

**Report of the Ad hoc Undergraduate Curriculum  
Taskforce and FCBE Assurance of Learning “Closing  
the Loop” Committee: Bachelors of Business  
Administration Degree Program**

**Fogelman College of Business & Economics  
University of Memphis**

**Committee Members:**

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**Report Submitted September 2009**

## **Introduction**

A faculty member from each department was nominated by their department chair to participate on the "Ad Hoc Undergraduate Curriculum Review Committee" during the Fall 2008 term..

Members of this committee included Emin Babakus (MSCM), P. K. Jain (FIR) Kimberlee Keef (MGMT), David Kemme (ECON), Bill Kettinger (MIS), David Spiceland (ACCT), Mercedes Langford (Undergraduate Advising) and Terry Umbreit (HPRM). Also participating on this committee were two representatives from the College standing Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, Judy Brown (MIS) and Jim Lukawitz (ACCT).

For the most part this committee served as a self-managed team, with early coordination and facilitation provided by Carol Danehower (then Associate Dean) and Lloyd Brooks (Director of Assessment) and later by three named co-chairs Judy Brown, Bill Kettinger and Kimberlee Keef. This group convened during the Spring 2009 and continued it work into the Fall 2009 term to complete the review.

The Committee was asked by Dean Rajiv Grover to discuss and evaluate several aspects of the undergraduate curriculum (relevant points from his request will be discussed below), with a major charge to the committee being to "close the loop" with regard to Assurance of Learning Goals and Objectives set by the Fogelman College (FCBE) standing Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. These goals and objectives were set with input and participation from faculty from all FCBE departments during 2006-2008 and were assessed while using measures of student learning in Fall 2008 classes.

This report incorporates all its charges within the "close the loop" assessment process. This report is primarily based on data provided through the formal assessment process, but also integrates findings, conclusions, and recommendations based on anecdotal data from external stakeholders collected by Dean Grover and other FCBE faculty leaders as well as from the findings of external focus groups conducted by the University of Memphis.

## **General Charge to FCBE "Close the Loop" Committees**

1. Review the assessment rubrics carefully for the degree program to assure a thorough knowledge of the goals and objectives established by faculty for the degree program.
2. Review data analysis and graphic representation for each objective to determine the degree that reasonable expectations were met. State the

- reason for your finding. If not met, what is needed to increase the likelihood that the objective will be met during a subsequent assessment—delete the objective, revise the objective wording, add specific assignments in courses, change in prerequisites, suggest a support activity, and so forth?
3. Include an appropriate statement for each objective to reflect findings that support your review comments so that a third reader can understand your reasoning and intentions.
  4. Include specific review recommendations and/or comments for each learning goal for the rubric.
  5. After all assessment data for the degree program have been reviewed, the committee should develop a team report in narrative form to summarize findings and conclusions. Be specific and relate conclusions and recommendations to specific findings. Discuss the entire process with appropriate faculty in the college to assure input and that your recommendations represent faculty in the college.

The following general line of logic/heuristics was considered by the Task Force in assessing where objectives were met and/or required further action. The task force recognized that there has to be a degree of subjectivity in applying these heuristics.

1. At the FCBE we strive to have all our assessed students fall in the 7-9 (exemplary) range.
2. When assessed students fall below this Exemplary range (i.e., below 7) we recognize that there is need for modification in our efforts to move these students towards the Exemplary Range. The greater percentage of students outside the Exemplary range (e.g., higher than 25-30%) the greater the need for corrective action in our curriculum and/or remedial interventions/programs.
3. In addition to the percentage of assessed students outside the Exemplary range triggering improvement actions, the identification of a subset (e.g., 1-10%) of all assessed students falling in the fair range (1-3 range) may indicate the need for very targeted remedial interventions to address a small but problematic subset of the assessed students that may be slowing the progress of the remainder of students and/or consuming a large share of FCBE resources.

