Committee Members:
Jim Bishop; Kathy Brook (ex officio); Doug Gegax; Shaun McQuitty; Greg Roth (Chair); and Jim Shannon

Executive Summary

The Assurance of Learning Committee’s responsibility is to oversee assessment activities related to AACSB assessment requirements for our undergraduate (BA and BBA) degrees. In prior years the committee identified a large set of potential assessment goals that were thought to meet with AACSB approval. Primarily in the 2005-2006 academic year committee members worked with the functional areas of their respective departments to select the specific goal that each functional area would assess. Committee members also worked with their respective functional areas to help design the assessment tools that each functional area would use.

Primarily in the 2006-2007 academic year functional areas began assessing student progress to determine whether assessment goals were being met. The exception to these generalizations is that, prior to the 2006-2007 academic year, Sherry Mills conducted writing assessment and integration assessment in BUSA 365. This served as the contribution from the accounting functional area.

Late in the spring 2007 semester, the committee members met to update each other on the assessment activities of their functional areas. The committee members agreed that each functional area was making appropriate progress in implementing and improving their assessment activities. The committee reviews the data collection and feedback into curriculum changes, but it does not store data collected. The committee assumes that each department is responsible for storing that department’s data, assessment results, and curriculum change decisions.

Each committee member has provided a detailed update for the functional area(s) in his department. These updates appear after the executive summary.

Challenges for future assessment:
Several functional areas are reporting a failure in goal achievement, that is, several functional areas’ stated standards are not being met.

In general, the functional areas need to show more progress in demonstrating that assessment data analysis has led to curriculum changes.

The loss of BUSA 365 means that the accounting functional area will need to find a new way to participate in AACSB assessment activities.

Finance Area Update-Greg Roth

(a) What learning objectives have been assessed by your department?
Goal 5.4: Students can apply financial decision making skills to solving problems.

(b) What is the assessment tool being used?
Instructors teaching FIN 341 are giving an assessment quiz that covers 6 key topics with two questions per topic for a total of 12 questions.

(c) Briefly, how was this assessment tool developed (and who’s input was included)?
A survey was taken, asking all full-time finance instructors who teach or have recently taught FIN 341 which main finance topics they cover in FIN 341. There were six topics that all instructors covered. Each of the six continuing full-time members of the finance faculty (that is, everybody but Barry Smith) then wrote 2 questions to be included in the assessment quiz. The end product is a 12-question assessment quiz that includes two questions from each of the six “most important topics.” After a series of elections, the finance faculty has also voted to approve many details regarding when and how the assessment tool will be administered.

(d) What data have your department collected?

The quiz was given by all FIN 341 instructors in all sections of FIN 341 during the fall 2006 semester. The finance faculty has committed to fall assessment and at least some faculty are conducting assessment this spring 2007 semester.

(e) What are the results of your department’s data collection?

The fall 2006 assessment quiz scores were very low. The finance area's stated objective was that 80% of students would score 70% or better. (The effective standard is a 75% correct score on a 12 question quiz.) Only 10% of students scored better than 70% on the quiz. Students are not meeting the standard.

(f) For purposes of determining whether the learning objective is being met, what is the standard that your department is using for each learning objective being assessed? (Example: A standard for an assessment quiz might be that 80% of students solve 70% or more of the questions correctly.)

(g) Are students passing the standard, indicating that the learning objective is being met?

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(h) What changes, if any, have been made in response to the data collected and analyzed?

Preliminary discussions among finance faculty members suggest the following possibilities for the low scores: (1) Students did not have sufficient motivation to perform well on the quiz, because the quiz contributed very little to students' final grades; (2) Students in many cases were given the quiz long after certain topics were covered (without the benefit of a review) and may have forgotten what they learned; (3) Students may not have been given sufficient time to complete the quiz; (4) Certain questions may have been inappropriate, because they reflected primarily a particular instructor's emphasis of, or approach to, a key topic; (5) Students perhaps should have been given the formula sheets in advance of the quiz, so they could familiarize themselves with the variety of formulas available; and (6) Instructors in some cases may not have given sufficient emphasis in class to certain topics.

