

**BBA Learning Assurance Committee
Minutes of October 16, 2007**

The minutes of the September 18, 2007 meeting of the BBA Learning Assurance Committee were approved.

The October 16, 2007 meeting began at 12:15PM. In attendance were Raquel Benbunan-Fich, Bob Blau, Al Booke, Mike Carew, John Choonoo, Mikhail Gershovich, Matthew Johnson, Karl Lang, David Rosenberg, Steve Schnaars, Dennis Slavin, Vanessa Vacchiano, Ashok Vora, Susan Young, Judith Tse, and Phyllis Zadra.

Phyllis reported that the Civic Awareness/Ethical Decision-making papers collected in summer 2007 would be scored on Friday, October 19, 2007. The results should be available for the next meeting.

The Committee resumed its discussion of technological skills. Once again we reviewed definition that was recommended by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and approved by the Zicklin faculty. That definition states, "Students will possess the necessary technological skills to analyze problems, develop solutions and convey information". Phyllis distributed two issue papers developed by ETS (Education Testing Service) that focus on information and communication technologies. ETS has designed and is marketing an ICT Literacy Assessment. (This information was provided by Jerry Bornstein who was unable to attend the meeting.) After looking at the descriptions of tasks on the ETS assessment, the committee members indicated that we could develop a task that would serve to better assess our students' capabilities. It was agreed that our task should include 1) searching for data; 2) downloading data; 3) creating a spreadsheet; 4) manipulating and analyzing data; and 5) possibly embedding Excel documents in a narrative.

Matt Johnson presented a problem (Calculating a Stock's beta). The Committee agreed that it would be great if all our students were able to perform that task. Some members felt that students not majoring in finance, economics or accounting would find the task too difficult. Bob Blau provided another possible task entitled "Prudent Provisions for Pensions". Raquel Fich distributed a project that she uses in her CIS 2200 class (Stock Track Portfolio).

Karl Lang indicated that he had heard about an assessment at Boston University that seemed very good. He emphasized the need for any task to have precise instructions and then it could be easily followed and scored. All of the problems submitted were discussed. In addition, we discussed creating our own problem related to student grade distributions. Such a problem/task might ask students to compare grades in one section with data for all classes in that course. Although the problem seemed to be one that would be of interest to our students, the task of searching for data would be omitted in such a scenario.

It was agreed that a small group would work to refine one or more of the problems that had been submitted to the Committee. We would have a conversation with some faculty in Mgt 3121, the preferred course for the assessment to determine what type of problem they would want to integrate in their course. In addition, we would see if faculty in some Eco 4000 sections would use the problem provided by Matt Johnson this semester, so that we might pilot the difficulty of that assignment.

The meeting was adjourned at 2PM. No date was set for the next meeting.

Funding for the project was provided from both the Provost's Office and Zicklin Dean's Office. The participants of the Seminar were required to read four books: *What The Best College Teachers Do* by Ken Bain; *Teaching with Your Mouth Shut* by Donald L. Finkel; *Learner-Centered Assessment on College Campuses Shifting the Focus from Teaching to Learning* by Mary E. Huba and Jann E. Freed; and *The Elements of Teaching Writing A Resource for Instructors in All Disciplines* by Katherine Gottschalk and Keith Hjortshoj. At the Seminar each participant redesigned a lesson that is part of her/his course in order to make it an interactive experience. There was candid feedback from the audience about how the lesson worked and what else might be considered to further improve it. Overall there was great enthusiasm by the participants. There were high marks for the assigned readings, excellent peer feedback and supportiveness of the group.

Both Raquel and Mike participated in the Seminar. Raquel stated that she found the Seminar inspiring and that it has peaked her interest in finding ways to use e-portfolios for her students. Mike indicated that the Seminar challenged him to think about teaching his large lectures in a more interactive manner. The Seminar did not provide all of the answers but it certainly stimulated discussion about what methods might be used. Phyllis indicated that the participants are expected to make changes in their own classes and to work with faculty in their departments to make all of the sections more interactive. To assist in that discussion we are providing copies of the Ken Bain book to faculty members teaching these courses. In addition, any of the members of BBA Learning Assurance Committee are welcome to a copy of the book if they wish. The minutes and recommendations of the Summer Seminar were distributed to the Committee.

Phyllis reported that 5 classes distributed the civic awareness/ethical decision-making prompt in their summer courses (Law 3102 -2 sections; Mgt 3120, Eco 3220, Mkt 5750). We have collected more than 120 papers. The assignments were given as part of the courses and they were all take home assignments. We will be scoring these papers in the next month. Vanessa Vacchiano revised the civic awareness/ethical decision-making rubric based on a reading of some sample responses. It is planned to gather teams of 3 individuals to score each of these papers, as was the procedure for the other assessments.

The Committee continued its consideration of possible ways to assess technological skills. Raquel distributed a problem (case) that would require students to create a method for ranking students applying to a fictional *International Studies Institute*. After reading

the case there was mixed reaction around the table. Some members felt that the type of problem would be interesting to students. It was not completely clear if this assignment would assess technological and quantitative skills. It was agreed that Raquel, Matt Johnson, and Bob Blau would rewrite or create a new case that would require both technological and quantitative skills. They agreed to present new case at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 1:50PM. No date was set for the next meeting.