## **BBA Goals, Objectives, Assessment Findings and Conclusions**

The following goals and objectives were adopted by the FCBE Undergraduate Curriculum Committee in 2006. Student learning related to each of these goals was assessed in Fall 2008. Findings were examined and conclusions developed by the Ad Hoc Undergraduate Curriculum Review Task Force.

### **Goal 1. Students will be effective communicators.**

**Objective 1.1.** Develop a clear and concise topic statement of the issues to be addressed.

- **Mean.** 6.63
- **Findings.** This objective was met by 76% of the class at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) and marginally satisfied by 23% who were rated good (scores 4-6) and 1% rated fair (score 3). Overall this objective was met but there is room for improvement with about 24% of the class.

**Objective 1.2.** Explain the approach taken to evaluate an issue relating to a business topic.

- Mean. 7.03.
- **Findings.** This objective was met by 70% of the class at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) and marginally satisfied by 29% who were rated good (scores 4-6) and 1% who were rated fair (score 3). Overall this objective was met but there is room for improvement with about 30% of the class.

**Objective 1.3.** Summarize the results of the analysis of an issue in a clear set of conclusions.

- **Mean.** 6.64
- **Findings.** This objective was met by 71% of the class at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) and marginally satisfied by 29% who were rated good (scores 4-6). Overall this objective was met.

**Objective 1.4.** Present the topic in a professional manner.

- **Mean.** 6.24
- **Findings.** This objective was met by 70% of the class at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) and marginally satisfied by 25% were rated good (scores 4-6) and by 5% who were rated fair (score 3). While this objective was met it had the highest percentage of fair students. About 30% were in the range possibly targeted for further improvement. The need for this improvement was further validated through additional evidence collected in University run focus groups with the Memphis business communities

and form conversations with Dean Grover based on his discussions with the Memphis Business Community

**Objective 1.5.** Synthesize and report written and oral conclusions in a rational, persuasive manner.

- **Mean.** 7.18.
- **Findings.** This objective was met by 78% of the class at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) and marginally satisfied by 21% were rated good (scores 4-6) and 1% fair (score 3). This objective was met with about 22% were in the range targeted for further improvement.

**Objective 1.6.** Create an effectively written or oral report using appropriate analytic tools and presentation software (e.g., SPSS, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint).

- **Mean.** 7.49.
- **Findings.** This objective was met by 90% of the class at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) and 9% who were rated good (scores 4-6) and 1% who were rated fair (score 3).

### **Goal 1 Conclusions:**

Based on an overall assessment of the six objectives it can be said that approximately 70 – 75 percent of our students are reasonably successful in communicating effectively. However, roughly 25-30 percent still shows significant areas for improvement. Most notably the objective concerning presenting in a professional manner was highlighted as needing attention with 30% in the good to fair range and particularly noteworthy was the 5% who were rated fair. This result correlates with the SPARKS-BBER focus group Number Six (made up almost exclusively of business focus group members) that identified lack of professional manner as a key deficiency in the University of Memphis undergraduate student. For example it was stated by many employers concerning University of Memphis students that, "their personal appearance was not acceptable for an interview, they were not dressed professionally, and they were not prepared." While they possessed reasonable "...technical and written communication skills..." students lacked verbal communication skills and business manners." In addition, conversations conveyed through FCBE Dean Rajiv Grover suggested the need for improved communication and confidence in professional interactions between students and the Memphis business community.

## **Goal 2. Students will be critical thinkers.**

**Objective 2.1.** Identify and summarize the important aspects of an issue and then determine relationships that are integral to analysis of the problem.

**Mean.** 6.54

**Findings.** Sixty five percent of the students performed in the 7-9 range, while 36% were below the exemplary range. This finding reveals that students are having some difficulty and corrective actions are needed. More classroom effort on helping students summarize important aspects of problems, cases and projects should help overcome the deficiency

**Objective 2.2.** Present, assess, and analyze appropriate supporting data/evidence relating to the problem or issue.

**Mean.** 6.44.

**Findings.** This objective recorded the lowest result with only sixty three percent of students achieving the exemplary level. Thirty seven percent (37%) of the students fell in the 2-6 range. A more than acceptable number of students are not demonstrating the ability to evaluate and analyze important supporting data/evidence when dealing with a problem or issue. As future business professionals and project team members assessed students need to be able to collect, access, analyze and present. Additional corrective action is required to improve these critical thinking skills.

