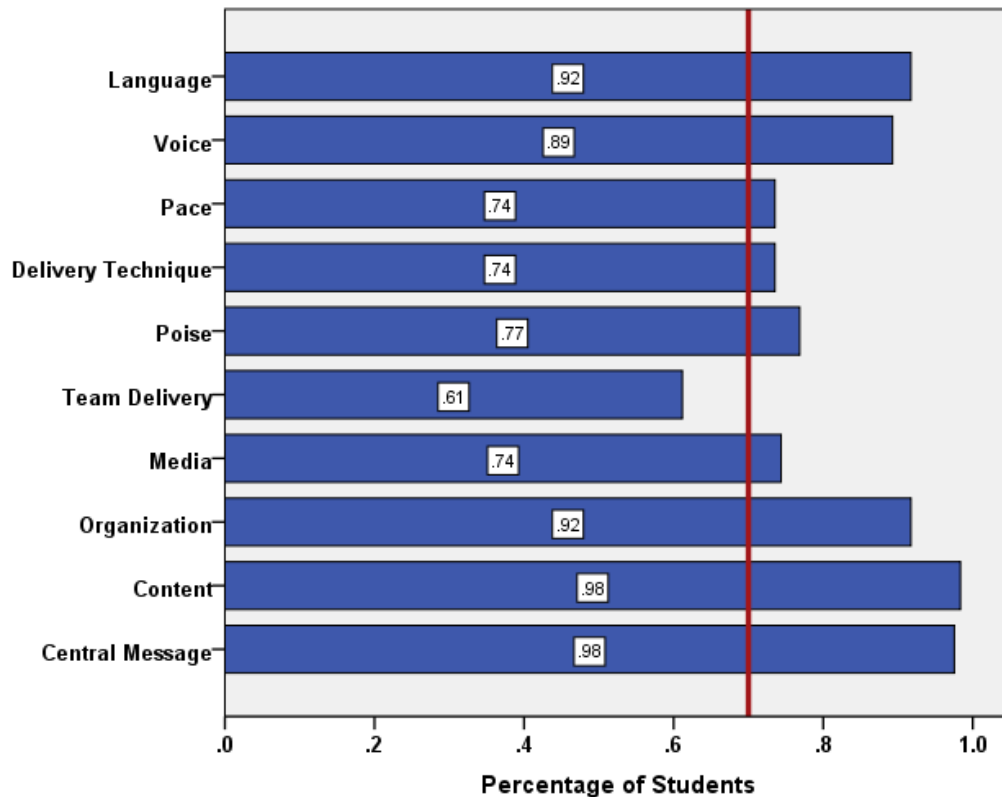
Trait:	Percent that did not meet expectations (Score = 1)	Percent that met expectations (Score = 2)	Percent that more than met expectations (Score = 3)	Percent that met or more than met expectations (Score=2 or 3)
<i>Language</i>	7.9	89.7	2.4	92.1
<i>Voice</i>	11.1	61.1	27.8	88.9
<i>Pace</i>	27.8	57.1	15.1	72.2
<i>Delivery Technique</i>	28.0	56.8	15.2	72.0
<i>Poise</i>	24.4	49.6	26.0	75.6
<i>Team Delivery Achieves Purpose</i>	40.3	52.4	7.3	59.7
<i>Use of Media Helps to Deliver Ideas</i>	25.0	59.7	15.3	75.0
<i>Organization is Logical</i>	8.1	68.5	23.4	91.9
<i>Content and Ideas are Developed</i>	1.6	78.2	20.2	98.4
<i>Central Message is Conveyed</i>	2.4	64.5	33.1	97.6

¹ Results are for a sample of 126 students out of 161 (78.3%) CBA majors enrolled in MKT 309 in the spring of 2016.

group as a whole the interactions between team members is an area which calls for significant improvement.

Of the areas in need of improvement the most glaring one is the trait “team delivery achieves purpose”. Behaviors faculty observed while scoring the presentations included students’ use of the pronoun “I” rather than “we” during their portion of the presentation and a general lack of verbal transitions between each speaker. In addition, students rarely looked at the other speakers during the presentation; instead they kept their eyes focused on the floor or straight ahead at the audience. Part of the low scores might be attributable to the way in which the assignment was organized. If each student was responsible for a certain portion of the presentation that would tend to create a product that appears to be “chunked” rather than a cohesive whole. Regardless of how the assignment was organized, though, students have a general tendency to “divide and conquer” group assignments, a problem faculty find very difficult to overcome.

Figure 1. Percentage of Students Who Met or More than Met Expectations by Rubric Trait¹



¹ Results are for a sample of 126 students out of 161 (78.3%) CBA majors enrolled in MKT 309 in the spring of 2016.

Another portion of the low team delivery score might be explained by the way in which the trait is defined in the rubric. The descriptor for “Does not meet expectations” is “Transitions or interactions between team members detract from presentation, while the descriptor for “Meets expectations” is “Transitions or interactions between team members make the presentation understandable.” Despite a norming session prior to scoring the presentations there was still some uncertainty and variation in the interpretation of the word “detract” under “does not meet expectations”. Faculty suggested changing the wording to “lack of transitions or interactions between team members” for “does not meet expectations”.

