

Report of the “Close the Loop” Committee: Bachelors of Business Administration Degree Program

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

Committee Members:

**John Amis (Management)
Emin Babakus (Marketing & Supply Chain Management)
Shelley D. Bennett (Undergraduate Student Services)
Judy Brown (Management Information Systems)(Chair)
David Kemme (Economics)
Jim Lukawitz (Accounting)
Radesh Palakurthi (Hospitality and Resort Management)
Ron Spahr (Finance, Insurance, Real Estate)
Jasbir Dhaliwal (Associate Dean) Ex-Officio**

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Introduction

A faculty member from each department was nominated by his/her Department Chair to serve on the Close the Loop Committee for the spring, 2013 term.

Members of this committee were John Amis (Management) Emin Babakus (Marketing & Supply Chain Management), Shelley Bennett (Undergraduate Student Services), Judy Brown (Management Information Systems), David Kemme (Economics), Jim Lukawitz (Accounting), Radesh Palakurthi (Hospitality and Resort Management), and Ron Spahr (Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate). Judy Brown was elected Chair of the committee.

Lloyd Brooks, Director of Assessment, met with the group at the beginning of the semester to explain to the committee the Cycle of Assessment and the general charge of the committee.

This report incorporates all of the charges with the Close the Loop assessment process. The report is primarily based on the data provided through the formal assessment process conducted Fall, 2012, but also integrates findings, conclusions, and recommendations based on data from interviews with invited faculty from the Oral Communications Department and from the Management Department. The committee requested materials from both the Management faculty and the Communications faculty to evaluate the type of assignments that students have in the courses relating to communications and potential opportunities for assessment.

General Charge to FCBE “Close the Loop” Committee

1. Analyze the data from the assessment of the BBA Degree Program in fall, 2012 semester.
2. Review findings for each objective based on the data collected to determine whether exemplary expectations were met and, if not, to determine what is needed to increase the likelihood that the exemplary expectations will be met in subsequent assessment of that objective.
3. Include specific review recommendations and/or comments for each learning goal for the rubric.
4. Develop a team report in narrative form to summarize findings and conclusions based on findings relating to objectives for each goal.
5. Form specific recommendations based on the conclusions for each goal.

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

1. At the FCBE the College established a standard to have 70% or more of the students meet each objective by scoring at the 7-9 (exemplary) level for each objective.
2. When assessed students fall below this exemplary level (i.e., below 7), the College recognizes that there is a need for modification in efforts to move these student towards the exemplary level.

3. In addition to the percentage of assessed students outside the exemplary level triggering improvement actions, the identification of a subset (e.g., 1-10%) of all assessed students falling in the fair level (1-3) may indicate a need for targeted remedial intervention. This would address a small group of 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 and amended in 2009. Findings were examined and conclusions developed by the Close the Loop Committee.

Goal 1. Students will be effective communicators.

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

Achievement at exemplary level (scores 7-9): 57%

Findings. This objective was met by 57% of the class at the exemplary level (7-9), by 35% at the good level (4-6), and by 8% at the fair level. Using the College standard of seventy percent in the exemplary range, this goal was not met.

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

Achievement at exemplary level (scores 7-9): 79%

Findings This objective was met by 79% of the class at the exemplary level (7-9) with the rest of the class rated good (4-6). This objective was met, but there is still room for improvement for approximately one-fifth of the class.

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

Achievement at exemplary level (scores 7-9): 72%

Findings. This objective was met by 72% of the class at the exemplary level (7-9) and marginally satisfied by 20% who were rated good (4-6). Using the College goal of 70% of the students being exemplary, the goal is met; however, one out of twelve of our students are only fair in this category so some improvement maybe needed.

Objective 1.4 Present the topic in a professional manner.

