

Masters of Business Administration (MBA) Degree

Assurance of Learning Report-September 2011

MBA Learning Goal #1: MBA students will be competent in the Business Disciplines, using appropriate accounting, marketing, economics, quantitative methods, organizational behavior, finance, or production knowledge and tools to make a business decision in that functional area. Each course assesses a specific dimension of Goal 1 relevant to the course in Learning Goals 1A through 1G.

Spring 2010 – MBA7050 – Strategic Marketing

MBA Learning Goal #1-B: MBA students will be able to apply marketing strategy and marketing management concepts to develop a feasible marketing plan. Embedded questions on four exams assessed Goals 1-B. A score of 70% correct answers on all embedded questions was used to determine whether student met expectations on this objective. Twenty-six of the thirty five students scored 70% or better (74%) on the ten embedded questions. Students were judged to have met expectations on Goal 1-B.

Spring 2010 – MBA7900 – Strategic Management

MBA Learning Goal #2 – MBA students will be critical thinkers. MBA students will be able to use concepts from strategic management to integrate relevant information, decision making techniques, and concepts from multiple business functions to make decisions in new or unpredictable environments.

Thirty-seven MBA students were assigned to seven teams. Each team was to review all relevant information about a Fortune 500 firm selected by the students with the approval of the Instructor. The students prepared both a written and an oral presentation about the firm. Students were instructed on specific items to include in their presentations including, but not limited to an analysis of the firm's environment, financial analysis of the firm, a SWOT analysis for the firm and its industry, an analysis of the firm's strategy and its competitive position, and possible recommendations that would assist the firm in improving its present and future performance.

Students were evaluated by the instructor on their skills as critical thinkers and on their knowledge of strategic management. During the oral presentation the instructor questioned individual team members about any issue related to the firm. This was done to prevent students from dividing the research into components and only learning one component. Another purpose was to make coordination and cooperation within each team even more important, requiring students to work as a team and not individually.

In order to test students' knowledge of strategic management, both the mid-term exam and the final exam included a number of embedded questions designed to test whether the students had retained conceptual knowledge about the subject content. The embedded questions followed a multiple choice format, were specific in the type of knowledge the student should possess, and were judged to be of "moderate" to "hard" in level of difficulty. It was decided that if at least 80% of the students in the class were able to correctly answer at least 70% of the questions, learning goal 2 would have been attained for the class. It was observed that 100% of the students correctly answered 70% or more of the embedded questions on the mid-term exam, and 92% of the students correctly answered 70% or more of the embedded questions on the final exam. Therefore, MBA Learning Goal #2 was judged to have been accomplished for the class.

MBA Learning Goal #6 . Team Players and Leaders, demonstrating team and leadership skills.

MBA Learning Goal 6-A: As a team member, MBA students will contribute functional knowledge and skills to a process that generates a reasonable business decision.

During the semester, several team meetings were scheduled during class time, and the instructor observed the teams on several occasions. The instructor's objective was to observe how the team members interacted, and if all or most of the members took part in the discussions. The instructor used a previously prepared rubric which assessed students on (1) sharing information effectively with fellow team members, (2) communicating effectively with fellow team members, (3) being prepared for team meetings, and (4) providing input in a timely manner so that the team was able to progress toward a decision with little or no delay. Students met in their groups on their own at other times convenient to team members. At the end of the semester, the students were required to submit a Team Member Evaluation Form and "grade" their fellow team members as to their participation in completing the case presentation. The students' teamwork skills were assessed based upon the observations of the instructor, and the results presented in the Team Member Evaluation form. Based on the results obtained from the instructor's observations 84% of the students met expectations and 16% exceeded expectations on sharing information effectively. 78% met and 11% exceed expectations on communicating effectively with team members. 84% met and 16% exceeded expectations on being prepared for team meetings. 81% met and 13% exceeded expectations on providing input in a timely manner. Based on the instructor's ratings and the evaluation of each team member by his/her peers, it was determined that Learning Goal 6-A was accomplished.

