Fall 2011 College of Business Convocation
Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Report

The Undergraduate (UG) Curriculum Committee continued its work on revising the College of Business (COB) Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) core curriculum. We have made huge strides over the past two years in finely focusing our curriculum to better improve student learning. The UG Curriculum Committee met 15 times this past year (e.g., 8 times in the Fall semester and 7 times in Spring semester) to accomplish our charge to “Improve Performance” as necessary. We sponsored a “Critical Thinking” workshop in the 2011 Spring semester which was part of our faculty’s success in improving the fit between student learning and our COB’s goals (see Goal 4b). As a reminder, the five COB goals and sub-goals are as follows:

1. **Communication:** Students are effective communicators.
   - **1a. Students can write effectively.** Data collected suggest that while student learning was less than acceptable in two of the three objectives for Goal 1a, it was an improvement from the previous semester. The assignment in BCIS 338 was changed from an agricultural topic to a more familiar business topic; thus, giving students more context in the writing assignment. The College of Business also continues to emphasize the CoB “Academic Survival Kit” aids available on the CoB website.

   - **1b. Students can make effective oral presentations.** Results also indicate an improvement based on data from Spring 2010. Data collected suggest that student learning was more than acceptable for all three objectives. Obviously these are good results. To clarify an issue raised by the AOL committee, our committee unanimously agreed to allow acceptance of either ‘face-to-face’ or ‘voice-over’ slide show presentations by students. While visual elements are important, we believed that one can assess a student’s presentation using voice-over capabilities just as well.

2. **Diversity:** Students can demonstrate knowledge of diversity. Data collected suggest that student learning was less than acceptable in two out of three objectives. The Management Department improved the assessment process by standardizing the textbook for Mgt 309 and limiting the diversity component to one video for instruction; so, student learning should increase in our next round of assessment. We wish to thank all Mgt 309 instructors for improving the assessment process.

3. **Information Technology:** Students are effective users of information technology. Data collected in BCIS 338 suggests that student learning improved as two out of three of the objectives were met in Spring 2010 while previously all three objectives were only being satisfied in the 70% range. Faculty stopped using grades to assess student performance and the IS department redesigned the assignments to improve the assessment process. Our thanks go out to all the IS instructors who have improved the assessment process in BCIS 338: Jim, Bobbie Green, Richard Oliver, Carlo Mora and Jim Nelson.

4. **Critical Thinking:** Students can solve problems and think critically.
   - **4a. Students can solve problems.** We did not assess this goal this past year.
4b. Students can think critically. Data from the AOL committee indicated that student learning in critical thinking was very poor. The committee decided to meet with BUSA 111 instructors and CoB Department Heads to get ideas or proposals for improving critical thinking. Our goal this semester was to increase awareness to our faculty that critical thinking was not being emphasized in their courses, even though they were probably teaching it, and to improve student skills in critical thinking. Our belief is that although we teach critical thinking skills in 7 of the 14 core undergraduate courses (i.e., ACCT 252, BCIS 110, BLAW 316, BUSA 111, ECON 252, FIN 341, and MGT 309 as assessed in Fall 2010), we probably do not emphasize when critical thinking is being expected of students. This may be the result of instructors just not emphasizing to students that what they are doing is learning how to critically think. There was much discussion on this topic and the committee agreed that faculty should incorporate the following two items into their courses for the Fall 2011 semester:

1. A critical thinking process model that includes an assignment that accomplishes the following:
   a. Students are presented a class-related problem or issue. Students should identify a problem where a decision must be made.
   b. Students use terms and topics introduced in class to frame this problem or issue.
   c. Students develop an argument or basis for solving the problem or address the issue. Students should develop and present alternative courses of action to address the problem. Students should list “Pro’s” and “Con’s” of each alternative using terms and comments used in the course. Students should choose appropriate course of action from one of the alternatives.
   d. Students present the argument or solution cogently in class or in writing. Students should explain why the course of action was chosen.

2. A standardized critical thinking course objective into their syllabi that states the following: “Students will think critically.” Any critical thinking assignments for the Fall 2011 semester should be weighted to at least 5% of the course grade to increase student awareness in attaining this skill.

