

University of Dayton
School of Business Administration Graduate (MBA)
Assessment Report 2004

Introduction:

This assessment report is based upon two data sources:

1. The School of Business MBA Exit Survey
2. AACSB/EBI Part-Time MBA Exit Survey

The report provides an assessment of the desired MBA outcomes that were approved by the School's Graduate Committee in the spring, 2004. The **Results Section** will highlight separately the results of each data source indicated above. The **Implications Section** of the report will interpret the results of both data sources.

One important modification to the data sources needs to be discussed. When the initial results of the AACSB/EBI survey were examined, a number of significant differences in results were noted relative to our six comparison schools. However, when our assessment coordinator separated the results of our program's full-time 150-hour students from the results of our part-time students, many of these differences were no longer significant. None of the six comparison schools had a similar 150 hour program. Consequently, a major finding is that the responses of the former, who are a relatively newer type of student in our MBA program, are significantly different than those of the latter, who constitute the majority of our MBA student population. These differences may also be the result of using a form designed for part-time students (As noted above the form used in our survey was the AACSB/EBI Part-Time MBA Survey). Therefore the EBI data presented in our **Results Section** will only reflect responses from our traditional, part-time MBA students. We will however include in a separate section of our report a discussion of the results reported by our full-time 150-hour students and their implication.

A. Part-Time Student Assessment Results (150hr Acct. students excluded)

Outcome 1: In-depth Understanding of the Functional Areas of Business (Scale: 1 to 7; higher is desirable)

Results from Questions Designated as Outcome Measures

- 1. From AACSB/EBI Part-Time Survey Responses (Non-150 hour students)**

Question #40—(5.32) Program enhanced ability to be an effective manager—response was positive
Question #41—(5.42) Program enhanced ability to be an effective leader—response was positive
Question #A1—(5.47) Program provided an in-depth understanding of functional business areas—response was positive
Question #38—(4.66) Ability to use technology—response was moderately positive
Question #39—(4.40) Ability to manage technology—response was moderately positive

2. Non-150 hour MBA Program Exit Survey Responses (Five point scale with 5 = strongly agree)

Question # 30—(4.29) Program provided opportunity to make decisions based upon theoretical and applied business knowledge
Question # 38—(3.95) Program provided opportunity to stay current in business knowledge and improve business skills

Responses to both of these questions are very positive.

Survey Implications

In general, this learning objective is being achieved with a good degree of success. Except for question 38---the ability to use technology—in which we rank second in comparison to our other six select schools, we rank either fifth or sixth in the other three outcome measures which may indicate that all of our comparison schools are very good as indicated by these measures. Our highest mean score was achieved (5.47) for a question we added to the survey (A1) in which we assessed an in-depth understanding of the functional areas of business.

Responses to the process questions for this outcome revealed that most students were satisfied with the quality of teaching in required courses. Rankings in comparison to our select schools also placed us in the middle. We should note, however, that the set of comparison schools was an ambitious one as alluded to above. In fact, two of the six schools actually represent upward comparisons for us. These two schools were on our AACSB list of “aspirant schools” because of key characteristics they possess and that we desire to emulate. Thus, we set our comparison “bar” here high.

Results from our own MBA Exit Survey also indicate that we are achieving our objective for Outcome #1.

Outcome 2: An Understanding of Functional Integration in the Business Enterprise

Results from Questions Designated as Outcome Measures

1. From AACSB/EBI Part-Time Survey (Non-150 hour students) Scale: 1 to 7; higher is desirable

Question # 37—(5.21) Program enhanced my ability to work in teams—response was positive

Question # 40—(5.32) Program enhanced my ability to be an effective manager—response was positive

Question # 63—(4.74) Ability of fellow students to work in teams—response was slightly satisfied

2. Non 150-Hour MBA Program Exit Survey Responses (Five point scale with 5 = strongly agree)

Question # 28—(4.14) Program provided opportunity to integrated knowledge of the primary functional areas in business

Question # 29—(4.43) Program provided opportunity to think about business problems from a multi-functional perspective

Question # 30—(4.29) Program provided opportunity to make decisions based upon theoretical and applied business knowledge

Question # 31—(4.43) Program provided opportunity to think critically

Question # 33—(3.90) Program provided opportunity to enhance by ability to work in a team environment

Survey Implications:

The process question responses for this outcome measure are very favorable. Except for the question related to the value derived from team experiences, we rank either second, third, or fourth in comparison to our six select schools. However, our ranking relative to our peer schools on these three outcome questions noted above place us at either six or seven in this comparison group, which again indicates the strength within our comparison group.

