

## **MBA Program Assessment Plan**

(Revised/Updated in Fall 2009)

### **Program Goal**

The MBA Program of Illinois State University is committed to producing future leaders of business who can communicate, interact, collaborate, and compete with anyone in the world by providing advanced business education that is professionally relevant, ethically sound, and culturally sensitive. The Program strives to provide the students with essential learning components required in the global business environments of today and tomorrow, such as interdisciplinary learning experience, critical thinking and effective communication, technology applications, international and multicultural understanding, and ethics and sustainability implications.

### **Background**

- Immediately following the July 16, 2004 training session entitled “Juggling, Dogs, and Assessment: The Importance of Feedback, Critical Thinking, and Punctuation,” conducted by Dr. Doug Eder, Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, Dr. Graf, then MBA Program Director, contacted Dr. Linda Showers (MKT), Dr. Masoud Hemmasi (MQM), Dr. Joe Trefzger (FIL) and Dr. Gail Russ (MQM), all who had attended Dr. Eder’s session and, also, all who had taught in the MBA Program, regarding their willingness to become members of the MBA Assessment Task Force. All agreed to serve on the Task Force. The MBA Assessment Task Force held its first formal meeting on Monday, October 18, 2004.
- During the Fall 2004 term, the Task Force began work on development of a rubric for assessing Team Skills and simultaneously assembled its tentative schedule for the remainder of MBA assessment that would be carried out in future semesters. The team selected 5 skill and 5 knowledge areas that, in its collective opinion, would be most reflective of program effectiveness.
- In the Spring 2005 Semester, the Team Skills assessment rubric was utilized for the first time in the MQM 485 class, and work was initiated to develop the rubric for assessing Critical Thinking and Written Communication Skills.
- In the Fall 2005 Semester the Critical Thinking and Written Communication Skills rubric was utilized for the first time in the MBA 412 class, Team skills assessment in MQM 485 was continued, work was initiated and concluded on development of the Finance Knowledge Rubric, and the first Finance Knowledge assessment was carried out.
- During the Fall 2006 Semester reports on assessment in Team Skills, Critical Thinking Skills, Written Communication Skills, and Finance Knowledge were assembled. Assessment standards were met in all four assessment areas.
- In the Spring 2007 Semester the College adopted the Major Field Test, the knowledge-content assessment provided by ETS for assessing all area knowledge content of the MBA Program.
- By the end of the Fall 2007 Semester with the help of the Task Force and College-wide departmental assessment efforts, the MBA Program completed the development of 6 learning goals and the rubrics for the five skills-related goals. The rubrics are attached at the end of this document.
- By the end of the Fall 2009 Semester the whole assessment sequence has been completed at least once for all 6 learning goal categories.

## Learning Goals & Objectives for MBA Program

Goal 1: We want students in the MBA Program to be adequately prepared to function as a competent business manager in relevant functional areas with sufficient knowledge and understanding of contemporary business in general.

Objective 1a: Students will understand and apply content knowledge in major business functional areas (accounting, marketing, finance, and management).

Goal 2: We want students to be effective written communicators and credible and persuasive speakers so that they can develop themselves to a business executive or leader.

Objective 2a: Students will communicate clearly both verbally and in writing.

Objective 2b: Students will be effective persuasive speakers.

Goal 3: We want students to possess the ability to work in teams and function as a contributing team member and as a motivating team leader.

Objective 3a: Students will work effectively and professionally in teams.

Goal 4: We want students to be critical thinkers and effective problem solvers equipped with relevant analytical skills so that they can become insightful business leaders.

Objective 4a: Students will think critically and solve problems using appropriate reasoning and analytical skills.

Objective 4b: Students will be able to draw logical conclusions and make appropriate recommendations based on appropriate data.

Goal 5: We want students to be ethical decision makers.

Objective 5a: Students will understand ethical issues in business decision making.

Goal 6: We want students to be cognizant of the impact of culture and diversity on global business.

Objective 6a: Students will understand the impact of global and national diversity on international business.

Objective 6b: Students will understand the legal arena surrounding international organizations.

Note: Additional learning goals may be developed as the assessment plan is implemented, reviewed, and revised continuously based on the actual data collection and subsequent changes and improvements in the program delivery.