Finally, a faculty-led “Critical Thinking” Workshop was held on 15 April 2011 to discuss the improvement of critical thinking skills in our CoB curriculum. 15 faculty representing each of the CoB departments attended and brought course materials that could be adapted to teach critical thinking in their courses. There was very good dialogue on how to improve student learning in teaching critical thinking skills and in improving student learning in critical thinking.
5. **Legal and Ethical**: Students can recognize legal and ethical issues.

5a. **Students can recognize legal issues.** We did not assess this goal this past year as the assessment data indicates students met or exceeded CoB goals.

5b. **Students can recognize ethical issues.** Data collected by the AOL committee suggest that student learning was less than acceptable. The *Management Department* led an effort to revise the assessment instrument as Mgt 309 instructors believed that it did not uniformly cover Goal 5a performance criteria and the questions in the assessment were inappropriate as well (e.g., ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ questions do not allow for assessing comprehensive learning). The addition of BA 301, an ethics course, to our CoB curriculum also shows that the college is serious about improving student learning in meeting this goal. In Fall 2011, this will be offered as a special topics course, BA 490 *Corporate Responsibility and Ethics*.

The UG Curriculum Committee has also addressed these issues this past year:

*After committee discussion, the following motions were passed:*

Approved MGT 463 being deleted since the cross-listed course (ECON 456) has already been deleted.

Approved deleting MGT 332 as a prerequisite for MGT 451, 453 and 460.

Approved a requirement of “C” or better in FIN 341 for finance majors and minors.

Approved a requirement of a “C” or better in FIN 341 as a prerequisite for FIN 355, FIN 385 and FIN 406.

Approved the requirement that finance minors take at least 9 of the credit hours required for the minor in the CoB including at least 6 of those credit hours in the Finance Department.

Approved the requirement that finance majors in the banking option to take either ACCT 403 or ACCT 356.

Approved the requirement that students get a “C” or better in ACCT 301 for ACCT 302.

Approved the requirement that renumbered ACCT 452 to ACCT 351 to reposition the course before ACCT 451.

Approved the requirement that students get a “C” or better in ACCT 251 and ACCT 252 for ACCT 353.

Approved the requirement that students get a “C” or better in ACCT 252 for ACCT 403.

Approved the requirement that students get a “C” or better in ACCT 302 for ACCT 451.
Approved the requirement that deleted ACCT 452 from the catalog as it was being renumbered to ACCT 351 in the second proposal.

Approved the requirement that students get a “C” or better in ACCT 403 or consent of instructor for ACCT 455.

Approved the requirement that students get a “C” or better in ACCT 302 for ACCT 456.

Approved the requirement that students get a “C” or better in ACCT 302 for ACCT 457.

Approved the requirement to substitute a Finance elective course numbered 310 or higher for the upper-division Accounting course requirement.

Approved the requirement to eliminate the Banking Option for Finance majors (the Finance Department will still offer the Banking Minor.)

Approved the change through CoB faculty vote at Spring Convocation to no longer require business students to complete 50% or 64 credits outside the college. To accomplish this, the following changes were made to the course catalog: elimination of the 64 credit requirement under Requirements for Bachelor’s Degree and rewording of the statement below under General Electives.

“Students must complete additional credits to bring total degree credits to a minimum of 128 and upper division credits to 48, and must take an additional 6 general elective credits outside the College of Business (beyond those required to satisfy other requirements listed above), to a minimum of 64. The number of general elective credits varies by student.”

Reviewed a temporary, one-time only summer version (BA 490) and permanent version (BA 301) of the same course proposal. The committee decided to not ‘review for approval’ the BA 490 course yet given the uncertainty of summer class offerings. The committee approved the BA 301 course.

Approved the revised BCIS 485 course description.

Future UG curriculum actions for the 2011-2012 academic year:

1. The UG Curriculum Committee needs to continue to emphasize the “Academic Survival Kit” section in the CoB website to support student written and oral communication skills.

2. The UG Curriculum Committee needs to at least review student learning in CoB Goals 4a and 5a since we did not get to these goals this past year.

3. The UG Curriculum Committee needs to follow-up with faculty who are using critical thinking assignments in their Fall 2011 courses.