Initially, the faculty is focusing on perceived problems of quiz implementation. Specifically, during this spring 2007 semester, Ben Taylor and Al Berryman are giving the quiz after making the following changes. First, they are raising the weight of the quiz in determining students' final grades. Second, they are giving students more time to complete the quiz. Third, they will pass out the quiz formula sheets earlier in the semester, so that students have more time to familiarize themselves with this tool.

Conclusion: If assessment scores do not improve dramatically and soon, the finance faculty will make further changes to the quiz, the implementation of the quiz, and/or to the emphasis of topics in class.

Business Law Area Update-Greg Roth

(a) What learning objectives have been assessed by your department?

Goal 6.2: Students can recognize legal problems.

(b) What is the assessment tool being used?
In the fall of 2006, instructors teaching BLAW 316 gave students an assessment exam that had 20 “objective” questions designed to test knowledge of specific legal issues. Each BLAW 316 instructor created his/her own exam by drawing from a pool of 60-70 questions.

(c) Briefly, how was this assessment tool developed (and who’s input was included)?

The Business Law faculty agreed upon the list of business topics that were generally covered in the required “Legal Environment of Business” course, and agreed to create a pool of objective questions which could be used in the Business Law 316 classes for assessment purposes. Each instructor selected 20 questions from the pool for assessment in their classes and administered their assessment instrument to their own classes during exam week.

(d) What data have your department collected?

The exam was given by all BLAW 316 instructors in all sections of BLAW 316 during the fall 2006 semester.

(e) What are the results of your department’s data collection?

The fall 2006 assessment quiz scores were somewhat low. The BLAW area’s stated objective was that 80% of students would score 70% or better. Only 71% of students scored better than 70% on the quiz. Students are not meeting the standard.

(f) For purposes of determining whether the learning objective is being met, what is the standard that your department is using for each learning objective being assessed? (Example: A standard for an assessment quiz might be that 80% of students solve 70% or more of the questions correctly.)

(g) Are students passing the standard, indicating that the learning objective is being met?

The fall 2006 assessment quiz scores were somewhat low. The BLAW area’s stated objective was that 80% of students would score 70% or better. Only 71% of students scored better than 70% on the quiz. Students are not meeting the standard.

(h) What changes, if any, have been made in response to the data collected and analyzed?

The BLAW faculty identified the following possible reasons for the somewhat low test scores: (1) questions given too far from time material was covered & without review; (2) unrealistic expectations in level of difficulty of questions; (3) failure to have assessment "count" in grade to a significant extent may have caused lack of motivation, (4) questions that were not directly related to the learning outcome - specifically questions expected students to correctly solve legal problems rather than merely recognize them.

The BLAW faculty concluded that the test questions were not the best way of directly assessing the stated learning objective that “students can recognize legal problems.”

Responding to this perceived weakness in the original assessment tool, the BLAW faculty has completely revamped its assessment approach. The BLAW faculty will conduct assessment this fall in BLAW 316 with a new tool that each BLAW faculty member has reviewed and approved. The BLAW faculty will use a project developed by Professor Liz Ellis, called the Business Law Scrapbook Project.

This project requires students to select 5 legal topics from a list of 19 covered in BLAW 316. Students must then find and read different articles relating to each of the 5 legal topics. Students must use information from the articles to answer standard questions relating to each the legal topic. The BLAW faculty believes that this process of identifying, reading, and writing about these 19 legal topics is a more direct assessment of students’ abilities to recognize legal issues.

Management Area Update-Jim Bishop

(a) What learning objectives have been assessed by your department?

No.2.2 Students demonstrate an adequate understanding of and appreciation for diversity including gender, age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background.
(b) What is the assessment tool being used?

The management department collected a pool of 50 multiple choice diversity questions from the management faculty.

(c) Briefly, how was this assessment tool developed (and who’s input was included)?

