REPORT ON ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

SPRING 2008

SUBMITTED TO:
Dr. Ed Ranelli
Dean, College of Business

By:
Arup Mukherjee
Chairman, Management/ MIS

September 10, 2008
MEMO
September 10, 2008

TO: Ed Ranelli, Dean
College of Business

FROM: Arup Mukherjee, Chairman
Management and MIS

SUBJECT: Report on Assessment conducted in Spring 2008

In the Spring 2008 semester, studies were conducted in MAN 4720, the capstone course for all business majors, to assess learning goals pertaining to critical thinking and written communications. The attachments to this memo include a summary report on student performance, major problems identified, and recommendations about actions that may be taken to improve student performance. The rubrics used are also included.
Name of Program: Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

A) Learning Goal: Demonstrate ability to think critically
Objective: Identify problems, select and apply appropriate problem-solving techniques, and make appropriate recommendations

B) Action Taken since previous assessment (Spring 2007)
A proficiency test on financial analysis has been developed and will be implemented in Fall 2008 to track incoming student ability over time.

C) Details of Assessment conducted in Spring 2008
Instructors of three sections of MAN 4720 (Business Policy) assigned an individual case study for student completion. The case study was standardized across all sections. The case study was analyzed using a standard rubric developed by the instructors (see Appendix 1). Copies of the individual instructor reports along with an aggregation spreadsheet are shown in Appendix 2. The summary report on student performance, major problems identified, and actions recommended are reported below.

D) Summary Report on Student Performance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A rating of 5 on the rubric was treated as Exemplary performance; Ratings of 4 or 3 were considered Acceptable performance; Ratings of 2 or 1 were considered to be Unacceptable performance.

E) Major Problems identified and Action Recommended:
The major problem found in this area is given below.

1. Beginning with Fall 2008, a pre-test / post test series will be initiated to identify specific strengths and weaknesses within the financial analysis skill set.
2. The following two recommendations remain in force until research findings provide guidance about changes in them.
   [a] Instructors recommend continuation of emphasis on financial analysis in accounting and finance courses.
   [b] Student recommendations in the individual case analysis still often lack any substance, such as “the company needs to focus more on their culture or on operations”. Examples of good recommendations for specific company situations will be emphasized by the instructors in class.
Name of Program: Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

A] Learning Goal: Demonstrate ability to think critically
Objective: Demonstrate ability to Integrate Knowledge across Business disciplines

B] Action Taken by course instructors since previous assessment (Spring 2007)
During the academic year, the Policy instructors met to discuss problem areas of student performance with regards to integration of knowledge across functional areas. Students were allocating insufficient time to the simulation game. Instructors allocated more time for simulation preparation including more practice rounds.

C] Details of Assessment conducted in Spring 2008
Instructors of three sections of MAN 4720 (Business Policy) assigned an individual case study for student completion. The case study was standardized across all sections. The case study was analyzed using a standard rubric developed by the instructors (see Appendix 1). Copies of the individual instructor reports along with an aggregation spreadsheet are shown in Appendix 2. The summary report on student performance, major problems identified, and actions recommended are reported below.

D] Summary Report on Student Performance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A rating of 5 on the rubric was treated as Exemplary performance; Ratings of 4 or 3 were considered Acceptable performance; Ratings of 2 or 1 were considered to be Unacceptable performance.

E] Major Problems identified and Action Recommended:
The major issues found in this area are given below.

1. At the undergraduate level a continuing issue is that students struggle to see the big picture; they have difficulty distinguishing strategies from operational issues/ tactics. Instructors of the course continue to adjust the pedagogical approach to help students try to overcome this problem.

2. A second continuing issue is that students view the world from a disciplinary position compartmentalizing the analysis rather than treating it as a holistic analysis. Instructors of the course continue to make it a primary pedagogical goal to help students overcome this problem.

3. It appears to the instructors that a single course cannot affect a complete behavioral change for these two complex issues. Although students are required to accomplish activities that serve to diminish shortcomings, the course instructors believe that life experiences and/or a series of courses is required to fully address these issues.
Name of Program: Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

A] Learning Goal: Demonstrate effectiveness in Communications
Objective: Develop effective written presentations

B] Action Taken by instructors/ others since previous assessment (Spring 2006)
The Dean of the College and Chair of Management/ MIS department met with the Chair
of the English department to discuss strategies to improve student writing skills. One idea
proposed was to utilize the writing lab for helping capstone students with their writing
assignments. Capstone instructors continued encouraging students to make better use of
the writing lab and its facilities. In addition greater emphasis is being placed on grammar
in Professional Writing (ENC 3250) and Writing for Business (GEB 3212) courses.

C] Assessment conducted in Spring 2007
Instructors of three sections of MAN 4720 (Business Policy) assigned a standardized
individual case study for student completion. The case study was analyzed using a
standard rubric developed by the instructors (see Appendix 1). Copies of individual
instructor reports along with an aggregation sheet are shown in Appendix 2. The
summary report on student performance, major problems identified, and actions
recommended are given below.