Achievement at exemplary level (scores 7-9): 60%

Findings: This objective was met by 60% of the class at the exemplary level (7-9) and marginally satisfied by 39% who were rated at the good level (4-6). Only one-percent of the students were rated at the fair level on this objective. Using the college objective of seventy percent exemplary, the College fails to meet the standard set for this goal. On a positive note, most (29% out of 40%) who were not exemplary were rated at the border of good and exemplary.

Goal 1: Conclusions.

Based on an overall assessment of the four objectives, improvements are needed for this learning outcome in this area. The objective was met by 60% of students at the exemplary

level. Specifically, students struggle with developing topic statements and presenting in a professional manner; corrective action is being recommended.

Goal 2. Students will be critical thinkers.

Objective 2.1. Present, assess, and analyze appropriate supporting data/evidence relating to the problem or issue.

Achievement at exemplary level (7-9): 91%

Findings. This objective was met by 91% of the students at the exemplary level (7-9), and 9% of the students were at the good level (4-6).

Objective 2.2. Identify and assess conclusions, implications, and consequences that support decision making.

Achievement at exemplary level (7-9): 89%

Findings. This objective was met by 89% of the students at the exemplary level (7-9). The remaining 11% of the students were at the good level (4-6).

Objective 2.3. Identify the problem and then formulate a summary.

Achievement at exemplary level (7-9): 89%

Findings. This objective was met at the exemplary level (7-9) by 89% of the students. The results show that the remaining 11% of the students were at the good level (4-6).

Goal 2: Conclusions.

The results from this round of assessments indicate that students meet the standard set by the College (at least 70% exemplary achievement) on critical thinking ability as indicated by the percentage of exemplary level of achievement across all three specific objectives. Corrective action is not 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.

Achievement at exemplary level (7-9): 14%

Findings: Overall this objective was met by only 14% of the class at the exemplary level (7-9), 63% of students were at the good level (4-6) and 23% of the students were at the fair level. There exists significant room for improvement for this objective.

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

Achievement at exemplary level (7-9): 62%

Findings: This objective was met by 62% of the class at the exemplary level (7-9), 26% were at the good level (4-6) and 12% were at the fair level. Again, there exists significant room for improvement, which would indicate a need for targeted identification and improvement actions.

Objective 3.3: Analyze alternatives and identify consequences that result from unethical behavior.

Achievement at exemplary level (7-9): 18%

Findings: This objective was met by 18% of the class at the exemplary level (7-9), 67% at the good level (4-6), and 15% at the fair level. Again, there exists significant room for improvement, which would indicate a need for targeted identification and improvement actions.

Goal 3: Conclusions.

This goal was not adequately attained as an average of only 31% of students were evaluated in the exemplary level for the three objectives. Thus, targeted identification and improvement are required to assist students in their knowledge and understanding of ethical factors in the business environment. Since this goal is critical in building future business leaders, there is significant room for improvement among many students, especially in the areas of identifying ethical dilemmas and understanding consequences that 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.

Achievement at exemplary level (7-9): 76%

Findings: The objective was met by 76% of students at the exemplary level (7-9). Twenty-two percent (22%) were at the good level (4-6), and two percent (2%) were at the fair level.

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

Achievement at exemplary level (7-9): 74%

Findings: The objective was met by 74% of students at the exemplary level (7-9). Twenty-four percent (24%) of the students were at the good level (4-6), and two percent (2%) were at the fair level.

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

Achievement at exemplary level (7-9): 70%

Findings: The objective was met by 70% of students at the exemplary level (7-9). Twenty-four percent (24%) scored at the good level (4-6), and six percent (6%) were at the fair level.

Goal 4: Conclusion

Overall the objectives of the goal are being met. No improvement action is required.

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.

Achievement at exemplary level (7-9): 67%

Findings. This objective was met by 67% of the students at the exemplary level (7-9). Further, 24% of students scored at the good level (4-6) and 9% scored at the fair level. While these numbers are relatively good, there is some need for improvement.

Objective 5.2. Utilize internet technology to perform queries and searches to locate relevant and accurate information.