Clearly we are experiencing some difficulties related to having a combination of full-time students with little or no practical experience and part-time students who are working full-time. MBA program administration is aware of the problem and has made significant progress addressing some of the administrative issues associated with our 150-hour students. The graduate committee intends to address the team experience and effectiveness issue in later meetings.

The committee was very satisfied with our select school rankings in terms of our teaching effectiveness in Business Policy/Strategy and in bringing global perspectives and real world applications into the classroom. On balance we believe we are achieving our learning objective in helping students to understand the functional integration required of a business enterprise.

The responses to questions for Outcome #2 from our own Exit Survey are excellent. Both surveys indicate that our efforts to provide functional integration, especially through our team-taught core courses, are successful.

Outcome 3: Ability to Visualize and Conceptualize Business Opportunities and Provide Effective Leadership in Pursuit of those Opportunities

Results from Questions Designated as Outcome Measures

**1. From AACSB/EBI Part-Time Survey (Non-150 hour students)
Scale: 1 to 7; higher is desirable**

Responses to questions related to enhancement of students' presentation skills (#35-4.95), writing skills (#36-5.29), ability to work in teams (#37-5.21) and ability to be an effective leader (#41-5.42), were positive.

Responses to questions related to enhancement of students' ability to think critically, define and solve problems, and interpret data (questions # 42-45) were very good. However the response to question #63-(4.74)--satisfaction with fellow students ability to work in teams was only slightly positive.

Responses to both of the questions that were added to the survey to measure outcome #3---ability to visualize/conceptualize business opportunities and effective leadership in pursuit of business opportunities—were positive.

2. Non-150 Hour MBA Program Exit Survey Responses (Five point scale with 5 = strongly agree)

There was agreement that the MBA program gave students an opportunity to:

- #30—(4.29) makes decisions using both theoretical and applied business knowledge
- #31—(4.43) think critically about business issues using both theoretical and applied knowledge
- #32—(3.90) increase leadership abilities
- #33—(3.90) enhance ability to work in teams
- #34—(3.95) enhance ability to communicate effectively in writing
- #35—(4.10) enhance ability to speak effectively in both formal and informal settings

There was somewhat less agreement for question #37-(3.67) that the program enhanced students' abilities to incorporate a global perspective in addressing issues in their work environment.

Survey Implications

Comparisons to our six select schools for Outcome #3 on the EBI survey were mixed. We ranked sixth for those questions related to *presentation skills* and *ability to be an effective leader*, and seventh for those questions related to *working in teams*. However, we ranked first in *ability to solve problems* and to *think critically*. We were third in writing skills and ability to define problems.

Except for the question relating to incorporation of global perspectives in my work environment, the results on our own exit survey were generally positive. Perhaps the committee needs to rethink the wording of this question since some students may not be in work positions where this is a relevant issue.

It is certainly clear at this point that the team experiences of some students are an issue that needs to be more closely examined. This problem will surface again when we look at survey results for the 150-hour students (see below).

Outcome #4: An Understanding of the Relations Between the Firm and its Stakeholders and Practice Balancing Their Needs

Results from Questions Designated as Outcome Measures

1. From AACSB/EBI Part-Time Survey (Non-150 hour students) Scale :1 to 7; higher is desirable

The only outcome question for this measure was a question added to the survey which asked students if the program had enhanced their understanding of the relations between the firm and its stakeholders (score = 5.76/7.0). The results were positive. There were five process questions for this outcome. Responses to two of these questions were excellent. Both related to student satisfaction with required and elective course instructors relating concepts to the real world. Results were also good for the question related to satisfaction with opportunities to pursue work related projects in courses. However, both questions related to the extent that the curriculum addressed business ethics and social responsibility were only slightly positive.

2. Non-150 Hour MBA Program Survey Responses (Five Point scale with 5 = strongly agree)

At present our own exit survey does not have questions related to this outcome.

Survey Implications

While our program addresses this outcome measure, the committee is concerned about the two process questions related to the ability of our curriculum to consider both business ethics and social responsibility issues. Compared to our select schools we ranked sixth for both of these questions. Given the mission, tradition, and heritage of our school this is an issue the committee will have to study in more detail. One caveat to this conclusion is that the survey results ask our respondents to reflect back on their entire

graduate experience, a time period that could comprise five years or more. Thus, the changes we have made to improve our emphasis on ethics may be working, but simply not be noted by our current graduates who took the bulk of their classes prior to our new emphasis on ethics.

