

BBA Learning Assurance Committee
Minutes of February 9, 2010

The minutes of the November 3, 2009 meeting of the BBA Learning Assurance were amended and approved.

The February 9, 2010 meeting began at 12:30PM. In attendance were Raquel Benbunan-Fich, Bob Blau, Al Booke, Mike Carew, Ting Chen, John Choonoo, Chuck Gengler, Mikhail Gershovich, Lie-Fern Hsu, Steven Schnaars, Judy Tse, Vanessa Vacchiano, and Phyllis Zadra.

Phyllis welcomed everyone back. She asked that the Committee consider some revisions to the learning goal document of 4/1/02. That document has been used as a guideline for our assessment activities, but at the recent AACSB reaccreditation visit it became clear that the document was in need of updating. Specifically, the General Education goal—*Students will acquire as part of their personal enrichment a foundation in the sciences, the arts and the social sciences.*--- should be removed from the list since it was agreed that the Weissman School would assess general education. In addition, the goal Analytical and Technological Skills --- *Students will possess the quantitative, technological, analytical and critical thinking skills to evaluate issues faced in business and professional careers*--- should be made into two separate goals. The Committee has done two separate assessments, one for analytical skills and one for technological skills and making them separate goals clarifies any previous confusion about these assessments. It is recommended that the definition for Analytical Skills should be *Students will possess the analytical and critical thinking skills to evaluate issues faced in business and professional careers.* The definition for Technological Skills should be *Students will possess the necessary technological skills to analyze problems, develop, solutions and convey information.* The Committee unanimously endorsed these revisions and recommended that they be brought to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee for approval and subsequently to the Zicklin Faculty for approval.

Vanessa Vacchiano reported on the written skills assessment and the analytical skills assessment. The same assignment was used for both assessments. The Robin Hood case by Joseph Lampel was a take home project for 8 BPL classes in fall 2009. One hundred and eighty-nine papers were collected. Students were asked to describe the issues that Robin Hood needs to address, explain the causes for the current situation, propose alternative solutions and suggest information/methods to evaluate the options and make a well-substantiated recommendation. The response was limited to 2 typewritten pages.

Nine evaluators were trained just prior to the evaluation session. Each paper was read by an executive, a faculty member and a Schwartz Communication fellow. Each paper received three scores on the 4 criteria of the written skills rubric. The rubric and the analyses of the data are attached to the minutes.

Based on the demographic analyses it appears that there were no significant differences between native and transfer students, or between male and female students. When the overall means of the 2009 writing assessment were compared with those of 2006, the only significant difference appeared in the category “support”, where there was a decline in the overall performance of the students.

The Committee discussed these findings at some length trying to hypothesize why the results did not mirror the improvements that were seen in the oral skills assessment. It was concluded that there has been a more concerted effort by the faculty to provide oral presentation opportunities to students, and that writing assignments especially those that provide students feedback and/or re-write opportunities are relatively rare in the Zicklin undergraduate program.

Vanessa provided the analyses of the analytical skills assessment. In this instance, 9 evaluators were trained on the analytical rubric and scored the 189 student papers. Again, there were 3 scores in each of the 3 criteria. There were no differences based on demographic information. All of the means for analytical skills improved in 2009 as compared with 2006. Students showed a significant improvement in “proposes alternative solutions”. In addition, Vanessa examined the correlation between the written and analytical scores. There was a slight positive correlation between the analytical skills and written communication skills. The Committee discussed this result at some length.

Professor Chuck Gengler, from the Marketing Dept. reported on the “proficiency in a discipline” goal for marketing. Prof. Gengler created a multiple choice exam that was given 65 students in the Marketing capstone 5750 course in fall 2009. The exam questions were selected to cover several topics: general marketing; economic and human behavior; international issues; analytical/market research; and communication/advertising. He examined the scores for the entire group and scores for students concentrating in marketing management; international marketing, advertising/communications and international business. The results are attached to the minutes. The Committee discussed the results and asked questions about the selection of the questions.

The Committee discussed how departments, in general, should be using their discipline specific data. It was suggested that there be departmental meetings to share the data with all the faculty. More discussions about this implementation of the data need to take place with the department chairs and UCC.

A date for the next meeting was not set.

The meeting was adjourned at 2PM.