One of the faculty members noted the use of casual language such as “you guys”. In the course of this discussion it was suggested that the wording for the “language” trait in the rubric be changed from “appropriate” and “not appropriate” to “professional” and “not professional”. Also in terms of the rubric, a question was raised about the difference between “comfortable” and “confident” under the “poise” trait. A confident speaker shows more body movement than someone who is merely comfortable, such as stepping forward while speaking and pointing at screen. Some of the faculty raised the question about whether or not we should add an additional trait to the rubric for professionalism. Is professionalism, however, about dress or language or both? It may be difficult to tease out the difference between these two.

There was also discussion about the use of notecards during presentations. Faculty were in agreement that the use of note cards shows a lack of professionalism and detracts from the presentation. It was suggested that this be communicated to all faculty in the CBA at an all-college meeting in order to create common expectations across all business courses.

Downstream users felt that students had improved over time but that further improvement might be achieved by asking students to video themselves giving their presentation before the actual presentation in class. This provides students with the opportunity to critique themselves and improve their performance prior to the delivery in class.

Closing the Loop

Oral communication was assessed in MKT 309 in both the spring of 2014 and the spring of 2016. Between these two assessments of student learning curricular changes were made in another core business course that had the potential to affect oral communication scores in MKT 309. BUS 230, Business and Economic Research and Communication, is another core course that maps to oral communication. Most business students either take both courses concurrently or BUS 230 prior to MKT 309.⁶ Between the spring of 2014 and the spring of 2016 the BUS 230 instructors made two changes to the course to improve students' oral communication skills.

First, all instructors made a concerted effort to give students opportunities to practice their "informal" communication skills. In prior conversations, faculty noted that much of business communication happens in more informal settings among smaller groups of people. The formal presentation, infused throughout the CBA core curriculum, can oftentimes be the exception rather than the norm. The exact form of this practice varied by instructor, with some having student teams present their research proposal to a client while others asked students to provide brief oral updates on their research project at different points throughout the semester.

Second, in the fall of 2014 some of the BUS 230 instructors invited a CST 110 instructor to come into their class and offer a 55-minute refresher workshop on oral communication.⁷ This workshop included a mix of instructional content on important verbal and physical presentation skills and how to deal with the anxiety experienced when public speaking, as well as an opportunity for students to speak in front of the class with some individual constructive feedback. Having received positive feedback from students on this initial pilot, more faculty worked this refresher workshop into their course such that by the fall of 2015 all BUS 230 instructors had added this workshop to their course curriculum.

⁶ In the spring of 2016, 85.1 percent of MKT 309 students were either currently enrolled in BUS 230 or had taken it in a prior semester.

⁷ CST 110, Communicating Effectively, is a general education course required of all students at UWL. While not a prerequisite for BUS 230, the vast majority of students have taken this course or its equivalent prior to enrolling in BUS 230.

Table 2 compares the scores with respect to each trait in the oral communication rubric for spring of 2014 and spring of 2016. Results appear to be somewhat mixed. The oral communication workshop focuses primarily on improving the first five traits in the rubric. Of these five only two statistically changed between 2014 and 2016; both, however, were statistically lower after the curricular changes than before. In contrast, performance on three of the team attributes significantly improved over this time period. One of the team traits, though, (team delivery achieves purpose) was statistically lower in 2016 than 2014.

Table 2. Comparison of Student Scores by Rubric Trait, spring 2014 and spring 2016

Trait:	Percent that met or more than met expectations, spring 2014 (Score=2 or 3)	Percent that met or more than met expectations, spring 2016 (Score=2 or 3)
<i>Language</i>	94.0	92.0
<i>Voice</i>	95.0	*89.0
<i>Pace</i>	78.0	72.0
<i>Delivery Technique</i>	72.0	72.0
<i>Poise</i>	87.0	**76.0
<i>Team Delivery Achieves Purpose</i>	81.0	***60.0
<i>Use of Media Helps to Deliver Ideas</i>	71.0	75.0
<i>Organization is Logical</i>	83.0	**92.0
<i>Content and Ideas are Developed</i>	83.0	***98.0
<i>Central Message is Conveyed</i>	80.0	***98.0

* Statistically significant at a 10 percent level of significance.

** Statistically significant at a 5 percent level of significance.

***Statistically significant at a 1 percent level of significance.

When asked to reflect on these results, some of the faculty felt that student performance had noticeably improved but that their expectations had more than likely increased over time. One of the instructors of BUS 230, however, noted the following:

“In the workshop, students are typically asked to speak briefly about a topic that is of interest to them (they talk about themselves and describe things they like to do, etc.), and/or they speak briefly using a notecard prompt with a quote. Neither of these methods mirrors what they need to do for formal presentations in the classroom, where they speak about more complex material that they are likely much less comfortable and familiar with. It is fairly easy to deliver a one-liner as you review and practice a few "best practices" in public speaking, but it is much more difficult to describe research purpose, methods, results, and analysis all while incorporating the public speaking skills we want them to demonstrate.”

This instructor intends to experiment with an oral communication refresher workshop of their own design.

Appendix A. Oral Communication Common Rubric

Goal: Our students will be able to convey information and ideas effectively.

Objective: Students will convey information and ideas in oral presentations.