The same set of learning goals and objectives apply to both the traditional MBA Program and the weekend Corporate MBA Program as the two programs employ the common curriculum.

### Assessment of Content Knowledge

- In the Spring 2007 semester after a successful pilot test of Major Field Test, the knowledge-content assessment provided by ETS, the College determined to adopt the ETS-MFT to all COB undergraduate and MBA students starting Spring 2008. The MBA Assessment Task Force subsequently agreed that the test would effectively serve the purposes of assessing the knowledge content of main functional areas as well as general business knowledge for MBA students.
- The ETS-MFT is administered in MQM 485, the required capstone course for all MBA students during the spring, summer, and the fall semesters

### Assessment of Skills using the College rubrics

- The MBA Program continues to monitor and implement the previously developed rubrics and mechanisms on team skills, critical thinking, written communication skills, and ethics reasoning skills on a regular basis (although not every semester).

### Data Collection Points for MBA Assessment

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| • Area Knowledge Content (Goal 1)          | MQM 485 (via ETS's Major Field Test) |
| • Communication Skills (Goal 2)            | MBA 412, ACC 450                     |
| • Team Skills (Goal 3)                     | MQM 421, MQM 427, MQM 485            |
| • Critical Thinking Skills (Goal 4)        | MBA 412, ACC 468, FIL 440            |
| • Ethics Reasoning Skills (Goal 5)         | MBA 412, ACC 468, MKT 430            |
| • Multicultural and Global Skills (Goal 6) | MKT 430, MQM 421                     |

### Assessment through Other Measures

Student learning outcome is also assessed by other appropriate and available tools which include student self-assessment (entry and exit surveys), alumni and employer surveys, and external assessment devices.

### Use of Data in Decision Making – Closing the Loop

- During the fall semester of each year the MBA Director calls a meeting for all faculty who teach the MBA core required courses to convene and review the assessment data collected during the prior academic year and discuss what action needs to be taken.
- Decisions regarding remedial changes and improvements to the program delivery are also made at this time.
- The process of the implementation, review, and revision of the MBA assessment follows the following timeline and cycle. (See a separate document, "Closing the Loop")

## Assessment Timeline

The process of the implementation, review, and revision of the MBA assessment follows the following timeline and cycle.

- Assessment of Goal 1 (Content Knowledge) is conducted every semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer) through the ETS Major Field Test within MQM 485, the capstone required course.
- Assessment of Goals 2 – 6 will follow the following schedule

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Rubrics Applied, Reviewed, and Refined</b>
2008-09 2009-10	Team Skills Ethics Multicultural and Global Skills
2010-11 2011-12	Oral Communication Written Communication Critical Thinking
2012-13 2013-14	Team skills Ethics Multicultural and Global Skills
2014-15 2015-16	Oral Communication Written Communication Critical Thinking
2016 and beyond	Cycle repeats

## MBA Assessment Rubrics

### Goal #2 COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Goal 2: We want students to be effective written communicators and credible and persuasive speakers so that they can develop themselves to a business executive or leader.

Objective 2a: Students will communicate clearly both verbally and in writing.

Objective 2b: Students will be effective persuasive speakers.

