MBA – Report on Assessment Results  
NMSU College of Business – Spring, 2010

Goal 1a: Written Communication Skills:  
Students can write effectively

Specific Learning Objectives:
Grammar (Knowledge of writing conventions):
- Writing follows normal conventions of spelling and grammar thorough and has been carefully proofread.
- Appropriate conventions for style and format are used consistently.
- Sources documented thoroughly and competently.
Clarity and coherence:
- Sentences are structured and words are chosen to communicate ideas clearly.
- Sequencing of ideas within paragraphs and transitions between paragraphs are easy to follow.
Rhetorical choices:
- Focus, organization, style/tone, and content communicate clearly and effective.
- Writing follows all requirements for the assignment.

Assessment Instrument – For Goal 1a, students in ACCT 503 completed a memo written as part of a business plan project.
Instrument Development  Instructor developed the assignment and used the college rubric for assessment of writing skills. Each of the last 3 semesters the instructor has developed the written-memo assignments. The context for the assignment varied across semester. In Fall 2008 and Spring 2009, students reviewed a self-selected business plan from bplans.com and prepared a memo to the bank president reflecting a recommendation to loan money to the business. In Fall 2009, students reviewed a Standard & Poor’s Industry Survey. Students then identified industry trends that would affect the assigned company’s business plan and wrote a memo addressing areas of plan that would need to be modified and whether or not these modifications would affect lender’s interest in the company. The memo was worth 20 of the 90-point assignment and 20 of 600 possible points for the course.

In Spring, 2010, the instructor asked students to prepare an additional memo. The instructor also increased the point value of the memo to encourage more effort in completing the tasks. The students were given an opportunity to become prepared for the writing assessment by writing a memo earlier in the semester recommending the investment of a restaurant company. At the end of the semester, students reviewed a business plan, responded to questions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the plan, and then wrote a memo with the student’s decision regarding a loan to the company that prepared the business plan. The memo was worth 40 of the 120 point assignment and 40 of 600 possible points for the course.

Performance Standards – The AOL Committee uses the standard that at least 80% of students score in the meets or exceeds category on all the performance criteria relating to writing skills.
Assessment Results – The instructor and two Masters of Accountancy graduate assistants assessed the student memos. See Exhibit 1 for paper requirements. A rubric was used to assess each of the three specific learning objectives for each writing sample (See Exhibit 1). Scores ranged from 1 to 3: below expectations (1), meets expectations (2), exceeds expectations (3).

Exhibit 1. Writing Skills Assessment Results -- % meet or exceed expectations for Spring 2009, Fall 2009 and Spring 2010

MBA Writing Skills -- % meet/exceeds expectations
Spring and Fall, 2009; Spring 2010

Table 1. Writing Skills Assessment Results -- % meet or exceed expectations for Spring 2009, Fall 2009 and Spring 2010

| Goal 1a: WRITE -- % Meet/exceeds expectations |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                               | Spring 2009 (n=31) | Fall 2009 (n=73) | Spring 2010 (n=39) |
| Grammar                       | 94                | 75                | 82                |
| Clarity                       | 82                | 60                | 59                |
| Rhetoric                      | 85                | 75                | 69                |
All 39 students taking the course in ACCT 503 completed the assessment. Twelve students met face-to-face each week, while the remaining students completed to course online. Findings indicate the following % of students that met or exceeded expectations: grammar (82%), clarity (59%), and rhetoric (69%).

A comparison with the Spring 2009 assessment which involved the same population of students (majority taking course online), shows that students in Spring 2010 did not perform as well on clarity and rhetoric as Spring 2009 students. This could be due, in part, to the nature of the assignment.

A comparison with Fall 2009 shows student performance to be about the same. Although the instructor required an additional memo to be prepared early in the semester, this assignment appeared to have little impact on the student’s performance.

Low performance may be due, in part, by difficulties students have in selecting the right information to include in the communication. Many submissions were premature. An additional iteration to refine, condense and restate was appropriate. Perhaps using “scaffolding” as a way to build upon written assignments throughout the semester may be appropriate to improve the quality of student work.

**AOL Committee Recommendation**

Recommend using the same assignment each semester and providing additional resources about memo writing.

**Graduate Committee Recommendation**

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**Goal 1b: Oral Presentation Skills - ORAL**

- **Students will present effectively**

  - **Objective 1b:** Students can make a professional oral presentation. (ORAL)

Specific Learning Objectives:

- Demonstrate an adequate level of knowledge presenting information in a logical sequence.
- Present readable, professional slides at an appropriate level of detail emphasizing main points with no grammatical errors or misspellings.
- Project voice clearly, pronounce words correctly, maintain eye contact, and dressing appropriately for a business setting.