Fall 2010- MBA7300-Advanced Production Techniques

MBA Learning Goal #1-7: MBA students will be able to use production, accounting and finance knowledge combined with quantitative skills to make decisions leading to operational excellence.

Forty students enrolled in the class responded to 65 embedded exam questions to assess the following four factors:

1. The student understands the link between quality and competitiveness. Fourteen questions assessed this factor. 5% failed to meet objectives, 40% met objectives, and 55% far exceeded expectations.
2. The student demonstrates an understanding of logic based problem identification, solution and implementation. Seventeen questions addressed this factor. 5% failed to meet expectations, 32% met expectations, and 63% far exceeded expectations.
3. The student understands the relationship between the performance measurement system and organizational performance. Twenty-nine questions addressed this factor. 2% failed to meet expectations, 35% met expectations, and 63% far exceeded expectations.
4. The student understands the commonality among Just-in-Time, Total Quality Management, and Theory of Constraints operations philosophies. Twelve questions addressed this factor. 7% failed to meet expectations, 33% met expectations, and 60% far exceeded expectations.

Answering less than 70% of the questions correctly resulted in a “Fails to Meet Expectations” rating. Answering 70% or more but less than 90% of the questions correctly resulted in a “Meets Expectations” rating. Answering more than 90% of the questions correctly resulted in a “Far Exceeds Expectations” rating.

These results are improved over the two previous years on all four factors. This may in part be due to the instructor administering five exams in Fall 2010. In previous years, only a midterm and a final exam were administered.

Fall 2010-MBA7350-Managerial Finance

MBA Learning Goal 1-F: MBA students will be able to evaluate investment, financing, and dividend decisions made by the executives of a firm and the resulting impact on shareholder wealth.

Sixteen questions embedded on the Midterm and Final exams assessed MBA Learning Goal 1-F: MBA Students will be able to evaluate investment, financing, and dividend decisions made by the executives of a firm and the resulting impact on shareholder wealth. Only the midterm, students averaged 66%. They did, however, score above 75% on 9 of the 16 questions. Using 70% as a cutoff, students met or exceeded expectations on 9 of the 16 questions. Modifications have been made in the topical coverage of the course to improve student knowledge in areas in which they did not meet expectations.

Spring 2011 – MBA7700 – Special Topics - Employment Law

MBA Learning Goal 4: Proficient in making ethical and legal decisions, recognizing diverse social factors in the legal and ethical implications of business decisions.

MBA Learning Goal 4-B: Evaluate a business dilemma from various ethical perspectives and formulate an ethical solution.

Twenty-four students completed a Business Ethics Mini-Quiz containing seven scenarios each presenting students with an ethical dilemma. Student success in meeting Learning Goal 4-B was determined by at least 70% of the class earning at least 70% correct answers on the quiz.

Seventy-eight percent of the students achieved at least a 70% score on the quiz.

Spring 2011 – MBA 7630 – Organizational Behavior and Theory

MBA Learning Goal 1-E: MBA students will be able to apply behavioral science theory and concepts to decisions involving the effective use of an organization's human resources.

All 43 students answered at least 70% of the twenty embedded questions correctly. The range was 70% to 100% with seven students answering all twenty embedded questions correctly. The class average was 85%.

MBA Learning Goal # 3: MBA students will be effective communicators, using information technology and oral and written skills to enhance decision making through better communication.

MBA Learning Goal 3-A : MBA students will be able to orally present and defend the analysis leading to a business decision utilizing appropriate presentation technology.