Trait	Does not meet expectations	Meets expectations	More than meets expectations
Verbal delivery achieves purpose (d) Language (e) Voice (f) pace	Language is inappropriate for the audience; Voice is inaudible or lacks expression; Pace is halting or too fast to understand	Language is appropriate for the audience; Voice is generally audible with some expression; Pace is natural	Voice is always audible and appropriately expressive; Pace flows and maintains interest
Physical delivery achieves purpose (e.g. mannerisms, eye contact) (d) delivery technique (e) poise	Physical delivery detracts from the presentation; Speaker appears uncomfortable.	Physical delivery makes the presentation understandable; Speaker appears comfortable	Physical delivery makes the presentation interesting; Speaker appears confident.
Team delivery achieves purpose (if applicable) (f)	Transitions or interactions between team members detract from presentation.	Transitions or interactions between team members make the presentation understandable.	Transitions or interactions between team members enhance the presentation.
Use of media helps to deliver information/ideas (g)	Visual aids are sometimes irrelevant and/or fail to convey information which improves understanding of the content	Visual aids are relevant and convey information which improves understanding of the content	Visual aids are relevant, clear, and generate interest and understanding of the content
Organization of ideas and content is logical (introduction, transitions, conclusions) (h)	Organizational sequence is not clear, and/or presentation feels disjointed	Organizational sequence is clear with only minor transitional problems.	Organizational sequence is clear and creates a cohesive presentation.
Content and ideas are developed (i)	Information is insufficient to support the ideas presented <u>or</u> irrelevant content is presented	Information is generally sufficient to support the ideas presented and minimal irrelevant content is presented	Information is relevant, supports the ideas presented and lends credibility to conclusions
Central message is conveyed (j)	Central message is absent or not explicitly stated.	Central message is basically understandable.	Central message is clear and consistent.

Revised March 2014: continued with trait definitions

Definitions of traits:

In order to clarify and/or provide examples of each trait, these definitions are provided to improve inter-rater reliability.

- (k) **Language:** *appropriate language means that language is not overly verbose to the point of being distracting; appropriate language does not contain slang or phrases like “you guys” and is not overly casual.*
- (l) **Voice:** *rubric sufficiently defines*
- (m) **Pace:** *Pace which does not meet expectations is so fast that it is difficult to understand content, or so slow that it is distracting. The latter usually includes many pauses, and sometimes excessive “ums”. If it becomes distracting, then the purpose of the material is not conveyed.*
- (n) **Physical delivery technique:** *Physical delivery which does not meet expectations includes characteristics like the failure to make any eye contact, reading from the screen or notes constantly, hands in pockets, inappropriate dress (caps), nervous habits like rocking, and failure to remain engaged while team members are talking. Students that have no gestures typically receive “meets”, whereas students who point to slides without continually focusing on them are typically scored as “more than meets”.*
- (o) **Poise:** *Besides looking at student comfort, excessive giggling distracts from purpose. Excessive “ums” may be considered here as well as in “pace”*
- (p) **Team Delivery:** *This is a team score which considers both the interaction and transitions between team members.*
- (q) **Media:** *To be considered “relevant” students should have considered whether what is on slide contributes to understanding or not. Visuals should be readable to convey information, including the key. Students should also consider whether numbering schemes are meaningful to the listener or only important for internal organization.*
- (r) **Organization:** *Typically “future directions” would be at end of presentation.*
- (s) **Content/ideas developed:** *Relevancy is key. A student “does not meet” if conclusions are inappropriate or incorrect.*
- (t) **Central message:** *Central message means the sense of a “wrap” of the entire story – the “take-away” or memorable message.*

Appendix B. Characteristics of CBA majors in MKT 309 and Sample, Spring 2016

	CBA majors in Sample	All CBA majors in Course
Number	126	161
Gender		
Male	69.8%	67.1%
Female	30.2%	32.9%
Class Rank		
Sophomore	5.6%	6.2%
Junior	71.4%	68.9%
Senior	23.0%	24.8%
First Major		
ACC	19.8%	21.1%
ECO	4.8%	5.0%
FIN	19.0%	16.8%
IB	5.6%	5.0%
IS	4.8%	5.6%
MGT	27.8%	27.3%
MKT	15.9%	15.5%
UNDEC	2.4%	3.7%
Combined Cumulative GPA		
Median	3.03	3.08
Minimum	2.17	2.17
Maximum	3.97	3.97
Composite ACT		
Median	24	24
Minimum	19	17
Maximum	33	33
No Score	18	22

Appendix C. Proportion of Students in the Sample with Required Course Work Completed or In-progress¹

Course	Proportion of students in the sample with course complete or in-progress
Non CBA pre-core courses:	
ENG110 or 112	100.0
CST 110	98.4
MTH145	97.6
MTH175 ²	71.4
MTH207 ²	18.3
CBA Pre-core courses:	
ACC 221	100.0
ACC 222	100.0
BUS 205	100.0
BUS 230	83.3
ECO 110	100.0
ECO 120	100.0
IS 220	96.0
MGT 300	20.6
CBA Core :	
FIN 355	84.9
MKT 309	100.00
MGT 308	89.7
MGT 393	24.6

¹ Figures include students who transferred credit for these courses to UWL.

² Students need to complete either MTH 175 or MTH 207, but not both.