**Assessment Instrument** – For Goal 1b, students in BA590 made an oral presentation of their team’s paper to committee members in Spring, 2010.

**Instrument Development** – Members of the Graduate committee approved a rubric in Fall, 2008.

**Performance Standards** – The AOL Committee uses the standard that at least 80% of students score in the meets or exceeds category on all the performance criteria relating to oral communications.
Assessment Results – Committee members (course instructor and two college faculty) for each team assessed each team member's portion of the taped oral presentation. Oral presentations for 35 of the 37 students enrolled in the course were assessed. The committee members used a rubric to assess each of the performance criteria. Scores ranged from 1 to 3: below expectations (1), meets expectations (2), exceeds expectations (3).

Findings indicate that all student performance met or exceeded expectations: organization (91%), subject knowledge (89%), quality of slides (86%), mechanics (100%), eye contact (94%), elocution (100%), and attire (100%).

MBA Oral Presentation Skills --
Fall 2009 and Spring 2010

![Bar chart showing MBA Oral Presentation Skills for Fall 2009 and Spring 2010]

Table 1: M.B.A. Distribution for ORAL by semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MBA Oral Presentation</th>
<th>Fall 2009 (n=45)</th>
<th>Spring 2010 (n=35)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance Criteria</td>
<td>% meets or exceeds</td>
<td>% meets or exceeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Knowledge</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Slides</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye Contact</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elocution</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attire</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AOL Committee Recommendations – At this time, the AOL Committee does not recommend any changes to the assessment process.

Graduate Committee Recommendations – No action deemed necessary at this time.

Assessment coordinator comments. This learning goal has been assessed for 5 semesters. Problems with eye contact and elocution that occurred prior to Fall 2009 were resolved by not videotaping sessions prior to team presentation. I recommend reducing frequency of assessment to one time per year, given
that the process has been formalized and the most recent assessments indicate that students are performing at an appropriate level.

**Goal 2: Critical Thinking - THINK**

Students can think critically to solve problems

**Specific Learning Objectives:**
- Identify all relevant components and define problems regarding a business situation
- Appropriately apply business tools and concepts to any problems and related issues identified
- Use business knowledge to make appropriate decisions and draw relevant conclusions related to any problems and issues identified

**Assessment Instrument** – For Goal 2, students in MKT 503 completed a case analysis.

**Instrument Development** – Instructors developed the assignment and used the college rubric for assessment of critical thinking.

**Performance Standards** – The AOL Committee uses the standard that at least 80% of students score in the meets or exceeds category on all the performance criteria relating to critical thinking.

**Assessment Results** – The Marketing Department representative on the AOL performed the assessment. The instructor used a rubric to assess each of the three specific learning objectives for each student artifact (See below). Scores ranged from 1 to 3: below expectations (1), meets expectations (2), exceeds expectations (3).

The work 19 of 36 students in MKT 503 were assessed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance criteria</th>
<th>Fall, 2009 (n=27) (%) Meets/Exceeds</th>
<th>Spring, 2010 (n = 19) (%) Meets/Exceeds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Analyze situation</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Define problem</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Provide alternative</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Make decision</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings indicate that fewer than 80% of the students met expectations for all performance criteria. Student work shows a lack of effort. Many seemed to scan or skim the case and dumped words on the page just to have a tangible document to submit. Very few demonstrated critical thinking.

**AOL Committee Recommendations**

**Assessment Coordinator suggests the following:** To improve the reliability of the results, the AOL committee recommends that the course instructors develop a single assignment to be used every semester by all faculty teaching the course every. In addition, the same learning materials, assessment format, and comparable weighting of assignment for course grade needs to be developed.

**Graduate Committee Recommendations**

**Goal 3: Quantitative Analysis - QUANT**

Students can solve problems using quantitative information.

Specific Learning Objectives:
- Translate verbal or written assertions into appropriate mathematical expressions and can properly apply a method of quantitative analysis
- Accurately interpret quantitative data, provide complete analyses and logical interpretation
- Communicate results and recommendations with quantitative information in a coherent, logical manner.

**Assessment Instrument** — For Goal 3, students in FIN 503 completed an open-ended exam question. Students were asked to calculate an interest rate using the appropriate formula and provide an answer with support.

**Instrument Development** — Finance faculty developed the assignment and used the college rubric for assessment of quantitative skills. Assignment and rubric are shown below.

**Performance Standards** — The AOL Committee uses the standard that at least 80% of students score in the meets or exceeds category on all the performance criteria relating to quantitative analysis.

