

Detailed Assessment Report
2010-2011 Business Administration MBA*

Mission/Purpose

Prepare students for upper management positions within public (e.g., health services & city, state, and federal government and their suppliers) and private enterprises (e.g., pharmaceutical firms, electric utilities, consumer packaged goods and industrial equipment manufacturers) thereby promoting economic development, meeting societal needs, and improving the quality of life for the organizations and the communities where they are employed.

Student Learning Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Achievement Targets, Findings, and Action Plans**O 1: Concepts and techniques in all functional areas**

MBA graduates will demonstrate knowledge of business concepts and techniques in all relevant functional areas (e.g., managerial accounting, marketing, management, finance, and strategy).

Associations:

AACSB 2-15

Related Measures:**M 1: MBA ETS Major Field Exam - Specific Areas**

Mean score of MBA students (sub grouped by location) on MBA-ETS Assessment Indicators for specific sub score areas (managerial accounting, finance, management, marketing and strategic integration)

Source of Evidence: Standardized test of subject matter knowledge

Achievement Target:

MBA students will score at or above the national 60th percentile in each sub score area (managerial accounting, finance, management, marketing, strategic integration), sub grouped by campus location.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Partially Met

Mean percent correct scores for assessment indicators of MBA students in Spring, 2011 are reported separately for the Hattiesburg and Coast cohorts. During the term, 23 students were enrolled in the Hattiesburg section of MBA 660 and 16 students were enrolled in the Coast section of MBA 660. Mean percent correct scores do indicate improvement in national percentile rankings in these assessment indicators. The Spring, 2011 results are detailed, by cohort, below:

1. Hattiesburg MBA cohort (n=23)

	Mean % Correct	National Percentile Rank
Managerial accounting	58	80%
Finance	51	80%
Management	61	50%
Marketing	66	70%
Strategic Integration	60	75%

2. Coast MBA cohort (n=16)

	Mean % Correct	National Percentile Rank
Managerial accounting	59	85%
Finance	52	80%
Management	64	60%
Marketing	69	85%
Strategic integration	61	80%

Discussion: ETS sub score results in 2011 show continued improvement in national percentile rankings. While sub score rankings improved in 4 of 5 categories, substantial improvements were observed in the Finance sub score area (from the 50th percentile in 2010 to the 80th percentile in 2011). Only one area declined; Management sub scores declined from the 75th percentile in 2010 to the 50th percentile in the Hattiesburg cohort and to the 60th percentile in the Coast cohort. Overall, the 2011 results document the highest sub score rankings achieved in 4 of 5 areas, over a 6 year-period of tracking and assessing results. This provides a second year of assessment evidence of enhanced learning outcomes, and the overall success of the MBA program revision in 2009. The Coast cohort continues to outperform the Hattiesburg cohort in most sub score areas. The Coast cohort met or exceeded the achievement target in all 5 sub score areas; the Hattiesburg cohort met the achievement target in 4 of 5 sub score areas.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

For full information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

Meet with graduate management faculty

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011

Given the decline in management national percentile rankings, a meeting will be held with the graduate management faculty to dis...

M 2: Statistical Analysis Abilities

Student performance (grouped by campus location) in statistical analysis skills, assessed on a comprehensive analysis project in MBA 610 using the "Mathematical and Statistical Accuracy" dimension on a 5 part rubric.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

Achievement Target:

85% of MBA students will meet or exceed expectations on this dimension, of a 5 part assessment rubric used in MBA 610.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met

Assessment results for the Spring, 2011 semester in MBA 610 (Hattiesburg cohort) indicate this goal was met. Of the 31 students enrolled in the course, 17 (54.8%) students exceeded expectations in Mathematical and Statistical Accuracy and 11 students (35.5%) met expectations. Three students (9.7%) failed to meet expectations on this rubric dimension. Therefore, 90.3% of students assessed met or exceeded expectations on this measure in 2011.

M 11: Exam questions in MBA 660

Thirteen exam questions will be used to assess knowledge of strategic integration concepts in MBA 660.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

Achievement Target:

MBA students will correctly answer 75% of these exam questions.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Not Reported This Cycle

Knowledge of concepts and techniques in the functional areas of business were not assessed by exam questions in MBA 660 during the 2010-2011 cycle.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

For full information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

Review measurements of O1 in MBA 660

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010

Minor adjustments in exam questions may be needed to capture knowledge of strategic concepts in MBA 660, or further class time m...

M 12: Exam questions in MBA 611

Examination questions in MBA 611 will be aggregated and used to assess fundamental knowledge of accounting (O1) and the ability to utilize accounting information in performing analyses required for business decisions (O5).