Achievement at exemplary level (7-9): 93%

Findings. This objective was met by 93% of students at the exemplary level (7-9). Six percent of the students scored in the good level (4-6), and 1% scored in the fair level.

Objective 5.3. Use computer software tools to organize data for analysis to solve business problems.

Achievement at exemplary level (7-9): 89%

Findings. This objective was met by 89% of the students at the exemplary level (7-9), indicating that this objective was met. Of the remaining students, 9% met the objective at the good level and 2% at the fair level. Although this objective was met, the College needs to review ways to further improve the performance of students outside the exemplary level.

Goal 5: Conclusions

Two of the objectives in this goal were comfortably met, with over 70% of students achieving exemplary levels. It thus seems that the steps taken to develop students' abilities to use search, business presentation, and analysis technology are largely effective. However, the College needs to further develop performances in objective 1 in particular.

Recommendations

General Recommendations:

Recommendation 1. Assessment should be carried out in capstone courses whenever possible. If a department that does not have a capstone course, then the assessment should be done at the highest-level class where appropriate for the goal.

Recommendation 2. The core faculty who teach *MGMT 4710* have agreed to carry out assessments in those areas that are most applicable. Thus the committee recommends that appropriate compensation (suggested amount \$700) be placed into a research account for each of the faculty to acknowledge the additional load they are carrying on behalf of the Assurance of Learning assessment.

Recommendation 3. Assessment should be carried out in classes taught by full-time faculty whenever possible program.

Recommendation 4. All sections where the assessment takes place should use consistent methods agreed upon by the faculty teaching the course.

Recommendation 5. Students in all FCBE programs should be given more writing assignments. The committee recommends that at least 2 writing assignments be required in every section of every course where class size is not prohibitive.

Recommendation 6. Reliance on multiple choice and true/false exams should be reduced in classes; however, class size should be considered in the implementation of this recommendation.

Recommendation 7. Students need more instruction and practice in oral communication skills including brief presentations, practice interviews, debates, and other similar types of activities.

Recommendation 8. The Fogelman Promise for Students should be included in the class syllabus for all BBA classes and should be discussed by faculty with the students in their classes.

Specific Recommendations:

Goal 1: (Communications)

Recommendation 9. Dialog between Dr. Dorsey, the Chair of the Oral Communications Department, and the *Management 3510* faculty should be continued in order to coordinate efforts between the two departments for preparing FCBE students to become better oral communicators.

Recommendation 10. Consideration should be given by Undergraduate Advisors to recommend that students enroll in the "Argument and Debate" course offered by the Communications Department as an elective.

Recommendation 11. Consideration should be given to making it easier for students to participate in Toastmasters International.

Recommendation 12. Whenever possible, writing assignments should have some research component.

Goal 2: (Critical Thinking)

Since all objectives were assessed at the exemplary level, no recommendations are made.

Goal 3: (Ethics)

Recommendation 13. Students need to develop a sense of good ethics. As students continue in their courses, they will need to evaluate the effects of their behavior on other stakeholders.

Recommendation 14. Each class in the FCBE should devote time to the study of ethics as it is applicable to the course content.

Recommendation 15. A repository of ethical videos with presentations by business professionals should be developed for use in classes.

Recommendation 16. Effective business professionals should be invited to speak on ethical issues during a class to point out cases involving ethical behavior. The Know Good, Do Good, Thrive Committee should continue to develop and maintain a list of potential speakers.

Recommendation 17. The committee recommends future assessment of ethical factors in the business environment be measured in *MGMT 4710, Strategic Management*, which is a senior level capstone class taken by all BBA students.

Goal 4: (Global Environments of Business)

Since all objectives were assessed at the exemplary level, no recommendations are made.

Goal 5: (Business Presentation and Analysis Technology)

Recommendation 18. Assessment of this goal should be carried out in *MGMT 4710*.

Recommendation 19. Whenever possible, students should be required to use business analysis technology to create informative business presentations.