**Assessment Results** — Two finance faculty members performed the assessment. The instructors used a rubric to assess each of the three specific learning objectives for each student artifact (See below). Scores ranged from 1 to 3: below expectations (1), meets expectations (2), exceeds expectations (3).

The work of all 50 students (students located at 3 sites: Sandia (13), Santa Fe (19), Main (20)) enrolled in FIN 503 was assessed.
Tables
Table 1. Overall % of students meeting or exceeding expectations
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MBA Quantitative Skills</th>
<th>Sp 09 (n=32)</th>
<th>Fa 09 (n=64)</th>
<th>Sp 10 (n=52)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Translate</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. % of students meeting or exceeding expectations by location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MBA Quantitative Skills</th>
<th>Sandia (n=13)</th>
<th>Santa Fe (n=19)</th>
<th>Main (n=20)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Translate</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings indicate that student performance in Spring 2009 and 2010 is lower than student performance in Fall, 2009. Further analysis by site indicates that student performance at main campus contributed primarily to lower performance scores for translate and analyze performance criteria. Student performance at all three sites did not meet the 80% performance standard.

Some of the differences between Fall 2009 and Spring 2010 were caused by one instructor using different guidelines in preparing and assessing student. In the Spring 2010 semester, the instructor administered the assessment toward the end of the semester. The assessment was unannounced. Students were allowed to use notes and book but could not collaborate. Instructor reviewed material from FIN 241 and solved lots of problems in class and for homework but did not work the same problem in class. In Fall 2009, the same instructor solved the exact same assessment question in class. Students did well because they had their notes and access to the question.

Additional comments from instructor follow:
“I have taught FIN 503 and it is a rigorous course. A baby version of a math/stat course geared to brush up their background will help. They have pre-requisites but many years ago. Many have forgotten what they learnt. Also, one thing is “skill” and the other is “disposition”. The problem in closing the loop is tougher because it is their disposition that (I feel) needs to change. The teaching and the curriculum is fine in my opinion. They know they will not fail and they don’t care. I think the loop has to close by changing the student’s expectations about the requirements for quantitative analysis in the MBA program. I don’t think it is instruction or curriculum. There is an old saying “You can take a horse to a pond but you can’t make it drink.”
“I don’t discuss the question beforehand. It is a fin 341 type question. I have done plenty of examples in class for them to put it together. I can only say that they are not having some basic quantitative and critical thinking skills.”

AOL Committee Recommendation –
Assessment coordinator recommends that committee develop some guidelines that will emphasize the importance of consistent applications of instruction and assessment among course instructors and across semesters.
To improve the reliability of the results, the AOL committee recommends that the course instructors develop a single assignment to be used every semester by all faculty members teaching the course every. In addition, the same learning materials, assessment format, and comparable weighting of assignment for course grade needs to be developed.
Graduate Committee Recommendation –
Goal 4: Interpersonal Skills - INTERPER

Students can interact effectively with others in a team environment.

Specific Learning Objectives:
- Demonstrate professionalism in a team environment
- Demonstrate initiative when working with others
- Make effective contribution in a team environment

Assessment Instrument – For Goal 4, students in BA590 completed peer evaluations four times during the semester. Instructors also completed a peer evaluation on each student based on observations of team meeting with instructor.

Instrument Development – BA 590 faculty developed the assessment instrument in summer 2008.

Performance Standards – The AOL Committee uses the standard that at least 80% of students score in the meets or exceeds category on all the objectives relating to interpersonal skills.

Assessment Results – Four peer evaluation sheets were completed by 36 students [spring 2009], 42 students [fall 2009], and 37 students [spring 2010]. A sample of 19 student’s fourth evaluation was assessed using a peer evaluation sheet.

For purposes of assessing student performance, the average score received by each team member for each of the three attributes was calculated. Scores ranged from 1 to 3: below expectations (1), meets expectations (2), exceeds expectations (3). Students averaging a score of 5 exceeded expectations; a score of 4 to 4.9 met expectations, and below 4 were below expectations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MBA Interpersonal Skills</th>
<th>Fall 2009 (n=42)</th>
<th>Spring 2010 (n=19)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance Criteria</td>
<td>% meets or exceeds</td>
<td>% meets or exceeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The evaluations of a sample of 19 of the 42 student students in BA 590, spring of 2010, were assessed. Findings indicate that all student performance met or exceeded expectations: professionalism (95%), initiative (95%), and effective contribution to team (95%).