Each instructor then gave quizzes to their Mgt 309 students regarding diversity in the Spring 2007 semester from the agreed pool of questions. The diversity quizzes counted toward the students’ grades. Grading of the quizzes was done by each of the instructors.

The management department agreed that a grade of 70% correct answers for 80% of the students would be considered as satisfying the goal.

(d) What data have your department collected?

We collected scores on the diversity quizzes.

(e) What are the results of your department’s data collection?

Of 119 students taking the quiz, 80 met the criteria of answering 70% of the questions correctly for a passing percentage of 67.23%

(f) For purposes of determining whether the learning objective is being met, what is the standard that your department is using for each learning objective being assessed? (Example: A standard for an assessment quiz might be that 80% of students solve 70% or more of the questions correctly.)

Our objective was for 80% of the students to answer 70% or more of the questions correctly.

(g) Are students passing the standard, indicating that the learning objective is being met?

No, 67.23% of the students were able to answer 70% (or more) of the questions correctly.

(h) What changes, if any, have been made in response to the data collected and analyzed?

The faculty determined that in class exercises may be a better way to help students learn about diversity.

IS Area Update-Jim Shannon

a) What learning objectives have been assessed by your department?

Goal 4.0: Students are effective users of information technology.

b) What is the assessment tool being used?

Assessment is based on graded IS projects in BCIS 338 (a required course for all non-IS business majors). Students must use information technology effectively to successfully complete the projects.

c) Briefly, how was this assessment tool developed (and who’s input was included)?

The assessment tool is embedded in the normal assessment for BCIS 338. Input for the assessment came from the IS faculty and the department head.
d) What data have your department collected?

Data was collected for all sections of BCIS 338 for the Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer Session I 2007 semesters. Students overall average grades on the IS projects were used for the assessment.

e) What are the results of your department’s data collection?

Overall results for each semester are shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Grade Range (%)</th>
<th>FA 2007</th>
<th>SP 2007</th>
<th>SSI 2007</th>
<th>Total All Semesters</th>
<th>Percent All Semesters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;= 90</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>48.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;= 80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>65.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;= 70</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>77.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;= 60</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>86.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;= 0</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

f) For purposes of determining whether the learning objective is being met, what is the standard that your department is using for each learning objective being assessed? (Example: A standard for an assessment quiz might be that 80% of students solve 70% or more of the questions correctly.)

Seventy percent of the students will average 70% or more on the IS projects.

g) Are students passing the standard, indicating that the learning objective is being met?

Yes, overall, 77.20% of the students averaged 70% or more on the projects.

h) What changes, if any, have been made in response to the data collected and analyzed?

No changes.

E-Stat Area Update-Doug Gegax

(a) What learning objectives have been assessed by your department?

Outcome of Assessment for Goal 5.2: Students can solve problems using statistical data analysis.

(b) What is the assessment tool being used?

The one business statistics course taught in the college, EST 251, uses several questions from the final exam regarding hypothesis testing, confidence intervals, and regression to do assessment. These questions are specifically NOT multiple choice or true/false type questions, but are “worked solutions.”

(c) Briefly, how was this assessment tool developed (and who’s input was included)?

An ad hoc committee of three faculty members from the EST program developed the tool and presented it for approval to the department head.

(d) What data have your department collected?

The final exam has been given and relevant data tallied in Fall 2006 and Spring 2007.

(e) What are the results of your department’s data collection?
Fall 2006
Among all students taking the exam: 23% scored 75% or better (31 students)
Among students passing the course with a C or better: 39% scored 75% or better (18 students)

(Note that as this is a new tool, the exam layout was changed in the spring semester to better facilitate evaluation of student ability in these specific areas.)

Spring 2007
Among all students taking the exam: 48% scored 75% or better (31 students)
Among students passing the course with a C or better: 71% scored 75% or better (21 students)

(f) For purposes of determining whether the learning objective is being met, what is the standard that your department is using for each learning objective being assessed?

70% of students score 75% or better

(g) Are students passing the standard, indicating that the learning objective is being met?

No.