The committee is extremely pleased with the results showing that our required and elective course instructors are relating concepts to real world examples. These same process questions are also used for outcome measures two and three. Taken together they indicate that we are achieving not only a balance of firm and stakeholder interests but also outcomes related to leadership and integration.

Outcome # 5: An Understanding of and a Commitment to Ethical Decision Making

Results from Questions Designated as Outcome Measures

1. From AACSB/EBI Part-Time Survey (Non-150 hour students) Scale: 1 to 7; higher is desirable

There were only two question related to this outcome measure. Both questions were added to the EBI survey. The first relates to an understanding of ethical decision- making and the second is related to an understanding of functional integration in business. Scores were as follows: Understanding of ethical decision-making = 4.66/7.0 and understanding of functional integration in business = 5.55/7.0.

2. Non-150 Hour MBA Program Exit Survey Responses (Five Point Scale with 5 = strongly agree)

Two questions from our own survey also related to this outcome measure:
#30—the program gave me an opportunity to enhance my ability to make decisions based upon both theoretical and applied business knowledge (score = 4.29/5.0)
#36—the program enhanced my ability to incorporate ethical dimensions when resolving issues in my work environment (score = 3.71/5.0)

Survey Implications

Since we added these optional questions to the EBI survey, we do not have comparisons with our select schools for the questions designated as outcomes. However we do have two process questions from the EBI survey related to this outcome that can act as benchmarks. . Questions five and six ask about the extent to which the curriculum addressed business ethics and social responsibility. We ranked sixth on both of these process questions. The results from both surveys show mixed results for our outcome questions related to this objective. This is an area the committee will have to address (please see caveat noted above).

B. 150 -Hour Student Assessment Results

Our MBA program has a mix of both full-time (referred to as 150-hour students since they are taking the MBA program to satisfy the educational requirements of the Ohio State Board of Accountancy in order to sit for the CPA exam) and part-time students. The part-time contingent is the largest segment of the program. Most of our part-time students are employed full-time. Since the AACSB/EBI survey instrument was designed for a Part-Time student population we have decided to report our two student populations separately both for the EBI survey and our own exit survey results. An additional motivation for this separation is also related to the marked differences in results from both student populations. The assessment that follows will highlight these differences by outcomes. We will focus on those questions where there are significant differences between both groups of students. It is important to note that the 150-hour student responses involved at most seventeen students compared to thirty-eight responses for the Non-150 hour students.

Outcome #1: In-depth Understanding of the Functional Areas of Business

1. From AACSB/EBI Part-Time Survey (Scale: 1 to 7; higher is desirable)

Significant differences were noted for the following questions:

#38—Ability to use technology score = 3.71 compared to 4.66

#A1—Question we add to the survey—in-depth understanding of functional business areas—score = 4.65 compared to 5.47

Given the seven- point scale for this question, four can be viewed as a learning outcome that is “moderately” positioned on the scale. Therefore a score below four indicates that our 150-hour students did not believe that our program even moderately enhanced their ability to use technology. Although results for question A1 were better there is almost a one-point difference in response to this question between the two groups.

2. MBA Program Exit Survey Responses (Five Point Scale with 5 = strongly agree)

Two questions from our own survey measured results for this outcome.

#30—program provided an opportunity to make decisions based upon both theoretical and applied business knowledge—score = 4.0 compared to 4.29.

#38—opportunity to stay current in business knowledge and improve my business skills—score = 3.45 compared to 3.95.

Survey Implications

Comparison of the two student groups shows that we are not as successful achieving Outcome #1 from the viewpoint of the 150-hour students.

Outcome #2: An Understanding of Functional Integration in the Business Enterprise

1. From AACSB/EBI Part-Time Survey (Scale: 1 to 7; higher is desirable)

Question #63—which measured satisfaction with fellow students ability to work in teams—showed a lower mean score for the 150-hour group (score = 4.00 vs. 4.74). Other outcome question scores were similar for both groups.

However there were significant differences in results for process questions for this outcome.

Question #16—satisfaction with quality of teaching in International Business—3.44 for 150-hour group vs. 5.00 for Non-150 hour group

Question #27—satisfaction with required course instructors relating concepts too real world—4.71 vs. 6.11

Question #28—satisfaction with elective course instructors relating concepts too real world—4.94 vs. 6.05

Question #29—satisfaction with instructors presenting a global perspective—3.71 vs.5.58

Question # 30—satisfaction with opportunities to pursue work-related projects in courses—4.13 vs. 5.34

2. MBA Program Exit Survey Responses (Five Point Scale with 5 = strongly agree)

Results for both groups of students were similar for Outcome #2.