#### Oral Communication Rubric

**At least 80 percent of the students will be evaluated as Acceptable or Exemplary on the following criteria.**

Criteria	Levels		
	Unacceptable	Acceptable	Exemplary
Organization	Audience cannot understand or has trouble following presentation because student jumps around and/or there is no sequence of information.	Student presents information in logical sequence which audience can follow.	Student presents information in logical, interesting sequence which audience can follow. There is a definite "flow" of the presentation from one topic to the next.
Subject Knowledge	Student does not have grasp of information or is uncomfortable with information. Student can only answer rudimentary questions about the subject.	Student is at ease with the information and can answer expected questions but does not elaborate or go beyond a surface-level of knowledge.	Student demonstrates full knowledge (more than required) by answering all class questions with explanations and elaboration.
Graphics	Student uses superfluous graphics, no graphics, or graphics/visual aids that rarely support text and presentation. The graphics or visual aids are not clear or easily interpretable.	Student's graphics or visual aids relate to the text and presentation.	Student's graphics/visual aids explain and reinforce screen text and presentation, are creative, and help to distinguish the student's presentation from other presentations.
Mechanics	Student's presentation has two or more spelling errors and/or grammatical errors.	Presentation has no more than one misspelling and/or grammatical error.	Presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors. Sentences or phrases are clear and concise.
Eye Contact	Student reads all or majority of report; presentation is highly "canned" and rigid; minimal or no eye contact throughout presentation	Student speaks and presents without reading, although may refer to notes or presentation materials occasionally; delivery exhibits some extemporaneous characteristics; eye contact is maintained and managed with total audience the majority of the presentation time.	Student speaks with little or no reference to notes or presentation materials; presentation appears very relaxed and non-scripted; eye contact is maintained and managed with total audience throughout the presentation.
Elocution	The student's voice lacks inflection and does not project well; student often mumbles or stumbles over words; there is frequent interjection of "crutch" words or sounds such as "ums," "uhs," "like," "you know," "stuff," etc.; words are mispronounced or word choice is often poor or incorrect.	The student's voice is clear and audible to all audience members and exhibits at least moderate inflection; there is minimal but some use of "crutch" words or sounds such as "ums," "uhs," "like," "you know," "stuff," etc.; words are pronounced accurately and word choice is acceptable.	The student's voice is clear and audible to all audience members and exhibits a high degree of inflection and precision; word choice is appropriate for the audience, well-selected and interesting; words are pronounced correctly; use of "crutch" words or sounds such as "ums," "uhs," "like," "you know," "stuff," etc. is seldom or non-existent.

## Goals # 2 & 4 CRITICAL THINKING and WRITTEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Goal: Students demonstrate evidence of critical thinking skills in written analyses.
- Objective: Instructors will rate students' critical thinking and/or written communication skills using the following rubric. Faculty will assess six elements of reasoning (Information, Concepts, Points of View, Assumptions, Implications, and Interpretation) on six intellectual standards (Clarity, Relevance, Depth, Breadth, Integration and Consistency), and two dimensions of written communication skills, where 1 = Did Not Meet Expectations, 2 = Met Expectations, 3 = Exceeded Expectations. At least 80 percent of the students will meet or exceed expectations on the six critical thinking elements and two written communication dimensions.
- Critical Thinking and Written Analyses Assessment Rubric<sup>1</sup>

<b>Written Communication Assessment</b>				
		<b>1 Did Not Meet Expectations</b>	<b>2 Met Expectations</b>	<b>3 Exceeded Expectations</b>
<b>Writing Conventions</b> (grammar, word use, punctuation, mechanics)		Frequent grammatical errors and misspellings inhibit readability Informal language, abbreviations and slang are used	Few grammatical errors and misspellings (e.g. three or fewer per page) Correct verb tense used Paragraphs flow from one to another Active voice pervasive	Free of grammatical errors and misspellings Effective verb tense used Uses phrases and construction that delight as well as inform the reader Primarily active voice
<b>Overall Effectiveness of Piece</b> (professional appearance, expression and format)		Not formatted to specifications Lacking professional appearance.	Formatting is generally correct, acceptable professional appearance.	Assigned format followed explicitly: Exceptional professional appearance
<b>Scale Key:</b> 1 = Did Not Meet Expectations      2 = Met Expectations      3 = Exceeded Expectations				
<sup>1</sup> . Based on <u>Critical Thinking: Basic Theory &amp; Instructional Structures</u> , "A Critical Thinker Considers the Elements of Reasoning," Foundations for Critical Thinking, <a href="http://www.criticalthinking.org">www.criticalthinking.org</a> . <sup>2</sup> . Refer to the rubric scale description below for each Intellectual Standard Criterion.				