**Objective 2.3.** Identify and assess conclusions, implications, and consequences that support decision making.

**Mean.** 6.93

**Findings.** This objective was met with students performing the highest on this objective with seventy four percent falling in the 7-9 range compared to twenty six percent in the 4-6 range. The results indicate students can perform this objective satisfactory. However, improvement in other areas of critical thinking should impact positively on this objective.

**Objective 2.4.** Identify the problem and then formulate a summary.

**Mean.** 6.85

**Findings.** While seventy-two percent of the students meet the exemplary standard, continued improvement is necessary as identifying the problem and formulating a summary is a central component of critical thinking. Continued emphasis on this aspect of critical thinking should help students meet the assessment goal.

**Objective 2.5.** Identify other perspectives in the problem that are important to determination of the solution.

**Mean.** 6.56

**Findings.** This objective did not meet the exemplary standard as less than 70 percent of the students reached the acceptable range. Students ability to identify other perspectives in a problem situation is another important aspect of critical thinking that students comprehending the material. Students need to be able to work individually and in project teams to uncover diverse perspective and less than obvious data and trends. The assessment clearly points out student deficiency in this area. Corrective action is required.

## **Goal 2: Conclusions.**

Overall the assessment indicates that students are not becoming critical thinkers to the level acceptable to the College. While some aspects of critical thinking are better than others, the desired performance level is not being achieved. Students are having difficulty identifying important aspects of an issue; presenting and analyzing supporting evidence; and clearly identifying other perspectives in the problem. In order to become competent critical thinkers, student must understand and develop skills in all of the objectives with particular improvement efforts directed to object 1, 2 and 5. Corrective action is required.

## **Goal 3. Students will be knowledgeable about ethical factors in the business environment.**

**Objective 3.1:** Identify a dilemma relating to a potentially unethical behavior.

**Mean 7.28**

**Findings:** Overall this objective was met with 81% of the class at the exemplary level (scores 7-9). However, with 19% at the good level (scores 4-6) there is still room for improvement. Many corporate problems can be attributed to situations where the participant is unaware that his or her behavior is unethical. Thus, continued focus on this objective is important.

**Objective 3.2:** Formulate stakeholders that are affected by a potentially unethical behavior.

**Mean 7.72**

**Findings:** This objective was met by 93% of the class at the exemplary level (scores 7-9) and was met by 6% at the good level (scores 4-6) and was met by 1% at the fair level (scores 2). This objective had 1% students assessed at the lowest level which would indicate a need for targeted identification and remedial action. Moreover, at entry level positions participants need to develop their own sense of good ethics and only later they will need to evaluate the effects on other stakeholders.

**Objective 3:** Analyze alternatives and identify consequences that result from unethical behavior.

**Mean 7.57**

**Findings:** This objective was met by 89% of the class at the exemplary level (scores 7-9) and was met by 11% at the good level (scores 5-6). There is room for improvement for 11% of the class. Perhaps students need to be exposed a bit more to the sensational stories about consequential of unethical behavior we see in the news all the time.

**Objective 4:** Select an appropriate course of action in order to avoid unethical behavior.

**Mean 8.06**

**Findings:** This objective was met by 100% of the students at the exemplary level (scores 7-9). It appears this objective is being met in this class. The high mean also indicates that the objective is being met. Action is more impactful than analysis and so this finding is very reassuring.

**Objective 5:** Demonstrate an understanding of major ethical concerns.

**Mean 7.26**

**Findings:** This objective was met by 80% of the students at the exemplary level (score 7-9) and was met by 20% at the good level (scores 5-6). There is room for improvement for 20% of the class. This objective had the lowest mean also indicating need for improvement.