Survey Implications

While results for both groups of students were similar with respect to our Outcome questions for both surveys---we are meeting Outcome #2—there does appear to be a significant difference in responses to a number of the process questions related to this outcome. The committee will have to address these differences as part of its on-going assessment review process. At this point, given the sample size of the 150-hour group, it is too early to speculate on reasons for these differences.

Outcome #3: Ability to Visualize and Conceptualize Business Opportunities and Provide Effective Leadership in Pursuit of those Opportunities

1. From AACSB/EBI Part-Time Survey (Scale: 1 to 7; higher is desirable)

Significant differences were noted in three outcome measures with respect to the programs ability to enhance:

#36—Writing skills—4.12 for 150-hour group vs. 5.29 for Non-150 hour group
#43—Ability to define problems—5.29 vs. 5.87
A4—Effective leadership in pursuit of business opportunities—4.41 vs. 5.32

Process questions for this Outcome were also the same as those noted above for Outcome #2.

2. MBA Program Exit Survey Responses (Five Point Scale with 5 = strongly agree)

Differences between the two groups were also noted for Outcome #3.

#34—program gave me the opportunity to enhance my ability to communicate in writing—3.09 for 150-hour group vs. 3.95 for Non-150 hour students

#37—program gave me an opportunity to incorporate a global perspective in addressing issues in my work environment—3.0 vs. 3.67

Survey Implications

In general, our 150-hour student responses show that we are meeting Outcome #3 although not to the same degree as expressed by our Non-150 students. The differences noted in question #37 above might simply be due to the fact that most of our 150-hour students have little if any work experience and therefore cannot relate to this question. Given the writing intensive approach in our MBA courses we are not able to make a determination at this point about the differences noted in question #34.

Outcome #4: An Understanding of the Relations Between the Firm and its Stakeholders and Practice Balancing their Needs

1. From AACSB/EBI Part-Time Survey (Scale: 1 to 7; higher is desirable)

The only outcome question for this objective is one, which we added to the survey instrument—question A5. The results are positive and very similar to those of the Non-150 hour students. However, the five process questions related to this outcome all show significant differences between the two groups. Since questions 27-30 have already been discussed for other outcome measures, we will only focus on two questions that have not been previously discussed.

#5—the extent to which the curriculum addressed business ethics—score = 3.76 for 150 hour students and 4.63 for Non-150 hour students.

#6—the extent to which the curriculum addressed social responsibility—score = 3.71 vs. 4.29

2. MBA Program Exit Survey Responses—There are no outcome measures for this objective in our own survey.

Survey Implications

As discussed in the assessment section for Non-150 hour students, responses to these two questions was somewhat disappointing given the mission, tradition, and heritage of UD. This is a result that the committee will study further in its on-going efforts to improve the program.

Outcome #5: An Understanding of and Commitment to Ethical Decision Making

1. From AACSB/EBI Part-Time Survey (Scale: 1 to 7; higher is desirable)

Two questions were added to the EBI survey:

#A6—the curriculum addressed business ethics

#A2—the curriculum addressed an understanding of functional integration in business

No significant differences in responses for the two groups were noted for question A6. However, there was a significant difference in responses for the two groups for question A2. For the 150-hour group the mean score was 4.53 vs. 5.55 for the Non-150 hour group.

2. MBA Program Exit Survey Responses (Five Point Scale with 5 = strongly agree)

Two questions related to Outcome #5 in our own survey—questions # 30 and 36. Both questions were discussed in the Non-150 hour assessment section above. No significant differences in the responses for the two groups were noted for these questions.

Survey Implications

As previously noted in the non-150 hour assessment section, the results for this outcome measure are mixed. The committee will have to examine these results as part of its on-going assessment effort.

Summary and Conclusion

While it is extremely difficult to draw conclusions from such a small sample size for both student groups, the following points are noted:

1. Further study and discussion is necessary given the significant differences noted for our non-150 hour vs. 150-hour student populations.
2. The team experiences of both student populations are at best just satisfactory.
3. Given the mission, tradition, and heritage of UD the results for ethics coverage and social responsibility issues are less than satisfactory.
4. In general we appear to be achieving our objectives for Outcomes 1, 2 and 3.

Assessment must be viewed in the context of a commitment to on-going improvement. While the sample size in question is certainly too small to draw any definitive conclusions about our program, the results did highlight areas of strength, weakness, and opportunities for improvement.