<b>Critical Thinking Assessment</b>						
	<b>Intellectual Standards</b>					
<b>Elements of Reasoning</b>	<b>Clarity</b>	<b>Relevance</b>	<b>Depth</b>	<b>Breadth</b>	<b>Integration of the Elements</b>	<b>Consistency</b>
<b>Information</b> (situation analysis; important data, facts, observations for analysis and decision making)	1 <sup>2</sup> 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	NA	NA
<b>Concepts</b> (theories, principles, models to be applied in the analysis/exercise)	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	NA	NA
<b>Points of View</b> (important stakeholders to consider in the analysis and resulting decision(s))	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	NA	NA
<b>Assumptions</b> (presuppositions, values or beliefs that must be explicitly stated)	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	NA	1 2 3
<b>Implications</b> (potential +/- outcomes or consequences of decisions or strategies)	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	NA	1 2 3
<b>Interpretation</b> (articulation of conclusions, interpretation, recommendations based on information, concepts, POV, Assumptions and Implications)	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
<sup>1</sup> . Based on <u>Critical Thinking: Basic Theory &amp; Instructional Structures</u> , "A Critical Thinker Considers the Elements of Reasoning," Foundations for Critical Thinking, <a href="http://www.criticalthinking.org">www.criticalthinking.org</a> . <sup>2</sup> . Scale Key: 1 = Did Not Meet Expectations      2 = Met Expectations      3 = Exceeded Expectations						

### Critical Thinking and Written Analyses Rubric – Scale Description

Criteria	Levels		
	1 Did Not Meet Expectations	2 Met Expectations	3 Exceeded Expectations
Breadth of Discussion	Omits arguments or perspectives; Misses major content areas/concepts; Presents few options	Covers the breadth of the topic without being superfluous.	Considers multiple perspectives; Thoroughly delves into the issues/questions; Thoroughly discusses facts relevant to the issues
Depth of Discussion	Ignores bias; Omits arguments Misrepresents issues; Excludes data; Includes but does not detect inconsistencies of information; Ideas contain unnecessary gaps, repetition or extraneous details; Sees no arguments and overlooks differences	Detects bias; Recognizes arguments; Categorizes content; Paraphrases data; Sufficient detail to support conclusions and/or recommendations	Analysis includes insightful questions; Refutes bias; Discusses issues thoroughly Critiques content; Values information Examines inconsistencies; Offers extensive detail to support conclusions and recommendations; Suggests solutions or implementation
Clarity	Writing is not clear. It is difficult to understand points being made. The writing lacks transitions, and few examples and/or illustrations are provided to support explanation or recommendations.	Writing is generally well organized and understood. Transitions are used to facilitate clarity. Some examples and/illustrations are used to support explanation or recommendations.	Writing is succinct, precise, effectively organized and without ambiguity. Transitions, explanation and elaboration are extensive to elucidate points. Detailed illustrations and/or examples are used to support explanation or recommendations.
Relevance	Critical issues/questions are omitted or ignored in the writing.	Most of the critical issues/questions are addressed in the writing.	All critical issues/questions are addressed completely in the writing.
Internal Consistency	There is little integration across the sections of the paper. Several inconsistencies or contradictions exist. Few of the issues, recommendations and explanations make sense and are well integrated.	Sections of the paper are generally well linked/connected. Only minor contradictions exist. Most of the issues, recommendations and explanations make sense and are well integrated.	All sections of the paper are linked. There are no contradictions in the writing. All issues, recommendations and explanations make sense and are well integrated.
Integration of all Elements of Reasoning	Fails to draw conclusions or conclusions rely on author's authority rather than strength of presentation; Draws faulty conclusions; Shows intellectual dishonesty	Formulates clear conclusions with adequate support	Assimilates and critically reviews information, uses reasonable judgment, and provides balanced, well justified conclusions

## Goal #3

**TEAM SKILLS ASSESSMENT RUBRIC**  
**PEER EVALUATION ON TEAMWORK**

At least 80 percent of the students will be evaluated as "2" or "3" on the following criteria.

Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester/Year \_\_\_\_\_ Team # \_\_\_\_\_

Please list names of all your team members and then, based on the given descriptions give each member (including yourself) the points that reflect his/her contribution to the team.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teammates: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_

		Teammates		
You		1	2	3
<p><b><u>ATTENDANCE:</u></b> .....</p> <p>3. Attended at least 90% of the team meetings and was on-time.</p> <p>2. Attended at least 80% of the team meetings and was rarely late.</p> <p>1. Missed more than 20% of the team meetings and/or was often late to meetings.</p>	<b>Points:</b>			
<p><b><u>PARTICIPATION:</u></b> .....</p> <p>3. Took a leadership role, came to meetings prepared and participated actively and constructively in group discussions.</p> <p>2. Came to meetings prepared and participated constructively in group discussions.</p> <p>1. Was mostly quiet in group meetings, or participated in an ill-informed or otherwise non-constructive manner.</p>	<b>Points:</b>			
<p><b><u>EFFORT:</u></b> .....</p> <p>3. Willingly accepted his/her fair share of the team's work and was appropriately proactive in taking on additional duties as needed.</p> <p>2. Showed willingness and necessary effort to do his/her fair share of the work.</p> <p>1. Ended up doing significantly less than his/her fair share of the work.</p>	<b>Points:</b>			
<p><b><u>WORK QUALITY:</u></b> .....</p> <p>3. Completed tasks on-time and produced exceptional quality results that made outstanding contributions to the group's work.</p> <p>2. Completed assigned tasks in a reasonably timely fashion and produced quality results that made meaningful contributions to the group's work.</p> <p>1. Completed assigned tasks either so late and/or so lacking in quality that other group members had to do significant additional work.</p>	<b>Points:</b>			
<p><b><u>INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIORS:</u></b> .....</p> <p>3. Played a key role in creating a collaborative climate that fostered productive group outcomes including effective decision making and constructive disagreement.</p> <p>2. Exhibited behaviors consistent with a collaborative group climate that fostered productive group outcomes including effective decision making and constructive disagreement.</p> <p>1. Exhibited a demeanor and interpersonal style that was intimidating, domineering, and/or non-supportive and, thus, detracted from the team's ability to work collaboratively.</p>	<b>Points:</b>			

## Goal # 5

## Ethics Assessment Rubrics

At least 80 percent of the students will be evaluated as Acceptable or Exemplary on the following five ethics criteria.

Criteria	Levels		
	Unacceptable	Acceptable	Exemplary
Students demonstrate an understanding of the essential points of major ethics theory and principles.	Students unable to explain the major differences between competing ethics theories (e.g., teleological vs. deontological theories)	Students show correct understanding of the different rationale and implications of ethics theories.	Students demonstrate ability to apply an understanding of explicit and implicit consequences of differing ethical principles in business setting.
Students demonstrate an understanding of the responsibility of business in society.	Students unable to explain the role of business in society.  Students do not understand monetary role (profit maximization) of business in society.	Students identify and understand : direct stakeholders when explaining the role of business (treatment of employees, optimal firm value) in society. and indirect stakeholders when explaining the role of business (corporate citizenship, Stakeholders' view) in society.	Students apply an understanding of direct and indirect stakeholders when examining the role and responsibility of business in society.
Students demonstrate an understanding of ethical decision making.	Students do not recognize an ethical situation exists.  Students use at most a single framework for assessing and evaluating an ethical situation.	Students explore only two frameworks for assessing and evaluating an ethical situation.	Students explore more than two frameworks for assessing and evaluating an ethical situation.
Students demonstrate moral development in ethical decision making.	Students show pre-conventional level of moral development (deferring to authority and satisfying their own needs).	Students show conventional level of moral development (stereotypical roles of people in society and how individual fits into social order).	Students show post-conventional level of moral development (morality based on "society as a whole" or "universal principles").
Students demonstrate an understanding of the responsibilities of a leader's role as it relates to ethics.	Students unable to explain the role leaders in organization's ethical conduct.	Students recognize leaders play some role in the organization's ethical conduct.	Students recognize organization leaders' actions and policies determine the ethical tone of the organization.
Students demonstrate an understanding of the roles of various corporate governance entities and policies as they relate to ethics.	Students unable to identify components of effective corporate governance.	Students recognize the organization's (code of conduct and ethical culture) and external entities (government and professional organizations via laws and professional codes of conduct) role in creating effective corporate governance.	Students apply appropriate organization and external entity roles (code of conduct, professional codes of conduct, laws and professional codes of conduct) when evaluating corporate governance.
Students demonstrate an understanding of the difference in ethics and morality in relation to cultural setting.	Students unable to understand culture-based relativism in ethical standards and practices.	Students recognize the impacts of cultural tradition on ethics definition and awareness in different countries and regions.	Students show a clear understanding of practical importance of different ethical norms in different cultures, yet recognize the potential danger of ethical relativism as well.