### **Goal 3: Conclusions.**

This goal was met with about 89% of our students being knowledgeable about ethical factors in the business environment. However, since this goal is critical in building future business leaders, there is still some room for targeted improvement among some students, especially in the areas of identifying ethical dilemmas and understanding consequences which arise from unethical behavior.

### **Goal 4. Students will be knowledgeable about the global environment of business.**

**Objective 4.1.** Demonstrate an awareness of the economic, social, and cultural environments within which international businesses operate.

**Mean.** 6.95.

**Findings.** Sixty nine percent (69%) of the students assessed performed "exemplary" (7-9 range), while the performance of 31% was "good" (4-6 range). These results indicate that students are generally aware of the



international economic, social and cultural environments of business, but there is room for improvement

**Objective 4.2.** Demonstrate an awareness of the political and technological environments within which international businesses operate.

**Mean.** 7.30.

**Findings.** The overwhelming majority of the students assessed (85%) showed "exemplary" level (7-9 range) of awareness of the political and technological environments within which international businesses operate. Those who performed "good" (4-6 range) constituted 14% of the students assessed. These results suggest that students have mastered this objective.

**Objective 4.3.** Demonstrate an awareness of the legal, institutional and financial types of international transactions that are components of global business operations.

**Mean.** 7.05.

**Findings.** This objective was not met with only 64% percent of the students assessed performed "exemplary" (7-9 range), while the performance of 36% fell in the 4-6 range. There is clearly room for improvement since more than one-third of the students show less than exemplary awareness levels of legal, institutional and financial types of international transactions.

**Objective 4.4.** Demonstrate awareness about how contemporary international events influence global business.

**Mean.** 6.98

**Findings.** Almost three fourth of our students assessed (74%) showed "exemplary" (7-9 range) levels of awareness regarding how contemporary international events influence global business. The awareness level of the rest of the students assessed (26%) was "good" (4-6 range). These results indicate that the objective was met.

**Objective 4.5.** Demonstrate an understanding about basic domestic, international, and host country laws and regulations regarding human rights and other labor related issues.

**Mean.** 6.51.

**Findings.** This objective was clearly not met. A comparative view of the average assessment scores shows only 56% of the students scoring in the exemplary level (7-9) with 43% of the students performing in the(4-6 range) and 1% performing "fair" (1-3 range). There appears to be considerable room for improvement since one-sixth of the students scored in the lower half of the assessment scale.

## **Goal 4: Conclusions.**

The assessment results collectively indicate that we have partially achieved Goal 4. The results also indicate that there are considerable opportunities for improvement in several areas, including increased awareness of domestic and international laws and regulations regarding human rights and labor laws, higher levels of awareness of the economic, social and cultural environments of businesses, and increased awareness of how international events may affect any business at any corner of the globe.

## **Goal 5. Students will be proficient users of business presentation and analysis technology.**

**Objective 5.1.** Demonstrate analytical skills and technological expertise while developing and presenting business information.

**Mean.** 6.63

**Findings.** This objective was not met with only 63% demonstrating exemplary (7-9 score) analytical skills and technological expertise while developing and presenting business information; 2% demonstrated less than "good" ability. This demonstrates room for improvement.

**Objective 5.2.** Demonstrate knowledge of computer hardware and software, networks, databases, the internet, and electronic commerce.

**Mean.** 4.71

**Findings.** This objective was clearly not met with only 59% demonstrating exemplary (7-9 score) knowledge of computer hardware and software, networks, databases, the internet and e-commerce. In addition, a significant segment (17%) demonstrated less than good knowledge. Some of this lower performance might be in part explained by the fact that at the time this measurement was taken some of the students were freshmen who had not had a course where they would have had any initial exposure to this material. However, this fact does not negate the clear need to make improvements in this area. The enhanced coverage of this material should be more extensively incorporated into MIS 2749.

