

Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) Action Project:

Master of Business Administration Assessment of Student Learning Plan

September, 2007

1. Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.

An Assistant Professor to head the Field Study Course was hired. This course includes a summative project that requires students to apply a variety of knowledge and skills acquired in the curriculum. Students work in Field Study Teams. Student learning is evaluated by performance on the written paper and the final project presentation. A team performance evaluation was designed to evaluate a student's ability to work effectively as a team member. Based on the results from this year, the Field Study program was redrafted and additional sessions with evaluated outcomes and team products were inserted.

"Exit Interviews" with graduating students was implemented to solicit feedback about the program. As a result the New Student Orientation was expanded to a full day. This allowed for greater involvement of faculty, library, IT and the Enrollment Center and to improve the overall content and design of the experience.

Given that the MBA program is cohort based, a student representative from each cohort is identified. Student representatives meet monthly with administration in order to gather information concerning curriculum quality, course content, and general student satisfaction. Minutes from these meetings plus any actions taken to address concerns are distributed electronically to all students.

2. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this action project.

We continued our efforts to involve faculty, staff, students and supporting departments in our efforts. Our IT liaison continued to be helpful with the design and implementation of survey efforts. Department faculty meetings have included updates on initial quality of applicants, student achievement, results of any assessments and any problem areas. Issues arising from this forum can then be taken to the Assessment Committee.

3. Describe your next planned steps for this action project.

At the end of this action project we feel that we are in a good place to maintain our assessment of student learning efforts. The one thing that remains to be done is to develop the pre-test that was planned for academic year 2006. (See *prior year update*). This was not accomplished because priority was placed on improving applicant quality through the use of more stringent selection processes which included a specifically designed rubric, selection committee processes and increased expectations for GMAT scores. Agenda for the coming year will include work to develop this pre-test.

4. Describe any “effective practices” that resulted from your work on this Action Project.

The most effective practice was the development of a Quantitative Skills Placement examination and remedial skills program (ALEKS) to assess and address the preparedness of students to meet the quantitative skill demands of the MBA curriculum. Applicants are identified during the admission process for placement in the remedial program. The criteria include: 10 or more years since the last academic experience, lack of quantitative courses in their undergraduate program, below average results on the quantitative skills portion of the GMAT, or stated anxiety in meeting the math requirements of the curriculum. Individual meetings with each student are held to identify specific areas of concern and introduce students to the on-line, self-paced and graded skills program. A faculty member monitors performance and is available for individual tutoring. Success is measured through the average grades attained by students in the quantitative courses of the curriculum. While average GPA increased, the overall quality of students improved during the same time period (higher GMAT scores), making it difficult to conclusively attribute the improved grades to this remedial program. However, students have reported more confidence in meeting the requirements of the curriculum and have been positive in their end of program evaluation and exit interviews.

5. What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this action project?

Our continued challenges include strengthening the role of the Assessment Committee and the Student Representatives. Agenda for the coming year include adopting more specific expectations and defining the roles of the committee members as well as expanding the committee to include a Rochester representative. Student Representatives will also have specific information concerning the roles and expectations.

We continue to face a challenge in designing an effective pre-test and given both the accelerated design of the program and processes required to insure effective test administration.

6. Help from AQIP

We would welcome additional insights and conversation concerning developing our pre-test as discussed above.