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

Achievement Target:

MBA students will correctly answer 75% of these exam questions.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Not Met

During the Fall, 2010 semester only one section of MBA 611 was offered. Therefore, results are reported for a combined cohort of Hattiesburg (full time) and Gulf Coast (working professional) students (n=19). The achievement target was almost met; on average, MBA students correctly answered 74% of exam questions developed to assess learning outcome 1. This is an improvement over the prior year. The professor modified some exam questions in the 2010 course offering and reported a small improvement in performance compared to the 2009 results.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

For full information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

Continue measuring accounting knowledge

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011

In the Fall, 2011 semester the MBA program consolidates to the Coast campus and the cohorts will be combined. A new professor w...

M 13: ETS Mean Composite Score National Percentile Rankings

MBA ETS Major Field Exam Mean Composite score is used to assess functional knowledge and critical thinking skills of all students in the MBA program. The trend over time will be analyzed for continuous improvement, and successful loop closing.

Source of Evidence: Standardized test of subject matter knowledge

Achievement Target:

The mean composite score will meet or exceed the 70th percentile nationally.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met

Mean composite scores have been analyzed over a 6 year period, from a national percentile ranking perspective. This assessment provides the advantage of an external, international perspective of the learning outcomes for our MBA students. The national percentile rankings compare our MBA performance to almost 30,000 MBA students who have taken the ETS major field test. In addition, MBA students take this standardized exam at the "exit point" in the MBA program as part of the capstone MBA 660 course requirements. Therefore, we are able to compare their performance to a large international cohort and are assessing knowledge at the conclusion of the MBA curriculum. The trend over the 6-year period for all MBA students is:

Year	National Percentile Ranking
2006	55th
2007	60th
2008	45th
2009	40th
2010	70th
2011	75th

Conclusion: Since the MBA program was revised in early 2009, our national percentile rankings have increased from a low of the 40th percentile to the 70th (2010) and 75th percentile (2011). This provides strong evidence of the success of the program's revision, and of significant improvement in learning outcomes across the functional areas of business. These results have been analyzed by cohort in 2010 and 2011, to identify and study any differences in performance between the Hattiesburg (full time student) group and the Coast (working professional student) group since the MBA program was revised.

Results for the last two years are reported for the national percentile ranking achieved (NPR) and sample sizes (n):

Cohort	2010 NPR(n)	2011 NPR(n)
Hattiesburg	70th (29)	65th (23)
Coast	95th (6)	80th (16)

Conclusion: Like many of our cohort-specific assessment results indicate, the Coast cohort generally outperforms the Hattiesburg cohort of students. This result can be attributed to the working experiences of the Coast cohort. However, our results are encouraging for both cohorts over the last two years. The Hattiesburg cohort achieved the 70th percentile in 2010 and nearly achieved the target in 2011. The Coast cohort exceeded the target in both years, and achieved an outstanding 95th percentile ranking in 2010.

M 15: Business Plan Assignment

Performance on a comprehensive Business Plan paper assignment in MBA 605 will be used to assess competence across the functional areas of business knowledge.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Achievement Target:

85% of MBA students will meet or exceed expectations on the Business Plan, assessed by a 13-part rubric.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Not Met

Results are reported for the Fall, 2010 semester. Two sections of MBA 605 were offered; results are separated for the Hattiesburg cohort (n=19) and the Coast cohort (n=20). In the Hattiesburg cohort, 40% of students scored above 85% on the business plan and met or exceeded expectations. In the Coast cohort, 75% of students scored above 85% on the business plan and met or exceeded expectations. Therefore, the achievement target was not met in either cohort. Detailed analysis according to rubric dimensions indicate weaknesses in the following sections of the business plans: 1. Target Market Analysis 2. Financial Plan 3. Operational Plan 4. Marketing Plan

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

For full information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

Modify course content to improve performance

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011

The plan is to modify the course content and coverage to place more emphasis on the sections of the business plan where performa...

O 2: Leadership and Team Building Skills

MBA graduates will demonstrate skills in leadership and team building.

Associations:

AACSB 2-18

Related Measures:

M 3: Comprehensive Group Case

Leadership and team building skills are assessed on a comprehensive group case administered in MBA 660, the capstone course for the program. Leadership and teambuilding skills are evaluated using a case team performance appraisal rubric.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

Achievement Target:

85% of MBA students will meet or exceed expectations in leadership and team building skills, assessed using a team building case study rubric in MBA 660.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Not Reported This Cycle

Leadership and team building skills were not assessed in MBA 660 during the 2010-2011 cycle.