Appendix C

Course Assessment Report

Critical Thinking

FIN 355, spring 2016

Course Assessment Report

Course: FIN 355

Learning Objective: Critical Thinking

Term: spring 2016

Methodology

FIN 355, Principles of Financial Management, maps to the CBA undergraduate curriculum critical thinking and decision-making learning objective: “Students will evaluate alternatives and understand the ramifications of those alternatives within a given business context.” In the spring of 2016, an assessment task was administered to all students enrolled in FIN 355 to measure the critical thinking and decision making skills of students who were predominantly in their third year in the CBA program.⁸ Students were presented with a capital budgeting problem involving an electrical utility company who is considering building a new power facility. The company faces two alternatives: build the facility without taking into account environmental considerations or build the facility with additional equipment to help protect the environment. Students were asked to compute the net present value and the internal rate of return for both alternatives. Using this information as well as additional information provided in the problem they were then asked to make a recommendation to the company in terms of how they should proceed moving forward. For a copy of the assessment task please see Appendix A.

Students submitted their completed tasks via D2L and electronic copies of their work were forwarded to the Assurance of Learning Coordinator. Student artifacts were then uploaded into a new assessment platform called Aqua.⁹ Student work was evaluated using the CBA common rubric for critical thinking and decision making (see Appendix B). The artifacts were scored by members of the Assurance of Learning Task Force as part of a pilot of the new software platform Aqua. The group as a whole normed to the critical thinking and decision making rubric before scoring began, using three different pieces of student work.

The members of the Task Force evaluated student performance with respect to four out of five traits in the rubric. The third trait, trait c, which evaluates student use of external sources was not used because the assignment did not prompt this skill. In the spring of 2016 there were 163 CBA students registered for FIN 355. Of these, 79 students were randomly selected to have their worked scored, generating a sample of 48 percent. For an analysis of the characteristics of the sample vs. the population of CBA FIN 355 students please see Appendix C.

⁸ In the spring of 2016, 71.6 percent of students enrolled in FIN 355 were classified as juniors, while 6.8 and 21.6 were classified as sophomores and seniors respectively.

⁹ Aqua is an electronic tool designed to store and facilitate the evaluation of student artifacts.

Results

Table 1 presents a summary of the results by individual trait in the rubric, while Figure 1 displays the percentage of students who either met or more than met expectations by rubric trait. The benchmark for performance is seventy percent of students either meeting or more than meeting expectations. As can be seen in the table and figure, the benchmark of seventy percent was met for only the first trait in the rubric, *identifies the problem or the question*. For the remaining rubric traits at least 65 percent of students either met or more than met expectations.

Table 1: Summary of Results by Trait and Score for All Students in Sample¹

Trait:	Percent that did not meet expectations (Score = 1)	Percent that met expectations (Score = 2)	Percent that more than met expectations (Score = 3)	Percent that met or more than met expectations (Score = 2 or 3)
<i>Identifies the problem or question (a)</i>	22.8	39.2	38.0	77.2
<i>Identifies relevant variables (b)</i>	31.6	45.6	22.8	68.4
<i>Develops relevant alternative approaches or solutions by integrating positions or perspectives (d)</i>	35.4	40.5	24.1	64.6
<i>Evaluates or draws conclusions about the potential impact of alternatives (e)</i>	35.4	32.9	31.6	64.5

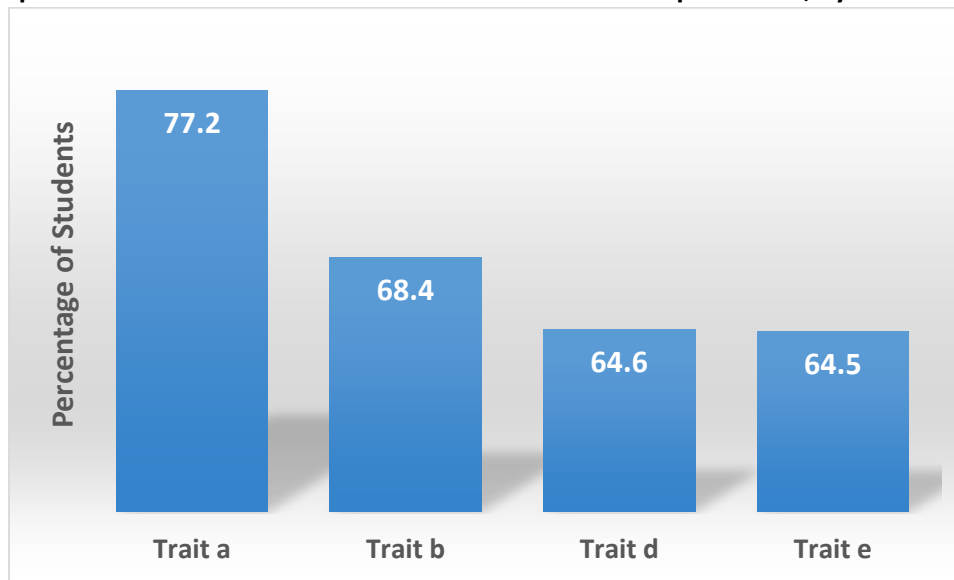
¹ Results are for a sample of 79 students out of 163 (48.5%) CBA majors enrolled in FIN 355 in the spring of 2016.

Discussion

The four FIN 355 instructors who administered the assessment task to their students met to discuss the results of the assessment. The main points of their discussion are as follows:

- The assessment task was a graded assignment in only three out of the seven sections of FIN 355. It was concluded that grading the tasks in all sections going forward would add meaning to the results.
- FIN 355 faculty felt the results of the assessment were positive. The results provided ideas on how the department could improve delivery and evaluation of assessments in the future.