## Goal # 6

**Globalization Awareness Rubric**

At least 80 percent of the students will be evaluated as “Meets Expectations” or “Exceeds Expectations” on the following criteria.

	Is Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Results Percentage		
				-	√	+
<b>Awareness of Global Diversity</b>	Shows no interest in global aspects of business or multicultural awareness.	Understands the growing trend of globalization, multiculturalism, and diversity in the business world.	Understands the increasing scope and influence of global business and the consequent global diversity and multiculturalism, as well as the potential side effect of globalization.			
<b>Global Business Perspectives</b>	Unable to understand the importance of developing and applying global perspectives in the business world.	Understands the importance of applying global perspectives to marketing, accounting, finance, and overall business strategy.	Applies the global and multicultural understanding and knowledge in business analysis and decision making.			
<b>Global Exposure</b>	Shows no interest in experiencing the global business world. Does not participate in international business seminars, lectures, study abroad, or international internship programs.	Makes serious efforts to know more about global diversity and experience the global business world.	Willingly and actively participates in global business programs, learns/speaks foreign languages, and/or travels abroad.			

**(In-Class Survey for Goal #6)****Awareness of Global Diversity, Global Business Perspectives, and Global Exposure**

One of the instructional goals of the MBA Program is that we want our MBA students to be cognizant of the impact of culture and diversity on global business. Through coursework and co-curricular activities our MBA students are to develop understanding of the globalization, cultural diversity as well as the legal arena surrounding international businesses. The following is a short survey designed to assess the students' awareness, understanding, and commitment towards globalization and cultural diversity.

**Check the most appropriate box.**

1. Overall does the MBA program help you understand the implications of globalization?  
 Not at All       Slightly       Somewhat       Quite a Bit       Completely
2. Overall does the MBA program help you understand the implications of diversity in the business world?  
 Not at All       Slightly       Somewhat       Quite a Bit       Completely
3. Overall does the MBA program help you develop cross-cultural knowledge/skills?  
 Not at All       Slightly       Somewhat       Quite a Bit       Completely

**Please circle the number that most nearly represents your assessment to each statement.**

4. Going through the MBA program my ability to make international business decisions has improved.  

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
5. I have the requisite cultural awareness and personal skills to accept positions with international responsibilities.  

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
6. I am comfortable leading and working with people from diverse cultural backgrounds in international settings.  

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

**Finally, we would like to ask a few questions about you to help us interpret the results.**

7. How many times have you traveled abroad over the last 10 years? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How many countries have you visited over the last 10 years? \_\_\_\_\_
9. How long have you stayed in foreign countries (in total)? \_\_\_\_\_ months
10. Do you think participating in international trips or conferences would be beneficial for you to develop skills to function effectively in international positions?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_\_\_ No



**Finally, we would like to ask a few questions about you to help us interpret the results.**

17. How many times have you traveled abroad over the last 10 years? \_\_\_\_\_
18. How many countries have you visited over the last 10 years? \_\_\_\_\_
19. How long have you stayed in foreign countries (in total)? \_\_\_\_\_ months
20. Do you think participating in international trips or conferences would be beneficial for you to develop skills to function effectively in international positions?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

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**Goals 2, 3, 4, and 6 – Communication, Team, Critical Thinking, and Multicultural Skills**

**October – November, 2009:** After the 2009 annual MBA assessment meeting, it was decided to create a new elective MBA seminar course to give students more opportunities to strengthen their learning in these categories.

Rationale and Purposes

As the contemporary business environments keep evolving it is imperative for future business managers to be adequately prepared for the challenges and opportunities that those changing environments present. Every day in and outside of a global corporation, many new and challenging business issues arise across a diverse spectrum of business disciplines. They may include a customer relations issue, an environmental sustainability issue, or a behavioral investment practice issue. In such an environment it is important for business professionals to have the versatility with which they can deal with those challenging issues.