(h) What changes, if any, have been made in response to the data collected and analyzed?

The faculty will discuss this issue at a future meeting. Discussions between the course teaching assistants and the instructor indicate that students are not taking the time to come to office hours despite frequent in-class encouragement to do so. The impact of students’ final exam scores on their final grades are counterbalanced by less comprehensive mid-term exams, quizzes, and homework scores, and may lead to less emphasis on preparing for the comprehensive final exam. Because regression is covered at the end of the semester after the last mid-term is given, it is a substantial component of the evaluation questions on the final exam, and hypothesis testing is evaluated in a regression context which is substantially more difficult, thus leading to lower scores than if hypothesis testing was evaluated in the context of testing a population mean value. Finally, these scores are not curved, whereas the overall final exam score was curved five points in the spring semester, in part to help compensate for the difficulty in testing in a regression context.

Economics Area Update-Doug Gegax

(a) What learning objectives have been assessed by your department?

Goal 5.1: Students can apply develop an analytical and systematic approach to solving problems.

(b) What is the assessment tool being used?

Instructors teaching ECON 304 are giving a 71-question multiple-choice quiz

(c) Briefly, how was this assessment tool developed (and who’s input was included)?

The entire economics faculty agreed that this would be a good first pass at assessment. The department agreed to discuss and evaluate the effectiveness of this instrument during the first economics faculty meeting in the fall. The department reserves the right to change the assessment tool if it is deemed advisable to do so.

(d) What data has your department collected?

The quiz was given in the two sections of ECON 304 during the spring 2007 semester. The non-business students were eliminated from the data.
What are the results of your department’s data collection?

87% of the 71 students scored 70% or better.

For purposes of determining whether the learning objective is being met, what is the standard that your department is using for each learning objective being assessed?

80% of students solve 70% or more of the questions correctly.

Are students passing the standard, indicating that the learning objective is being met?

Yes, like I said, 87% of the 71 students scored 70% or better.

What changes, if any, have been made in response to the data collected and analyzed?

The assessment tool will be discussed in the first department of economics meeting in the fall. There is some feeling that the questions may be too detailed and that most of the information required to answer the test questions will be forgotten soon after the class ends. Along this line of thought, some feel that it might be better to try and identify skills that tend to stick with the college graduate and distinguish the graduate from a person who does not go to college. For example, we could change our objective to something like: “Students can identify an economic policy issue when they are exposed to one through the T.V., newspaper, the President’s State of the Union Address” or some such thing. If we move to this objective, we might utilize vignettes similar to what is currently used by the marketing department in their assessment tools.

Marketing Area Update-Shaun McQuitty

What learning objectives have been assessed by your department?

Goal 6.1: Students can recognize ethical problems (under Goal 6: Students have an understanding of ethical decision-making.)

What is the assessment tool being used?

Marketing majors in MKTG 489 (the marketing capstone course) were given an exam that contained 10 scenarios concerning business ethics (randomly selected from a question database containing 50 scenarios). Students were asked to read the scenarios one at a time, and then answer a question addressing whether the scenario required an ethical decision or not. The ability to correctly discriminate between scenarios that did or did not require an ethical decision is taken as evidence that the students understand business ethics.

Briefly, how was this assessment tool developed (and who’s input was included)?

The assessment tool was developed by Professor Michael Hyman, who is our resident expert in ethics and measurement of ethics. Once Mike created the assessment tool, it was distributed to the other members of the marketing department for evaluation and subsequently was accepted by the department.

What data have your department collected?

The assessment tool was used by MKTG 489 students in the Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 semesters.

What are the results of your department’s data collection?

In Fall 2006 90 students took the test and the mean score was 7.66 out of 10, i.e., students correctly recognized whether or not the scenario constituted an ethical dilemma 77% of the time. 73/90 (81.1%)
students obtained a score of 7 or more out of 10. In Spring 2007 55 students took the test and the mean score was 8.06 out of 10. 50/55 (90.9%) students obtained a score of 7 or more out of 10.