Figure 1: Proportion of Students that “met” or “more than met” Expectations, by Rubric Trait¹



¹ Results are for a sample of 79 students out of 163 (48.5%) CBA majors enrolled in FIN 355 in the spring of 2016.

- Possible curricular changes in FIN 355 as a result of this assessment were also discussed, particularly in regard to how critical thinking could be taught as a content area in FIN 355 in the future. This idea may be pursued as possible future assessment tasks are developed.

Two additional conclusions can be drawn from the results. First, while students fell short of the benchmark of 70 percent of students either meeting or more than meeting expectations for three out of the four rubric traits, they did not miss the mark by a tremendous amount. Given that the vast majority of students in the sample were juniors and the rubric reflects the standard for graduating seniors, these results are consistent with where we would expect students to be in terms of their academic career.

The second is in regard to the administration of the assessment task. More emphasis needs to be placed on the consistency of the conditions under which the task is administered. It is important that all students, regardless of their instructor, have relatively similar incentives to perform well on the assessment task. As an example of the impact of this, a nearly identical assessment task was administered to all students in FIN 355 in the spring of 2012. According to the course report, “the task was a course assignment for credit”. Table 2 below contains the results of the spring 2012 assessment along with the results from the spring of 2016.

What stands out from the table is the significantly lower performance of students in the spring of 2016 compared to the spring of 2012. Several things could account for this difference in performance. For example, faculty may have become more strict in their interpretation of the rubric over time as they become more familiar with it. In addition, in 2016 two of the four FIN 355 instructors were only in their second semester at UWL. Most likely, though, the difference in the incentive structure between the two time periods had an impact on student performance.

Table 2. Comparison of Student Scores by Rubric Trait, spring 2012 and spring 2016

Trait:	Percent that met or more than met expectations, <i>spring 2012</i> (Score = 2 or 3)	Percent that met or more than met expectations, <i>spring 2016</i> (Score = 2 or 3)
<i>Identifies the problem or question (a)</i>	91.5	77.2
<i>Identifies relevant variables (b)</i>	69.1	68.4
<i>Develops relevant alternative approaches or solutions by integrating positions or perspectives (d)</i>	70.2	64.6
<i>Evaluates or draws conclusions about the potential impact of alternatives (e)</i>	87.2	64.5

Appendix A: Student Task

The assessment task has been removed to protect the integrity of the instrument.

Appendix B: Decision Making and Critical Thinking Common Rubric

Goal: Our students will be able to think critically when evaluating decisions.

Objective: Students will evaluate alternatives and understand the ramifications of those alternatives within a given business context

Trait	Does not meet expectations	Meets expectations	More than meets expectations
<i>Identifies the problem or question (a)</i>	Does not identify the problem	Identifies the basic problem with no elaboration	Identifies and recognizes the complexity of the problem (For example: recognizes multiple stakeholders <u>or</u> short and long term dimensions of problem)
<i>Acquire appropriate information or evidence to frame business decisions (b)</i> <i>(c)</i>	Identifies a limited number of relevant variables or considered irrelevant variables Few sources identified and/or they are not objective.	Identifies the most relevant variables for the problem or decision and did not consider irrelevant variables Sources of information are identified and all are objective	Identification of relevant variables demonstrates thorough consideration of problem because less obvious variables are included. Sources of information are identified and are all objective, <u>and</u> either demonstrated a breadth of approaches <u>or</u> an evaluation of quality of sources.
<i>Develop relevant alternative approaches or solutions by integrating positions or perspectives (d)</i>	Considers only one or limited positions or perspective and does not consider that they are related.	Integrates several positions or perspectives and considers at least one way they are related.	Multiple diverse positions or perspectives are considered and considers relationships.
<i>Evaluates or draws conclusions about the potential impact of alternatives (e)</i>	Fails to draw conclusions based on the evaluation, or draws conclusions which contradict the evidence or context.	Identifies and discusses conclusions which consider the context, but uses some, but not all, of the evidence considered.	Identifies and discusses conclusions, implications, or consequences which consider context, and all evidence considered. Objectively reflects upon their own assertions.

Revised Aug 1, 2012

**Appendix C: Select Demographic Characteristics of Students in
FIN 355, Spring 2016**

	CBA majors in Sample	CBA majors not in Sample	All CBA majors in Course
Number	79	84	163
Gender			
Male	67.1%	58.3%	62.6%
Female	32.9%	41.7%	37.4%
Class Rank			
Senior	20.3%	22.9%	21.6%
Junior	73.4%	69.9%	71.6%
Sophomore	6.3%	7.2%	6.8%
First Major			
ACC	27.8%	17.9%	22.7%
ECO	3.8%	3.6%	3.7%
FIN	16.5%	7.1%	11.7%
IB	6.3%	2.4%	4.3%
IS	2.5%	6.0%	4.3%
MGT	21.5%	29.8%	25.8%
MKT	19.0%	29.8%	24.5%
Undecided	2.5%	3.6%	3.1%
Combined Cumulative GPA			
Median	3.11	3.00	3.07
Minimum	2.17	1.97	1.97
Maximum	3.97	3.95	3.97
Composite ACT			
Median	24	25	24
Minimum	17	17	17
Maximum	33	29	33
No Score	7	23	30

There are no statistical differences between those students in the sample and those who are not in terms of mean ACT scores, cumulative GPA, and the total number of credits earned. In terms of class status, statistically there is the same proportion of sophomores, juniors, and seniors in both the sample and the group of students not included in the sample. The gender composition of both groups is statistically the same as well.