M 4: Leadership Skills Assessment

Leadership skills will be assessed in MBA 600 course, using case assignments and specific exam questions. Rubric is being developed for this new course in the MBA program (Organizational Behavior and Leadership). Course content has changed with MBA program revision. Target date for assessment: Fall, 2011. Alternately, leadership and team building skills will be assessed in other MBA courses (i.e., MBA 600 or MBA 660) where students operate in teams and self-assess these skills using a rubric.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

Achievement Target:

85% of MBA students (grouped by campus cohort) will meet or exceed expectations on leadership skills, as indicated on a rubric where students directly assess leadership and team building skills in assigned group work/cases.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Not Met

In the 2009-2010 report, the plan was to assess leadership and team building skills in MBA 600. During the current cycle, the expected report from MBA 600 was not received. However, leadership and team building skills were assessed in 2 sections of MBA 605 during the Fall semester, 2010. The Hattiesburg cohort had 19 students; the Coast cohort had 20 students. Assessment results indicate that 100% of students in the Hattiesburg cohort met or exceeded expectations in team building and leadership skills, using student self-assessments of these abilities on a rubric. In the Coast cohort, 75% of students met or exceeded expectations in this area. In the Coast cohort, one team of 4 students did not function well as a group, failing to meet expectations.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

For full information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

Monitor team performance during semester

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011

The Coast MBAs are working professionals. Therefore, teamwork can be more difficult than in the Hattiesburg cohort (largely full...

O 3: Ethical and Cultural Awareness

MBA graduates will demonstrate the ability to identify and understand ethical and cultural perspectives.

Associations:

AACSB 2-15, 2-18

Related Measures:

M 5: Ethical and Cultural Awareness Case

In-class case assignment in MBA 600 class to evaluate student skills in identifying and managing ethical and cultural diversity issues in business, evaluated with a 5 part rubric.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

Achievement Target:

85% of MBA students, sub grouped by campus cohort will meet or exceed expectations on an ethics and cultural awareness case assignment in MBA 600. Assessment results will be derived from a 5-part rubric.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Not Reported This Cycle

Ethical and cultural awareness was not assessed in the 2010-11 cycle in MBA 600. Report was expected during the year, but not received from the faculty member. A new measure will be added to assess this learning objective. In addition, a new faculty member will teach MBA 600 in the Fall, 2011 and will be asked to assess this learning outcome in the course.

M 14: RCR Training Completion

Effective Spring, 2011 the Vice President for Research implemented a mandatory "Responsible Conduct of Research" online training program for all graduate students. This online training module includes extensive content on the ethical conduct of research, and cultural differences in perspectives and research teams. Each year, we will assess the percentage of MBA students who successfully complete the training program.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

Achievement Target:

All new MBA students (100%) will complete RCR training while in the MBA program.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Partially Met

During the spring, 2011 semester 26 MBA students completed the RCR training module (55%) and 21 MBA students did not complete the training (45%). This result is positive, since the mandatory training only began in the spring, 2011 semester; completion rates are based only on a 1-semester time frame.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

For full information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

Communicate the RCR training requirement to MBA students

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011

During the next year, we will communicate the need to complete this mandatory training at several points during each semester. ...

O 4: Effective communication skills

MBA graduates will demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively.

Associations:

AACSB 2-15, 2-18

Related Measures:

M 6: Statistical Analysis Comprehensive Assignment

Written and graphic communication abilities will be assessed in a final comprehensive assignment in MBA 610, using 2 dimensions on a 5-part rubric.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

Achievement Target:

85% of MBA students will meet or exceed expectations in written and graphic communication abilities on a comprehensive analysis case assignment in MBA 610, sub grouped by campus location.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met

Assessment results for the Spring, 2011 semester in MBA 610 indicate this goal was met. All findings are for the Hattiesburg cohort (n=31). Specifically, 27 students (87.1%) exceeded expectations in written communication skills and 1 student (3.2%) met expectations. Three students (9.7%) failed to meet expectations. Therefore, 90.3% of students met or exceeded expectations in written communications skills. In graphic

communication skills assessment, 19 students (61.3%) exceeded expectations and 9 students (29%) met expectations. Three students (9.7%) failed to meet expectations. Therefore, 90.3% of students met or exceeded expectations in graphic communication skills.

M 7: Written and Presentation Communication Skills Assignments

Written and verbal/presentation communications skills assessed in multiple case assignments in MBA 660, the capstone course in the program. Written communication skills assessed using a 6-part written communication rubric; verbal/presentation skills assessed using a 6-part oral communication rubric.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

Achievement Target:

85% of MBA students will meet or exceed expectations in written and oral/presentation communication skills assignments in the capstone course, MBA 660.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Not Reported This Cycle

Written and presentation communication skills were not assessed in MBA 660 during the 2010-2011 cycle.