**Objective 5.3.** Utilize internet technology to perform queries and searches locate relevant and accurate information.

**Mean.** 7.54

**Findings.** This objective was met with a large majority (86%) of the students assessed demonstrated an exemplary (7-9 score) ability to utilize

internet technology and the remaining students demonstrated a "good" ability.

**Objective 5.4.** Create substantial and/or multiple presentations using text, graphics, and animation.

**Mean.** 7.69

**Findings.** This objective was met with (90%) of the assessed students demonstrating proficiency in creating presentations using text, graphics, and animation.

**Objective 5.5.** Use computer software tools to organize data for analysis to solve business problems.

**Mean.** 5.17

**Findings.** This objective was clearly not met with only 50% of the students demonstrating exemplary (7-9 score) ability to use computer software tools to organize data for analysis. Forty percent demonstrated a "good" ability. The remaining students showed a "fair" ability. This was comparatively the objective that showed the lowest level of mastery and should be a target for significant improvement. There is a need for improvement in the knowledge of and use of tools for solving business problems. This topic is covered in ISDS 3711 (Analytical Tools for Business Decisions) and efforts to improve student performance on this objective should be considered in any revision to that course's content, particularly as it relates to the use of statistical and decision making software. In addition, an enhanced version of the BBA core class MIS 2755 should include a module on data organization and analysis related project management and the use of such software tools as Microsoft Project.

**Objective 5.6.** Utilize business presentation software to effectively portray ideas in a structured presentation format.

**Mean.** 8.08

**Findings.** This objective was met with (93%) of the assessed students demonstrating proficiency in using business presentation software effectively.

## **Goal 5: Conclusions.**

This goal is at best partially met. Overall, the students demonstrated a greater ability to use technology to effectively present ideas and solutions than to formulate those problems, analyze data or to understand the technology. The faculty recommends exploration of how the College might avoid having a significant segment of the students having only a fair knowledge of computer hardware and software, networks, databases, and the internet. It was recommended by the faculty that enhanced coverage of this material should be

more extensively incorporated into MIS 2749. These results correlate with findings in Goal 2 (Critical Thinking) suggesting students need further introduction to technological tools to assist in problem formulation, project management, data organization and analysis, and in developing solutions. It was further recommended by the faculty in response to the 4Cs initiative, that a revised version of MIS 2755 (retitled: Project Management and Critical Thinking) focus on critical thinking and this be taught making use of the Microsoft Project software with a project management theme. Finally, the faculty advises to explore how ISDS 3711 can be enhanced to improve performance of students in data organization and analysis in using statistical and decision making software.

## **Focus Group and External Stakeholder Feedback Findings and Conclusions**

In addition to the data from the assessment process, the task force considered information and evaluation from two other sources: (1) a focus group project that was conducted by the Academic Programs and Assessment unit at the University of Memphis as a part of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) Employer Satisfaction Project and (2) anecdotal evidence from Dean Rajiv Grover's discussions with a considerable number of business personnel, in groups and individually, who employ our undergraduate students, primarily in the Memphis area.

### **Findings**

One of six groups assembled for the THEC project was composed of employers who either have in the past or are currently employing BBA graduates from the Fogelman College. The business focus group represented a financial services company, a hotel, an accounting firm, a medical device company, and an airline. While the group seemed to agree that technical presentation skills of the students were good, they also reported that the BBA graduates did not possess polished communication skills needed to be successful. They also indicated that BBA graduates needed significant improvement in their ability to present themselves professionally (in terms of dress, business etiquette, interview skills, etc.).

In addition, there appeared to be a strong sentiment from business leaders that increased interaction with business practitioners related to these topics could be a strong supplement to student classroom learning in these areas.

Dean Grover's discussions and feedback sessions with representatives from large and small businesses in the Memphis area validated, in large part, the focus group results. Several specific areas for student skill improvement surfaced as

critical focus points: "communication", "creativity", "critical thinking", and "emotional control", all of which lead to the "self confidence" of a business professional. These 4 "Cs" identified in the ad hoc evidence from the Memphis business community correlate closely with the results from the "closing loop assessment"; namely, it was identified that significant with opportunities exist to make improvements to better meet our "communication" (Goal1) and "critical thinking" goals (Goal 2). In addition, the closing the loop assessment identified additional need for improvements in meeting our Globalization (Goal 4) and technical problem analysis proficiency goal (Goal 6).