The proposed course will serve this purpose by providing our MBA students with relevant learning experience in many of those new, challenging issues. It will give the students opportunities to learn about a variety of contemporary business issues that do not necessarily fit in other regular course offerings. The proposed course will also allow our students to earn credits by participating in the College-sponsored study abroad program where they can acquire much-needed first-hand international experience.

Course Description for Graduate Catalog

**MBA 489 Seminar in Graduate Business Studies**                      3 sem. hrs.

While topics will vary with needs and interests of students and instructors, this course will cover significant issues related to the contemporary business management including, but not limited to, sustainable enterprise management, global corporate cultures and business strategy, organizational planning and leadership, business consulting and conflict management, business communication and presentation, customer relations and brand marketing, and behavioral finance and investment practice. This course will also utilize the study abroad programs offered by the College of Business. May be taken more than once if different material is covered. Offered irregularly. Open to MBA students only. Material charge optional.

### Structure of the Course

- Credit Hours: Three semester hours of credit
- Open to all MBA students in the traditional MBA program who are in good standing
- Semesters Offered: Fall, Spring, or Summer
- Classes may be offered in weekday mornings or weekends.
- The student earns the credit by fulfilling the course requirements set by the instructor or by participating in the pre-arranged study abroad program.
- The credit from this course will count toward the elective requirements for the MBA degree.
- The MBA Director will coordinate the course in cooperation with the instructors chosen. The MBA Director will also consult with the Director of the College's International Business Institute to coordinate study abroad programs under this course.

#### **Fall 2010:**

First offering of this new elective course was approved and implemented for the Fall 2010 semester as below. Goal 3 Team Skills and Goal 4 Critical Thinking Skills were the main learning goals addressed in the course.

MBA 489      Executive Leadership in Today's Organization  
 Tuesdays, 5:00–7:50 pm, COB 132  
 Instructor: Ron Thein, Assistant Vice President, State Farm  
 Enrollment: 20 MBA students

#### **Spring 2011**

The second offering of MBA 489 was approved for Spring 2011. It mainly addresses Goal 2 Communication Skills.

MBA 489.01    Communication Strategies and Skills for Business Professionals  
 Tuesdays, 5:00–7:50 pm, COB 132  
 Instructor: Eric Hoss, Director, State Farm  
 Expected Enrollment: 25 MBA students

### **Goals 2 and 6 – Communication and Multicultural Skills**

**April 2010:** The MBA Program established a **formal networking dinner** event for all MBA students. The purpose is to offer opportunities for the students to network and communicate with faculty, alums, business leaders, and fellow students. The event also offers a keynote speech on varying yet relevant topics such as developing effective

communication skills, globalization and multicultural experiences, and technology and sustainability issues.

The first event was held on April 9, 2010 with 100 people in attendance. The overall feedback from the students was very positive in that they were able to get connected with faculty, alums, business leaders, and fellow students. Students particularly appreciated the insightful keynote speech on communication and job search skills as well as the opportunity to get exposed to people of different culture and background.

**October 2010:** The MBA Program has started a new event called “**MBA Connection.**” This event invites several alums and faculty members for MBA students to network with in an informal but intimate manner. The MBA Program plans to host MBA Connection two or three times per semester in cooperation with MBAA, the MBA student organization. The purpose is again to help MBA students promote their communication and job search skills as well as the opportunity to get exposed to people of different culture and background.

## Utilization of Exit Survey Data for Graduating MBA Students (For all learning goals)

### Summer 2010

Graduating MBA students enrolled in MQM 485 Advanced Organizational Strategy, the capstone required course, are surveyed and asked to self assess their learning experience throughout the program regarding the major content knowledge (Goal 1) and other skills categories (Goals 2–6).

Assessment Question: How has the MBA Program overall helped you in learning and developing the knowledge and skills in the following learning goals?

- 1 Content Knowledge
- 2 Communication Skills
- 3 Team Skills
- 4 Critical Thinking Skills
- 5 Ethical Reasoning Skills
- 6 Global and Multicultural Skills

Scale: Little = 1    2    3    4    5    6    7 = Very Much