There were, however, statistical differences in terms of the number of transfer credits earned. On average, the students in the sample earned fewer transfer credits than those not in the sample. Fewer transfer credits mean more courses taken at UWL, and potentially more courses taken in the CBA core curriculum. If this is the case, the sample would provide a more accurate assessment of student learning in the CBA core curriculum.

Appendix D

Course Assessment Report

Social Responsibility

BUS 205, spring 2016

Course Assessment Report

Course: BUS 205

Learning Objective: Social Responsibility

Term: spring 2016

Methodology

BUS 205, the Legal and Ethical Environment of Business, maps to the CBA undergraduate curriculum social responsibility learning objective: "Students will be able to identify and apply different frameworks of social responsibility to business problems and recognize the short- and long-term effects on stakeholders and society."

Students were given an assessment task created by the BUS 205 faculty. In this assessment task students were given the role of a member of the board of directors for a fictitious company, ABC Steel, Inc. ABC is facing rising costs at its production facility in the U.S. due to non-compliance with environmental regulations and demands from the labor union for higher wages and benefits. Its stock price has also been trading at a relatively low value. One viable option for the company would be to move its production facility to China where labor costs would be significantly lower and environmental regulations are laxer than in the U.S. However, the firm is currently located in a town with an extremely high level of poverty and closing the plant would only further devastate the already struggling community. Students were asked to construct a memo to other members of the Board of Directors containing their recommendation of whether the firm should stay in its present location in the U.S. or move production to China. In making their recommendation they were asked to consider the ecological, social and economic impacts of their decision in light of a code of ethics adopted by the company. (For a copy of the assessment task please see Appendix A.)

Paper copies of student work were given to the Assurance of Learning Coordinator who subsequently uploaded them into a new assessment platform called Aqua.¹⁰ Student work was evaluated using the CBA common rubric for social responsibility (see Appendix B). The artifacts were scored by faculty from all six departments in the College of Business at an all-college meeting. The purpose of using this particular setting was two-fold: introduce new faculty to the process of scoring student artifacts as well as roll out Aqua to the college. Faculty first normed to the social responsibility rubric with 3-4 other individuals at their table. Comments and questions concerning the norming were then shared with the group as a whole. Following this, faculty were asked to log into Aqua and score several student artifacts using the new software.

The faculty evaluated student performance with respect to all four traits in the rubric. In the spring of 2016 there were 185 CBA students registered for BUS 205. Of these, 123 students were randomly selected providing a sample of 66.5 percent. For an analysis of the characteristics of the sample vs. the population please see Appendix C.

¹⁰ Aqua is an electronic tool designed to store and facilitate the evaluation of student artifacts.

Results

Table 1 presents a summary of the results by individual trait in the rubric, while Figure 1 displays the percentage of students who either met or more than met expectations by rubric trait. The benchmark for performance is seventy percent of students either meeting or more than meeting expectations. As can be seen in both the table and the figure this benchmark was achieved for all traits in the rubric. Students scored the highest with respect to the first trait in the rubric, with the percentage of students who met or more than met expectations declining for each subsequent trait in the rubric.

Table 1. Summary of Results by Rubric Trait for All Students in Sample¹

Trait:	Percent that did not meet expectations (Score = 1)	Percent that met expectations (Score = 2)	Percent that more than met expectations (Score = 3)	Percent that met or more than met expectations (Score = 2 or 3)
<i>Demonstrate an awareness of social and ethical responsibilities to various stakeholders (a)</i>	10.6	59.3	30.1	89.4
<i>Recognize the importance of standards of ethical business conduct (b)</i>	15.4	58.5	26.0	84.5
<i>Recognize the ecological, social, and economic implications of business decisions (c)</i>	17.1	56.1	26.8	82.9
<i>Analyze the ecological, social, and economic implications of business decisions (d)</i>	22.8	61.0	16.3	77.3

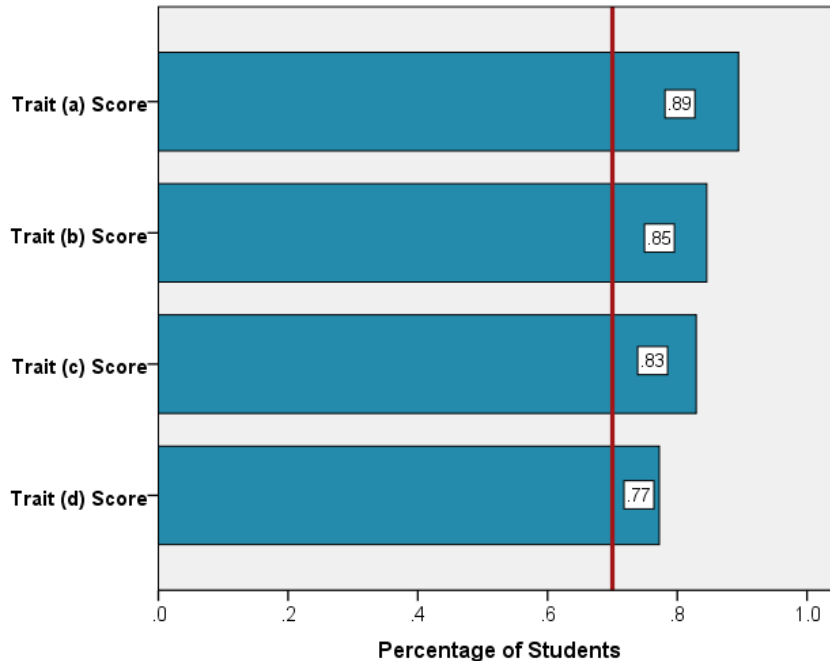
⁽¹⁾ Results are for a sample of 123 students out of 185 (66.5%) CBA majors enrolled in BUS 205 in the spring of 2016.