## **Recommendations**

### **In Reference to The "4 Cs" Initiative:**

Dean Grover initiated discussions during the Spring 2009 term with various department faculty and groups, in both formal and informal sessions, about an initiative that would utilize expertise and support from the business community to assist FCBE faculty with helping students hone critical skills needed for business success. He met with this group to discuss the possibility of a "Four C" initiative which touches on areas for improvement identified in the assessment process as well as from the focus group and discussions with external stakeholders. This report which includes information related to the "Four C" initiative being led by MGMT faculty Dr. John Amis is shown in Appendix 1.

**Recommendation 1.** The Task Force endorses the immediate implementation of the "Four C" initiative starting in Fall 2009 with some incorporation of the assessment of the effectiveness of this initiative conducted at the end of the Spring 2010 in conjunction with the BBA Assurance of Learning process.

### **In Reference to Goal 1 (Communications):**

**Recommendation 2.** It is recommended that discussions with the Department of Communications be continued and the possibility of business-oriented, dedicated sections of COMM 2381, Oral Communications, be developed if at all possible. This would require schedule coordination and appropriate advising.

**Recommendation 3.** It is recommended that students be required to take COMM 2381 along with the lower division business core so that the MGMT 3510 course (as well as other courses in the upper core) build on the communication

principles learned in that course (possibly COMM 2381 could be considered a prerequisite for MGMT 3510). We further recommend that students be advised or required to take MGMT 3510 as early in their junior year as possible.

**Recommendation 4.** To reinforce oral communication skills taught in OC 2381 and to focus on areas of need that have been determined, we recommend that a greater percentage of the Business Communication MGMT 3510 be dedicated to professional oral communication and professional etiquette.

**Recommendation 5.** To ensure that written and oral communications receive the level of curriculum importance reflective in the urgency of these findings we recommend that a dedicated faculty coordinator of the MGMT 3510 course be named and supported properly. One of the key responsibilities of this position would be to ensure consistency across all the instructors of this course. Further, a standard syllabus should be developed.

**Recommendation 6.** Establish a business writing competency exam that will be administered to determine whether or not student's communication writing skills are adequate for upper core courses. Establish an effective balance of writing and professional communications across the curriculum.

**Recommendation 7.** Beyond the designated communication courses (COMM 2381 and MGMT 3510), we recommend that FCBE faculty should be encouraged to further incorporate oral communication assignments and professional presentations into the coursework in all majors.

**Recommendation 8.** Related to the "4 C" initiative discussed above, we recommend that, to the extent possible, local business professionals be present to evaluate students' oral presentations in all majors. This practice would underscore the importance of communication skills to the students, provide students with role models, and provide them with constructive feedback in addition to faculty feedback. If possible, the same practice might be initiated for written assignments. Students should also be encouraged to participate in programs provided by professional organizations such as Toastmasters to improve their confidence in professional oral communications.

**Recommendation 9.** It is recommended that we explore ways to establish professional cultural norms among our students, either with a designated day or week for "professional dress" or "focus on professionalism". This day might be associated with formal oral presentations in classes throughout the College.

**Recommendation 10.** We recommend that a repository of best business written and oral presentation formats and styles be made available online to help students model good communication practices.

**In Reference to Goal 2 (Critical Thinking):**

**Recommendation 11.** Students need more practice working on assignments that require critical thinking. In order to improve student critical thinking skills, it is recommended that more projects and cases be utilized throughout the BBA business core.

