

College of Business Administration

Tipping Points Update: Learning Centered Activities

March 2009

1. Learning Centeredness in Mission and Strategic Plan.

Over the past year, the College has undertaken a comprehensive effort to update our mission and strategic plan. In this process, our College has tried to ensure that the mission and plan themselves are learning centered. We have also ensured students the opportunity to participate in the process. Through focus groups and surveys, students have been consulted three times over the past year on the development of our mission and strategic plan.

Our mission, which was approved by the faculty and staff on March 6, 2009, reflects learning centeredness.

The College of Business Administration at Cal Poly Pomona is a diverse community of students, teacher-scholars, and staff, committed to active learning through the application of theory in practice. The College partners with its stakeholders to develop individuals with the knowledge and skills to be successful and to contribute in a dynamic global business environment.

A significant number of our strategic initiatives and objectives reflect learning centeredness

- Develop learning experiences and niche programs that students and employers value,
- Expand externally funded merit scholarships.
- Continue development of innovative undergraduate and graduate curricula that (a) address areas such as international/global issues, ethics, and communication, (b) address critical needs and areas of strong potential growth in the regional economy, and (c) strengthen and institutionalize the learn-by-doing aspects of the curriculum.
- Ensure each student will have the opportunity for a professional experience activity prior to graduation.

2. CBA's Assessment Effort.

As part of its re-accreditation effort, CBA has developed a comprehensive assessment system to identify areas of where student learning can be improved and implement changes to do so. The system includes learning goals for both the undergraduate and graduate programs. The undergraduate learning goals are: Students completing the BSBA program will be able to:

1. communicate effectively in a business environment
2. use critical thinking to make business decisions
3. understand the impact of globalization and diversity in a business environment
4. demonstrate knowledge of business principles and apply them to business problems in an integrative manner.
5. demonstrate awareness of the ethical and legal aspects of the business environment

2-1. Effective methods used to measure student learning. The College is assessing students mastery of these learning goals through special exams, presentations, and papers in its Business core courses. Examples are:

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| 1. Communication | -MHR 410 Capstone presentations- Rubric developed
-Graduation Writing Test (GWT) |
| 2. Critical Thinking | -TOM 411 Student Papers
- CIS 310 Spreadsheet project |
| 3. Global/Diversity | -TOM 411 Student papers
- FRL 301 and MHR 318 Questions |
| 4. Knowledge/Integration | -Common exams in ACC 207-08, FRL 300-01, CIS 310 |

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| 5. Ethics | -Ethics exams |
| 6. Multi-goal | -Employer internship evaluations |

Similar methods are being developed to measure learning goals in the CBA Graduate Program.

2-2. Assessment as part of continuous improvement: closing the loop. The College Assurance of Learning and Curriculum Improvement (ALCI) Committee and the Graduate Committee have begun to use analyses of assessment data in their efforts to improve the curriculum. Departments are using assessment data to identify needed improvements in specific courses. Examples include:

- Test results were analyzed and faculty were interviewed to identify weaknesses in students' quantitative preparation for the Business core courses. As a result, the ALCI Committee approved MAT 125, Business Calculus, as a prerequisite for quantitatively oriented core courses, including FRL 300.
- FRL has developed a common exam for its core courses FRL 300 and 301. It was piloted for the first time in Fall 2008. Results were analyzed and a deficiency was identified: the ability to calculate 'net present value' and explain its use. Course content is being modified to place greater attention on this subject and to assess student understanding of it.

3. Effective methods used to measure customer satisfaction.

The CBA measures customer satisfaction directly through its Graduating Student Survey to all graduating students. Students provide input on their self-perceptions of learning and their satisfaction with the program. The College has also gained indirect input on student/alumni satisfaction through its strategic planning surveys of students and alumni on critical issues, mission, and initiatives.

4. Students taking charge of their own learning: assessment.

The College has a number of courses in which students are expected to undertake projects individually or as teams that have 'deliverables' to an external group in the community. Although they are under faculty supervision, students must work independently, use initiative, and take charge of their own learning. In all cases, assessment is critical to student success in the course. Assessment often involves evaluation by clients or external business people, which further motivates students to perform well. Examples are:

- The Merrill Lynch Partnership with School and Arts and Enterprise at the Downtown Center, Pomona. Students lead teams of high school students, in helping small businesses in the community. Participating students develop leadership skills and learn self-reliance in developing solutions to the small business's needs. They are evaluated based on the quality of their project and the satisfaction of their client.
- Each year, the Competitive Marketing Edge, sponsored by a bank, has teams of graduate and undergraduate students developing promotional plans for local businesses. The effort, which is structured as a course, involves extensive work with the business owners, independent market research, and teamwork. The team plans are judged by a panel of faculty and business men. Client satisfaction is also part of the evaluation. Awards are given to the best three teams.
- The Accounting Department's VITA program has students assisting low income and senior taxpayers with completing their tax returns. With some faculty supervision, students learn how to interact with their clients and produce accurate tax returns. They are evaluated based on the accuracy of the return and the satisfaction of the client.

5 Cross-disciplinary efforts

- College collaboration with Judicial Affairs to produce ethics video on cheating, shown in MHR 301m which is required for all Business students.
- College collaboration with CLASS in offering the China Quarter each summer.
- IBM collaboration with Apparel Merchandising Management providing curricular support