It should be noted that students were prompted in the assignment to consider all four traits in the social responsibility rubric:

Your memo must take into account all of the following:

- a) Demonstrate an awareness of social and ethical responsibilities to various stakeholders;
- b) Recognize the importance of standards in ethical business conduct;
- c) Recognize the ecological, social, and economic implications of business decisions; and
- d) Analyze the ecological, social, and economic implications of business decisions.

Figure 1. Percentage of Students Who Met or More than Met Expectations by Rubric Trait¹



¹ Results are for a sample of 123 students out of 185 (66.5%) CBA majors enrolled in BUS 205 in the spring of 2016.

Given this, it is not surprising that students scored as highly as they did. This raises the question, though, of whether or not they should have been given this much direction? In the spring of 2016, 74.1 percent of CBA BUS 205 students were either freshmen or sophomores. What is more, this course is typically a student’s first exposure in the curriculum to social responsibility within the context of business decision-making. Without a certain level of prompting it is highly unlikely they would have approached this problem from a social responsibility standpoint, thereby providing assessment data that more than likely would have been of little use.

Discussion

Most students in the sample recommended the firm keep its production facilities in the U.S. as opposed to moving operations to China. This recommendation was based on the perceived ethical responsibilities of the firm to its current employees and the Reading, Pennsylvania, community, as well as its ethical responsibility to protect the physical environment. What was noticeably missing from the analysis of most students, however, was a consideration of the firm’s ethical responsibility to its shareholders. They did not seem to understand that the stock price is highly influenced by profits and those profits would rise if the firm moved to China. Students failed to see the complexity of the situation or the conflict of interest between the employees, the community of Reading, and the environment on the one hand and the shareholders of the company on the other.

Some of this can be attributed to a lack of understanding of the market for steel, in particular that it is sold in an international market to business/commercial customers. For example, several students noted if ABC Steel remained in the U.S. this would be perceived favorably by the firm's customers and would thereby increase sales because many individuals prefer to buy products made in the U.S.A. They considered steel to be the same type of product as clothing, shoes, wine, etc., in that ethical behavior on the part of the firm has the ability to increase its customer base. Students also believed that by staying in the U.S. ABC Steel could avoid selling their product in a market characterized by excess supply due to the high volume of steel exports from China.

In addition, the *potential* imposition of the tariff on foreign steel made it appear like remaining in the U.S. is a win-win situation. What students neglected to see is that while the tariff had the potential to raise revenue, costs would decrease with certainty if production were moved to China. In addition, ABC Steel could potentially export its product from China to countries other than the United States, and thereby avoid the impact of the tariff.

Overall there seemed to be a level of naivety or ignorance on the part of students about how certain aspects of business work. The following quote from a student paper exemplifies this:

We would naturally have to provide the labor union workers with a wage increase, but if the company does not have the proper means to establish this wage increase they will have conduct employee evaluations. In doing so each employee will be evaluated to determine their actual worth in the company and there will be incentives in place that claim that their upcoming raises or bonuses are contingent on their performance in the company. Employees are more likely to keep making the same amount than find a different job completely, although this may seem archaic it may be the only way to improve worker productivity and keep the company and community running.

This student demonstrates a lack of a knowledge or understanding with respect to how unions bargain as one voice to increase the wages of all workers. Basing wage increases on individual evaluations of employees is characteristic of a non-union place of employment. Other students believed that ABC Steel would be personally responsible for paying the tariff, if levied, on steel imported by the United States, thereby reducing the cost savings associated with relocating to China, as opposed to eliminating their price advantage compared to U.S. steel companies.

Appendix A: Assessment Task

The assessment task has been removed to protect the integrity of the instrument.

Appendix B: Social Responsibility Rubric

Social Responsibility Common Rubric

Goal: Students will demonstrate the role of social responsibility in business decisions.

Objective: Students will be able to identify and apply different frameworks of social responsibility to business problems and recognize the short- and long-term effects on stakeholders and society.