**Recommendation 12.** In accordance with the 4 Cs initiative and the need to improve critical thinking in project management, problem formulation, problems analysis and resolution, it is recommended that the content of MIS 2755 be substantially enhanced to emphasize critical thinking through a project management lens so students can experience a formalized process of problem formulation, alternative development, data organization and analysis, and solution design and presentation in a project format. Initial efforts are underway and John Amis, of the 4 Cs initiatives, asked the Fall 2009 classes of MIS 2755 to incorporate critical thinking more heavily into their course work. It is further recommended that the existing MIS 2755 core class be re-titled "Project Management and Critical Thinking". The revised course content should focus on the development of critical thinking through the use of in depth assignments requiring the reinforcement of each step in the project management process. This corrective action should permit students to meet the exemplary standard in the future. While pedagogical and sequencing considerations must be resolved, it is also recommended that the revised course MIS 2755 be moved to the BBA upper level BBA core as MIS 3755 "Project Management and Critical Thinking."

### **In Reference to Goal 3 (Ethics):**

**Recommendation 13** It is recommended that business professionals from the Memphis community be invited to classes throughout the BBA core to speak about ethical issues. To emphasize the negative consequences arising from employees' violating ethical standards, these local business professionals should discuss the immediate and dire consequences for employees found guilty of unethical behavior on the job.

**Recommendation 14:** To measure student performance on Goal 3 objectives, it is recommended that in the future these objectives be measured in more than one course settings across the BBA program. In addition, it is recommended that Objective 5 of Goal 3 be eliminated from future assessments since it is sufficiently covered in the first four objectives .

### **In Reference to Goal 4 (Global):**

**Recommendation 15:** Efforts should continue to emphasize the role and importance of the global environment of business. Special attention should be given to improving understanding about basic domestic, international, and host country laws and regulations regarding human rights and other labor related issues as well legal, institutional and financial types of international transactions that are components of global business operations. The following specific actions are recommended:

A special emphasis should be made to cover materials associated with improving understanding about basic domestic, international, and host country laws and regulations regarding human rights and other labor related issues as well legal, institutional and financial types of international transactions that are components of global business operations where appropriate in ACCT 3130 - Legal/Social/Political Environment and in the designated international required course as a component of a student's BBA program.

Compile and distribute information regarding current international programs and events on campus, travel opportunities and study abroad programs to our students. This effort should be led by the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and executed by the UG advising office.

Faculty should emphasize, whenever there is an opportunity, inform and encourage our students to participate in international programs and events on or off campus.

To better determine whether Objectives 3 and 5 are being achieved, ACCT 3130 - Legal/Social/Political Environment should be included in the set of courses in which assessment of this goal takes place.

**Recommendation 16:** Rephrase the first four objectives to better align each one with the goal. The following restatements are recommended for the second round of assessment:

Objective 1: Demonstrate an understanding of the global economic, social and cultural environments within which businesses operate.

Objective 2: Demonstrate an awareness of the global political and technological environments within which businesses operate.

Objective 3: Demonstrate an awareness of the legal, institutional and financial types of international transactions.



Objective 4: Demonstrate understanding how contemporary international events influence businesses around the world.

### **In Reference to Goal 5 (Technical/Analytic Proficiency):**

**Recommendation 18:** Consideration of ways to improve business data analysis and presentation should continue to be explored in the ISDS 3711 course (Analytical Tools for Business Decision). Also, improvements in knowledge of tools for business analysis and in presentation skills should also be addressed in the recommended enhanced MIS 2755 (Project Management and Critical Thinking) course.

**Recommendation 19:** To directly address lower than exemplary level performance related to objective 2, it is recommended that MIS 2749 be enhanced to include a much greater coverage of computer hardware and software, networks, databases, and the Internet. This additional material should supplement computer skill training on Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Access with the major concentration being on Excel. It is recommended that some of the skills training be moved to online computer tutorials and testing through the use of Microsoft IT Academy. It is further recommended that students be given an option for certification testing while using the MCAS (Microsoft Certified Application Specialist) early in (or prior to taking) MIS 2749 to determine their proficiency levels. It is also recommended that MIS 2749 be renamed "Foundations of IS" to be in closer conformance to its broader coverage beyond merely computer skills. Enhance the content in MIS 2749 to include greater coverage of computer hardware and software, networks, databases, and the Internet. Computer application skills, except for spreadsheet and decision support applications, will be eliminated from this course to make room for the additional content. Database applications will be a required component and made available online via the Microsoft IT Academy.