MBA students were placed into teams of approximately five members and assigned a research project. The project involves reviewing and summarizing the empirical literature on a specific topic and making a presentation on the state of our knowledge of this topic and some practical implications for managers. Team members are told that the instructor may ask any team member about any part of the presentation. This is done to prevent students from dividing up the subtopics and learning only a portion of the material. It is also done to require more teamwork and cooperation throughout the project. Students were allocated approximately 45 minutes for their presentation, after which time the instructor questioned team members for approximately 15 minutes. The instructor used a previously prepared rubric to assess students oral communication skills. This rubric assesses students on the organization, clarity, choice of media, use of language and delivery of their presentation. Each student must meet or exceed expectations on 4 out of the 5 criteria to meet oral communications objective. In addition, at least 80% of the class

must meet or exceed expectations on all five criteria. 51% of the students met expectations and 46% exceeded expectations on organization and clarity. 90% met and 10% exceeded expectations on use of media. 34% met and 63% exceeded expectations on language, and 39% met and 59% exceeded expectations on delivery. Thus, it is determined that MBA Learning Goal 3-A was met.

MBA Learning Goal #6: MBA students will be team players and leaders, demonstrating team and leadership skills.

MBA Learning Goal # 6-B: Lead a team process to a reasonable business decision.

MBA students were placed into teams of approximately five members and assigned a research project. The project involves reviewing and summarizing the empirical literature on a specific topic and making a presentation on the state of our knowledge of this topic and some practical implications for managers. Team members are told that the instructor may ask any team member about any part of the presentation. This is done to prevent students from dividing up the subtopics and learning only a portion of the material. It is also done to require more teamwork and cooperation throughout the project. Approximately 15 to 20 minutes at the end of each class was devoted to team meetings. The instructor would circulate among the teams observing individual students' leadership skills. After observing a student, the instructor would use a previously prepared rubric to assess that student's leadership skills. The rubric assesses 8 criteria: (1) develops a vision/sets clear goals with the group, (2) encourages other team members to participate, (3) focuses on goals during team meetings, (4) listens actively to other team members, (5) intervenes when the team gets off track, (6) shares information openly with team members, (7) gives recognition to other team members, and (8) encourages other team members to perform up to their capabilities. 80% of the students must meet or exceed expectations for this learning goal to be met. The results on each of the eight criteria are: (1) 59% meet expectations, 41% exceed expectations, (2) 61% meet expectations, 37% exceed expectations, (3) 59% meet expectations, 41% exceed expectations, (4) 61% meet expectations, 39% exceed expectations, (5) 66% meet expectations, 29% exceed expectations, (6) 54% meet expectations, 46% exceed expectations, (7) 63% meet expectations, 32% exceed expectations, (8) 76% meet expectations, 17% exceed expectations. Thus, learning goal 6-B was determined to have been met.

MBA Learning Goal 6-A: . As a team member contribute functional knowledge and skills to a process that generates a reasonable business decision.

MBA students were placed into teams of approximately five members and assigned a research project. The project involves reviewing and summarizing the empirical literature on a specific topic and making a presentation on the state of our knowledge of this topic and some practical implications for managers. Team members are told that the instructor may ask any team member about any part of the presentation. This is done to prevent students from dividing up the subtopics and learning only a portion of the material. It is also done to require more teamwork

and cooperation throughout the project. Approximately 15 to 20 minutes at the end of each class was devoted to team meetings. The instructor would circulate among the teams observing individual students' teamwork skills. After observing a student, the instructor would use a previously prepared rubric to assess that student's teamwork skills. The rubric assesses four criteria: (1) the student shares information effectively, (2) the student communicates effectively, (3) the student is prepared for team meetings, and (4) the student provides his/her input in a timely manner so that the team is able to progress toward a decision with little or no delay. A minimum of 80% of the students in the course must meet or exceed expectations in order for this learning goal to be met. The results on each criteria are: (1) 18% meet expectations, 81% exceed expectations; (2) 16% meet expectations, 81% exceed expectations; (3) 16% meet expectations, 81% exceed expectations; (4) 16% meet expectations, 82% exceed expectations. Thus, it was determined that Learning Goal 6-A was met.