Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Report to Fall 2013 College Convocation

Our charges were to do the following:

- Evaluate the assessment data on critical thinking and writing collected by the AoL Committee during fall 2012 and make recommendations for curriculum changes.
- Address the recommendation of the AACSB peer review team concerning the addition of management specific objective to the BBA learning objectives.
- Address the recommendation of the spring convocation to increase the standards for business students to be eligible for upper division business classes.
- Consider changes to the undergraduate minor in business administration such as allowing students to select from the background knowledge for the MBA (ACCT 251/252, ECON 251, FIN 341, MKTG 303) or from the lower and upper division business core courses. We don’t know what the rationale was for the current structure which requires 9 credits in a single prefix (for a traditional business subject) and 9 additional credits from any business prefix.
- Ensure that minutes are distributed promptly to faculty and posted on the web.

The Committee met four times over the Spring Semester. Our May meeting did not make quorum. We did meet and with a quorum on February 11 and 26, March 11 and April 8, 2013. Our May meeting was intended to complete the writing outcomes assessment recommendation and make recommendation on the proposal to increase standards for admission to the upper division. I have called a committee meeting for Monday afternoon, and will include those in my verbal report and revise this written report for the record.

With regard to the specific recommendations of the AACSB peer review team, we recommend that the College adopt a very basic goal that complies with the AACSB’s guidelines. We recommend the following new Goal:

*Our graduates will have sound understanding of the basic business processes and the social environment in which they function.*

We have declined to pick and choose among their listed goals. It strikes us that the items on their list are comprehensive, and all are important. We found it difficult to reach consensus about an appropriate subset to evaluate. This difficulty leads to our recommendation about assessment.

We recommend that the Educational Testing Service’s written exam be used to assess this goal. It is a comprehensive examination that covers the basic business practices. We further recommend that the assessment take place in MGT 449 and that instructors in that class make the score a significant grade component. To cover the added costs, we recommend that the College Administration look into a course-specific fee for the class.
With regard to assessment, our students continue to fall far short of our goals in writing. Our goal is for 80% of our graduating seniors to meet or exceed our expectations. Currently, about half do. I am not a fan of doing a particular thing because we need to something, but we do need to do something. The writing pedagogues tell us that students learn to write by writing and getting feedback on their efforts.

Finally, data collected by Nate Whitten of the Advising Center show that the Council’s “Straw Proposal” for admission to upper division business courses is a good predictor of past student success. Like any predictor it is imperfect, but it is good at identifying students who are unlikely to succeed.

Respectfully submitted,

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