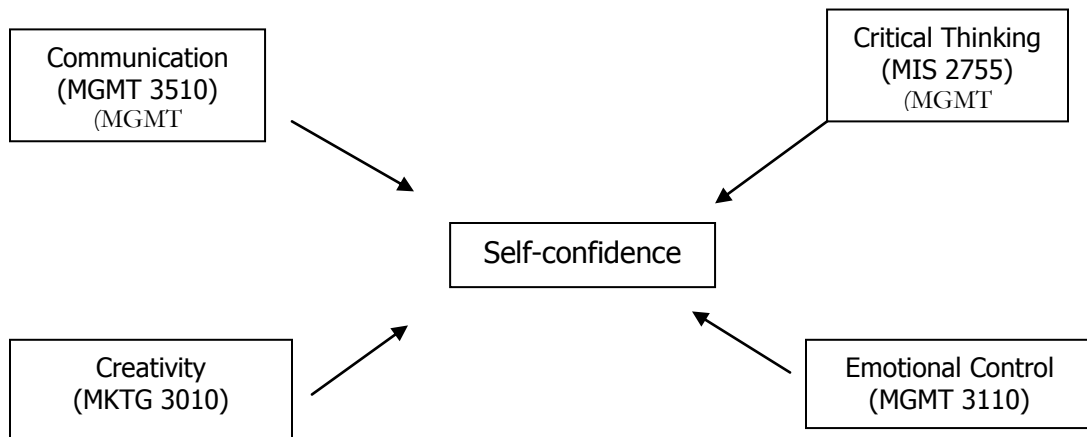
Students should be tested in MIS 2749 while using a nationally recognized certification program, such as the MCAS Certification, to determine the level of skills and knowledge gained in the course. The MCAS certification score should become part of each student's grade.

**Recommendation 20:** Examine ways to improve instruction relating to student use of computer software tools to organize data for analysis in order to solve business related problems. Since this topic is covered in ISDS 3711 (Analytical Tools for Business Decisions), efforts should be directed to improve student performance on this goal's objective 5, and to a lesser extent objective 1, by examining ways to enhance the performance of students in use of computer tools assisting in statistical analysis and decision-making. In addition, the new

enhanced MIS 2755 (Project Management and Critical Thinking) course should include a module on data organization and analysis related project management and the use of such software tools as Microsoft Project.

## Appendix 1: The 4 Cs Initiative

- The Audience:** Students in the Fogelman College of Business & Economics
- The Objective:** Enhance students' awareness and understanding of four critical functions that will be intrinsic to their career success: Communication, Creativity, Critical Thinking, and Emotional Control. In so doing, this will raise the self-confidence of our students that they can make effective contributions to the world around them
- The Participants:** An Action Panel of successful business professionals who will be integrated into regular FCBE courses in order to share their experiences of what constitutes more, and less, effective communication, creativity, critical thinking, or emotional control practices, and how these relate to enhanced self-confidence.
- The Method:** A business professional will be partnered with a faculty member who is teaching either a 4Cs 'Core Course' or another course in the College (see figure below). They will agree on a course of engagement that may likely include an in-class presentation, electronic interactions with students, review of student presentations, and/or any other activity that the faculty member and business professional agree upon.
- More Information:** Contact John Amis ([johnamis@memphis.edu](mailto:johnamis@memphis.edu)) or Shawn Jones ([srjones8@memphis.edu](mailto:srjones8@memphis.edu))



Accounting  
Economics  
Finance & Real Estate  
Management  
Marketing & Supply Chain Management

Course leaders can opt to select one or more 'C' to emphasize and link to 'Confidence'