D] Summary Report on Student Performance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A rating of 5 on the rubric was treated as Exemplary performance; Ratings of 4 or
3 were considered Acceptable performance; Ratings of 2 or 1 were considered to be
Unacceptable performance.

E] Major Problems identified and Action Recommended:
1. Approximately 22% of students were found to be unacceptable on this goal. This
   compares favorably to the result in Spring 2007 when 28% of students were found to be
   unacceptable.
2. Historical problems continue to be identified in this area. Examples of problems
   include [a] Improper punctuation {e.g. when to use a comma versus a semicolon/colon};
   [b] Possessive: {e.g. Its versus It’s}; [c] Spelling {e.g. Lose versus Loose}; [d] Format
   (e.g. Run on paragraphs; Headings). The English department and GEB 3212 instructors
   are working to improve student skills in these areas but the reality is that in a world of
electronic texting, using handheld phones, grammar deficiencies are likely to present an
increasing challenge. Solving grammar problems may not be possible without a much
broader emphasis across the curriculum.
APPENDIX 1

RUBRICS USED FOR ASSESSMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS
Revised MAN 4720 Rubric as of 1/10/2008

**AJ CRITICAL THINKING RUBRICS:**

**Objective 1: Ability to Integrate Knowledge across Business Disciplines Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Well Exceeds Expectations (5)</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations (4)</th>
<th>Meets Expectations (3)</th>
<th>Below Expectations (2)</th>
<th>Unacceptable (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clearly identified all major issues and developed appropriate recommendations for all.</td>
<td>Identified most major issues and developed recommendations for them.</td>
<td>Generally identified some of the major issues and developed recommendations for them.</td>
<td>Missed critical issues and/or did not develop appropriate recommendations for them.</td>
<td>Did not identify major issues and/or did not develop appropriate recommendations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 2: Identify problems, select and apply appropriate problem solving techniques, and make appropriate recommendations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Well Exceeds Expectations (5)</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations (4)</th>
<th>Meets Expectations (3)</th>
<th>Below Expectations (2)</th>
<th>Unacceptable (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correctly analyzed the situation and extracted relevant information; identified major issues confronting the organization; Developed alternative responses to issues; developed appropriate strategies; developed appropriate implementation plan.</td>
<td>Correctly analyzed the situation and extracted most of the relevant information; identified major issues confronting the organization; Developed alternative responses to most of the issues; developed appropriate strategies; implementation plan has minor gaps.</td>
<td>Situation analysis had some gaps in relevant information; Identified most of the major issues; Some key issues had no alternatives and strategies; Implementation plan has some gaps.</td>
<td>Situation analysis had significant gaps in relevant information; Some key issues were not identified; Key issues had no alternatives and strategies; Implementation plan has significant gaps.</td>
<td>Insufficient identification of relevant environmental data; Partial identification of major issues confronting organization; Inadequate development of alternatives; Incomplete implementation plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: On the final report, a 5 is Exemplary; a 4 or 3 is Acceptable; a 2 or 1 is Unacceptable
### B] Written Communication Rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Well Exceeds Expectations (5)</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations (4)</th>
<th>Meets Expectations (3)</th>
<th>Below Expectations (2)</th>
<th>Unacceptable (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Presentation clear, logical, and organized; Excellent use of typesetting including spacing, heading fonts, section separation; Easy to follow the direction of case write-up.</td>
<td>Presentation clear, logical, and organized; Good use of typesetting including spacing, heading fonts, section separation; Easy to follow direction of case write-up.</td>
<td>Presentation acceptably clear, logical, and organized; Acceptable use of typesetting including spacing, heading fonts, section separation; Easy to follow direction of case write-up.</td>
<td>Presentation inconsistently clear and organized; A few organization elements are confusing; Appearance generally acceptable with a few unacceptable occurrences.</td>
<td>Amateur appearance; Poor print quality; Organization lacking; Case logic not clear; Readers are confused.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar</strong></td>
<td>No problems of mechanics (spelling, punctuation, grammar); All sentences complete; No run-on sentences; Almost no misspelled words or noun-verb or singular-plural errors; Verb tense consistency within and between paragraphs; Proper use of colloquialisms, slang and acronyms where appropriate.</td>
<td>Minor problems of mechanics (spelling, punctuation, grammar); All sentences complete; No run-on sentences; Very few misspelled words or noun-verb or singular-plural errors; Most verb tense consistent within and between paragraphs; Proper use of colloquialisms, slang and acronyms where appropriate.</td>
<td>Occasional problems of mechanics (spelling, punctuation, grammar); Very few incomplete sentences or run-on sentences; Occasional misspelled words; occasional noun-verb or singular-plural errors; occasional errors in verb tense consistency within and between paragraphs; Occasional improper use of colloquialisms, slang and acronyms.</td>
<td>Numerous distracting problems; Occasional incomplete sentences or run-on sentences; Numerous misspelled words and grammar issues; Verb tense inconsistency within and between paragraphs; Improper use of colloquialisms, slang and acronyms.</td>
<td>Number and type of mechanical errors impede reader understanding and effectiveness of case write-up.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>