(f) For purposes of determining whether the learning objective is being met, what is the standard that your department is using for each learning objective being assessed?

80% of students correctly categorize seven or more of the scenarios as involving an ethical dilemma or not.

(g) Are students passing the standard, indicating that the learning objective is being met?

Yes. Over the last two semesters, 84.8% of the students who took the test correctly categorize seven or more of the scenarios (123/145).

(h) What changes, if any, have been made in response to the data collected and analyzed?

(No response was provided to this question.)

Accounting Area Update-Jim Shannon

(a) What learning objectives have been assessed by your department?

Students will write effectively

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.

(b) What is the assessment tool being used?

Student writings from executive summary, target market identification, and facility location descriptions of the final stage of the Fall, 2005 business plan project.

(c) Briefly, how was this assessment tool developed (and who’s input was included)?

The assignment was designed as part of the BUSA 365 team project.

(d) What data have your department collected?

Assessed 93 writing samples from 31 teams prepared by different individuals within the teams. (Total class size = 225 students; sample 41.3% of total (93/225)).

Two faculty and two graduate assistants assessed the writing samples. Each sample was assessed by at least one faculty member. All writing samples were assessed twice. Interrater reliability ranged from 88% to 96%.
Assessors used a rubric to assess each of the three specific learning objectives for each writing sample. Scores ranged from 4 to 1: accomplished (4), competent (3), developing (2), and beginning (1). A score of 3 or 4 was considered acceptable.

(e) What are the results of your department’s data collection?

A comparison of the goal of 80% of student writing being competent or accomplished (Score of 3 or 4) to the assessment results indicates that students did not meet the goals except in the areas of knowledge of conventions and clarity and coherence for the student writing on the operations portion of the project.

Table 1. Percentage of Writing Samples Scoring Competent or Accomplished

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Conventions</th>
<th>Clarity_coherence</th>
<th>Rhetoric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment results</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(f) For purposes of determining whether the learning objective is being met, what is the standard that your department is using for each learning objective being assessed? (Example: A standard for an assessment quiz might be that 80% of students solve 70% or more of the questions correctly.)

80% of the student writing will be competent or accomplished.

(g) Are students passing the standard, indicating that the learning objective is being met?

As shown in table 1, the goal was achieved marginally.

Analysis of Assessment Results:
Conventions: Students often do not proofread their work before submission. In the marketing component, many students did not adequately document sources of information. Overall, students did a fair job following normal conventions of spelling and grammar.
Clarity and coherence: In the executive summary, students had difficulty condensing ten to twenty pages of information into 1 single-spaced summary page. In the marketing section, ideas tended not to flow smoothly.
Rhetoric: In the executive summary, instructions provided a list of critical information in no particular order for the students to consider. However, rather than designing a summary tailored to their project, some presented information in the order listed in the instructions. In the marketing and operations sections, students lacked focus in defining their target markets and/or did not address all of the requirements for the assignment.

(h) What changes, if any, have been made in response to the data collected and analyzed?

To improve overall writing performance, the writing rubric will be provided to the students and more weighting of the final stage project grade will be placed on writing. To improve clarity, coherence and rhetoric, individual and team assignments related to specific tasks and the executive summary for the team project will be submitted in a preliminary stage to be graded prior to final submission, so that students will receive feedback to improve writing, focus, organization and completeness of their project.

Plans for next assessment of writing skills competency
An assessment of the Fall, 2007 submissions will be performed in Spring, 2008.
Recommendations: **Results of this assessment indicate that additional writing assignments and assessments need to be performed in student’s major areas during the junior and senior year. These results can be compared to this assessment to see if student writing improves.**

Please note that after Fall, 2007 BUSA 365 will no longer be offered. Accounting had taken the responsibility for assessing writing skills by using student artifacts from this course. ACCT 251 and 252 do not have writing assignments, so the assessment of writing skills will have to be performed in another course, e.g. Marketing 303 or Management 309 for example. Accounting will identify another learning outcome for assessment to support the college’s efforts.