AOL Committee Recommendations – At this time, the AOL Committee does not recommend any changes to the assessment process.
The learning goal has been assessed three times in the past 2 years. Assessment coordinator recommends that we modify the assessment plan so that this learning goal is assessed once a year rather than every semester.
The assessment coordinator also believes that the current process does not accurately reflect the development of interpersonal skills given that the coordinator was a member of several committees in spring 2010 and saw that lack of adequate team interactions resulted in weaknesses in the project that were not reflected in the current process. Suggest a review of the process in 2012 after the overall assessment process is in place and bearing successful continuous improvements.

Graduate Committee Recommendations—

Goal 5a: Ethical Issues:
Students can comprehend ethical implications in business

Performance Criteria: Students can
- describe alternative ethical perspectives
- identify and explain relevant ethical issues within a business context
- identify the stakeholders affected by the decision
- propose alternative solutions
- explain why each alternative may or may not be appropriate

Assessment Instrument – For Objective 5b, students in MGT 503 read a case and completed a written assignment answering questions related to the case.
Instrument Development – Instructors in the management department developed the assignment and rubric for assessment of ethical implications

Performance Standards – The AOL Committee uses the standard that at least 80% of students score in the meets or exceeds category on all the performance criteria relating to ethics.

Assessment Results – The instructor scored the student papers using a rubric. Forty-two of the 44 students enrolled in MGT 503 provided papers for assessment. The figure below presents the distribution of ethical comprehension scores for the meets or exceeds category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MBA Goal 5A ETHICS -- Spring 2010 (n = 42)</th>
<th>Below expectations</th>
<th>Meets expectations</th>
<th>Exceeds expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Perspectives</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant Stakeholders</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propose alternatives</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain appropriateness</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This semester the ethics assessment was moved from ACCT 503 to MGT 503, so this is a pilot study for the assessment of MBA ethics learning goal. In previous assessment, students met the standard with respect to identifying stakeholders and writing a recommendation. However, students failed to meet the standard with respect to describing the dilemma, identifying the pertinent facts, providing alternative solutions and explaining the alternative solutions.

The Spring 2010 assessment shows that the 80% performance standard was not achieved for propose alternatives [65%] and explain appropriateness of alternatives [48%].

Instructor comments:
I think there are two main things that impacted the results, but in my opinion, the biggest is that the class was taught on-line. I posted the material in Blackboard and incorporated the material into an exam, but I am skeptical that people in the class really took the information seriously. In my 309 class, I think the assignment went over well because there was discussion involved. Another issue with 503, which I did not have in 309, was that several students commented that they thought the materials covering the different forms of ethics were poorly worded. Almost all the international students (which was a fair number) commented on this issue. In fact, a lot of the international students left several of the questions unanswered.

To be honest, another issue I had in general with that section of 503 was that the students tended to do poorly on all the exams. Even though the course was taught on-line, the exams were proctored. It would be an understatement to say the exam scores of the students who had proctored exams were significantly lower than those whose exams were not proctored in prior semesters. Noteworthy is that the ethics assessment material was assessed on a proctored exam.

AOL Committee Recommendations –

Graduate Committee Recommendations –
**Goal 5b (LEGAL)**

Students can comprehend legal implications in business.

Performance Criteria: Students can
- Identify and explain relevant legal issues within a business context
- Distinguish the various sides of a legal issue
- Thoroughly describe personal views on the legal

**Assessment Instrument** – For Objective 5b, students in BLAW 502 completed a written assignment.

**Instrument Development** – Instructors developed the assignment and used the college rubric for assessment of legal issues. Exhibit 1 includes the assignment.

**Performance Standards** – The AOL Committee uses the standard that at least 80% of students score in the meets or exceeds category on all the performance criteria relating to legal issues.

**Assessment Results** – Two BLAW 502 faculty teaching the course online (10 students) and face to face on Main Campus (39 students) assessed the student papers using a rubric.

The work of 47 of the 49 students in BLAW 502 completed the assignment in Fall 2009. Forty-four students enrolled in BLAW 502 completed the assignment in Spring 2010.

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**MBA -- Legal Issues -- Comparison**

% meet/exceed expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Identify</th>
<th>Discuss</th>
<th>Own view</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings for the spring 2010 assessment indicate that 86% of students met/exceeded expectations on identifying a legal issue and 100% of students could discuss different sides of the issues and provide a solid personal perspective. A comparison of findings over 3 semesters shows consistent performance of this learning goal.

**AOL Committee Recommendations** – At this time, the AOL Committee does not recommend any changes to the assessment process.

*Assessment coordinator suggests that we reduce frequency of assessment. Rather than assessment each semester, I recommend assessment once every two or three semesters.*

**Graduate Committee Recommendations** --