Trait	Does not meet expectations	Meets expectations	More than meets expectations
<i>Demonstrate an awareness of social and ethical responsibilities to various stakeholders (a)</i>	Fails to demonstrate an awareness of social and ethical responsibilities to various stakeholders	Demonstrates an awareness of social and ethical responsibilities to various stakeholders	Demonstrates an in depth awareness of social and ethical responsibilities to various stakeholders
<i>Recognize the importance of standards of ethical business conduct (b)</i>	Fails to identify how standards of ethical business conduct impact decisions	Identifies the most obvious ways that standards of ethical business conduct impact decisions	Identifies multiple ways that standards of ethical business conduct impact decisions
<i>Recognize the ecological, social, and economic implications of business decisions (c)</i>	Fails to identify more than one dimension in a business context	Identifies ecological, social and economic factors in a business context but incompletely articulates their complexity	Identifies ecological, social and economic factors in a business context and articulates their complexity
<i>Analyze the ecological, social, and economic implications of business decisions (d)</i>	States a position but fails to analyze a business decision	States a position and considers, at a basic level, the implications of the position or decision	States a position and considers in depth the assumptions and/or all three dimensions in the implications of the position or decision

Revised January 2013

Appendix C: Select Demographic Characteristics of Students in BUS 205, Spring 2016

	CBA majors in Sample	CBA majors not in Sample	All CBA majors in Course
Number	123	62	185
Gender			
Male	61.0%	67.7%	63.2%
Female	39.0%	32.3%	36.8%
Class Rank			
Freshman	3.3%	1.6%	2.7%
Sophomore	67.5%	79.0%	71.4%
Junior	25.2%	17.7%	22.7%
Senior	4.1%	1.6%	3.2%
First Major			
ACC	12.2%	12.9%	12.4%
ECO	4.9%	3.2%	4.3%
FIN	17.1%	16.1%	16.8%
IB	4.9%	8.1%	5.9%
IS	5.7%	1.6%	4.3%
MGT	25.2%	21.0%	23.8%
MKT	22.0%	24.2%	22.7%
Undecided	8.1%	12.9%	9.7%
Combined Cumulative GPA			
Median	3.00	3.00	3.00
Minimum	1.48	1.33	1.33
Maximum	4.00	3.94	4.00
Composite ACT			
Median	24	24	24
Minimum	17	19	17
Maximum	30	32	32
No Score	20	12	32

Appendix E

Curriculum Mapping Questionnaire

CBA All-College Meeting

spring 2016

Name: _____

CBA Learning Objectives Faculty Reflection

1. Think about the 2-3 courses you teach most often. List the name and number of these courses in the first row of the table found at the end of this document.
2. Next, think about the learning outcomes for these courses listed on your class syllabus. Given these learning outcomes, which of the six CBA learning objectives do you feel your courses map to? Place this information in the second row of the table. For your convenience the CBA learning goals and objectives are listed below:

Communication Goal: Our students will be able to convey information and ideas effectively.

Learning Objective: Students will convey information and ideas in professional business reports.

Learning Objective: Students will convey information and ideas in oral presentations.

Critical Thinking and Decision Making Goal: Our students will be able to think critically when evaluating decisions.

Learning Objective: Students will evaluate alternatives and understand the ramifications of those alternatives within a given business context.

Global Context of Business Goal: Our students will be prepared to serve others in a global environment.

Learning Objective: Students will demonstrate the ability to integrate global perspectives in business decisions.

Social Responsibility Goal: Our students will be prepared to be socially responsible citizens.

Learning Objective: Students will demonstrate the ability to consider the effects of business decisions on the entire social system.

Major Competency Goal: Our students will be proficient in the primary functional area of study.

Learning Objective: Students will apply functional area concepts and decision-making techniques and tools appropriately while incorporating concepts from other functional business area into the primary area.

3. How would you describe the skill level of your students with respect to these learning objectives when they *leave* your class? Are they ***beginning or emerging***? Are they ***developing and practicing these skills with feedback***? Or would you consider them to be ***competent or proficient***? Place this information in the third row of the table.

4. We have all at one time or another complained about how our students are lacking certain skills or knowledge when they come into our classes. What are the skills or knowledge areas that you feel students should have ***with respect to the six College learning objectives*** when they step into your classroom? Place this information in row 4 of the table.

5. Finally, consider question (4) again. What specific skills or knowledge areas ***outside of the five CBA learning objectives*** do you feel students should have when they step into your classroom? Feel free to be as specific as you like and to reference other courses. Place this information in row 5 of the table.

(1) Course:			
<i>(2) Which CBA learning objective(s) do these courses map to? (Check all that apply.)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> oral communication <input type="checkbox"/> written communication <input type="checkbox"/> critical thinking <input type="checkbox"/> global context of business <input type="checkbox"/> social responsibility <input type="checkbox"/> competency in the major	<input type="checkbox"/> oral communication <input type="checkbox"/> written communication <input type="checkbox"/> critical thinking <input type="checkbox"/> global context of business <input type="checkbox"/> social responsibility <input type="checkbox"/> competency in the major	<input type="checkbox"/> oral communication <input type="checkbox"/> written communication <input type="checkbox"/> critical thinking <input type="checkbox"/> global context of business <input type="checkbox"/> social responsibility <input type="checkbox"/> competency in the major

<p>(3) How would you describe the skill level of your students with regard to each of the learning objectives your course maps to? (beginning or emerging/ developing and practicing with feedback/ competent or proficient)</p>			
<p>(4) What skills or knowledge do students seem to be lacking with respect to the six CBA learning objectives when they enter your course that you wish they had?</p>			



<p>(5) What other skills or knowledge do students seem to be lacking when they enter your course that you wish they had?</p>			
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Please place any additional comments that you might have on the back of this page. Thank you!!