

BBA Learning Assurance Committee Minutes of September 9, 2008

The minutes of the April 29, 2008 meeting of the BBA Learning Assurance Committee were approved.

The September 9, 2008 meeting began at 12:00PM. In attendance were Raquel Benbunan-Fich, Bob Blau, Al Booke, Mike Carew, John Choonoo, Mehmet Genc, Mihail Gershovich, Lie-Fern Hsu, Karl Lang, Steve Schnaars, Dennis Slavin, Vanessa Vacchiano, Ashok Vora, Susan Young, and Phyllis Zadra.

Raquel provided background information on the technological skills assessment. This assignment was distributed to all Mgt 3121 sections in spring 2008. Students were encouraged to complete the assignment and submit them to two specially designed Blackboard sites. The assignment required students to access data on annual audited Apple Inc. sales and to format it into a spreadsheet. Students were asked to develop simple exponential smoothed annual sales forecasts for 2007 using *alpha* values of 0.2, 0.6, and 0.9 using the historical sales data. Also, students were asked to find the 3 year simple moving average annual sales forecast for 2007. Finally students were asked to develop error metrics for each forecast using CFE, Average error, MSE, MAD and MAPE. The aforementioned were to be displayed on the spreadsheet. On a separate document, students were asked to write a one page memorandum to the V.P. of Operations indicating which forecast was recommended and why, and whether the results of the time series forecasting exercise should be combined with a qualitative forecast for developing a final forecast for management action. (The assignment is in the binder.)

A sub group worked on developing a rubric after the assignments were collected. The sub group worked met several times beginning in May until a final rubric was created. In late August four scorers met to review a random sample of submissions that had been selected by the Institutional Research Office. Efforts were made to select from different class sections. The results were presented to the BBA Learning Assurance Committee. The results of the 10 assignments that were scored are in the binder. The assignment was rated on the following categories: Excel; Data Analysis; and Technical Writing with subdivisions within each category. As in our other assessments ratings of below expectation, met expectation and exceeded expectations were given based upon the definitions in the rubric. We are well aware that this was a very small sample and that these data cannot be generalized. However, the assignment was very complex and scoring additional submissions may be prohibitive in terms of time. We believe that these results help to define how we might wish to revise the assignment for a spring 2009 administration. In addition, the raters made notes of the type of errors that students made. These errors shed some light on how the students understood (or did not understand) how to complete the spreadsheet part of the assignment. The errors include:

1. Wrong implementation of the exponential smoothing formula

2. Linking moving average forecasts to exponential smoothing forecasts when they should be independent of each other
3. Unnecessary use of the SUM function for short algebraic formulas
4. Inconsistent formatting of numbers
5. No understanding of the concept of Absolute Error
6. Different results for mean errors due to the use of different denominators
7. No validation or verification of Excel results

Based upon the results we will create a simplified assignment to be used in several Mgt. 3121 classes in spring 2008. Al Booke indicated that the new strategy program that has been adopted by BPL may have a section that could be used for this assessment. Before the next meeting he and Mehmet will look at the Globus product. In addition, we will meet with the Mgt 3121 faculty to discuss the assignments that we gathered.

Vanessa described the results for the Civic Awareness/Ethical Decision-making assessment. On average the scores on the civic awareness were higher than on our previous assessments. The weakest result was in the category "chooses an action". Although students appeared to understand the dimensions of the problem, some were uneasy or unwilling to choose the action that followed from their analysis. The committee asked Vanessa if she break out the data by student's major.

Phyllis provided a brief overview of where the School/College stand with regard to other assessment activities. The Zicklin School will have its reaccreditation visit by AACSB on October 11, 2009. Prior to this time, the School will need to report on it assessment activities. One of the glaring problems for the School is that none of the majors has defined "proficiency in the major" and begun any assessment. It is urgent that all of the departments move forward on these assessments. This issue has been discussed on and off for at least 3 years. The committee recommended that each department select a faculty member responsible for determining the learning goals and moving forward with the assessments. It was suggested that faculty appointed receive released time for this effort. Dennis Slavin echoed the need for learning goals for each of the majors. At the most recent Middle States meeting attended by Baruch faculty/staff it was clearly stated that the Middle States review (expected in 2010) will be looking closely for assessment of each of the majors.

The committee moved on to review the three scenarios provided to assess "global awareness". Ed Rogoff, Mike Carew and Steve Schnaars each submitted a 1-2 page scenario. These are available in the binder. After considerable discussion it was agreed that none of scenarios fully captured what we wished to assess. Mehmet Genc offered to review some existing cases and present some additional choices at the next meeting.

The next meeting is set for Tuesday, October 14, 2008. The meeting was adjourned at 2:00PM.