M 16: Group oral presentation of business plan

Group oral presentations of business plans in MBA 605 will be used to assess communication skills of MBA students.

Source of Evidence: Presentation, either individual or group

Achievement Target:

85% of MBA students will meet or exceed expectations on the group oral presentations of the business plan project.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met

Results are reported for 2 sections of MBA 605, offered in the Fall 2010 semester. The Hattiesburg cohort included 19 students; the Coast cohort included 20 students. Results indicate that 100% of MBA students in both cohorts met or exceeded expectations on the oral group presentations of their business plan projects, defined as scoring above 85% on the presentation (measured by a presentation rubric).

M 18: Presentation scores on MBA 611 cases

Scores for oral presentations of MBA 611 cases will be used to assess communication skills (LO4).

Source of Evidence: Presentation, either individual or group

Achievement Target:

85% of MBA students will meet or exceed expectations on case presentations in MBA 611, judged by the faculty member and by peer assessments of presentation skills.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met

Results are reported for the Fall 2010 section of MBA 611 and for a combined cohort of Hattiesburg and Coast students (n=19). Presentation scores ranged from 91% to 80% for all students in the class. Students were assessed to have excellent oral presentation skills

regarding their use of PowerPoint, the organization of their presentations, and the conduct of their presentations using multiple speakers. The achievement target was met; 100% of MBA students met or exceeded expectations as assessed by the faculty member and their peers.

O 5: Creative Critical Thinking Skills

MBA graduates will demonstrate creative critical thinking skills by integrating and applying appropriate concepts, technologies and decision making techniques to effectively evaluate and manage a business in a global environment.

Associations:

AACSB 2-15

Related Measures:

M 8: MBA ETS Major Field Exam - Composite Score

MBA ETS Major Field Exam Composite Score is used to assess strategic integration and critical thinking abilities of all students in the MBA program, sub grouped by campus location.

Source of Evidence: Standardized test of subject matter knowledge

Achievement Target:

85% of MBA students will have a composite ETS score above the national median score, sub grouped by campus location.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Not Met

Findings for the Spring, 2011 ETS administration to MBA students are reported separately for the Hattiesburg cohort (n=23) and the Coast cohort (n=16). Individual score reports were used to calculate the number of students in each cohort who achieved or exceeded the national median composite score of 248 reported by ETS. This goal was achieved by 19 students in the Hattiesburg cohort (83%) and by 13 of the students in the Coast cohort (81%). While both cohorts nearly achieved this (somewhat high) target, neither group achieved the 85% achievement target. The average ETS scores in both cohorts continued to document strong performance in 2011, on a national percentile ranking basis. The mean composite score for the Hattiesburg cohort was 256, placing this group at the 65th percentile nationally. The mean composite score for the Coast cohort was 259, placing this group at the 80th percentile nationally.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

For full information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

Monitor ETS results and test conditions

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010

Continue to monitor ETS composite scores for MBA students through the 2010-2011 year.

Continue analysis of ETS total score performance

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011

The MBA cohorts will be combined in the Fall, 2011 semester since the program has been consolidated to the Coast campus. We will...

M 9: Analytical Comprehensive Assignment

Comprehensive analysis assignment in MBA 610, sub grouped by campus location. Creativity and strategic integration/managerial relevance of recommendations will be assessed on two dimensions of a 5 part rubric.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

Achievement Target:

85% of MBA students will meet or exceed expectations on a comprehensive analytical case assignment in two dimensions (creativity and analytical curiosity; managerial usefulness of the analysis) of a 5 part rubric used in MBA 610.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met

Assessment results indicate this goal was met in MBA 610. Results are reported for the Spring, 2011 semester and represent the Hattiesburg cohort (n=31). Specifically, 87.1% of students met or exceeded expectations in the creativity and analytical curiosity dimension (14 students/45.2% exceeded expectations and 13 students/41.9% met expectations). Four students (12.9%) failed to meet expectations in this dimension. Similarly, 90.3% of students met or exceeded expectations in the critical thinking/managerial usefulness of the analysis dimension (16 students/51.6% exceeded expectations and 12 students/38.7% met expectations). Three students (9.7%) failed to meet expectations in this dimension.

M 10: Strategic Case Analysis

Strategic integration, critical thinking and decision making abilities will be assessed on a comprehensive case in MBA 660, the capstone course for the MBA program.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

Achievement Target:

85% of MBA students (grouped by campus cohort) will meet or exceed expectations in strategic integration, critical thinking and decision making skills, assessed using case analyses in the course. Two dimensions on a case analysis rubric (content and analytical skills) will be utilized for this assessment.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Not Reported This Cycle

Creative critical thinking skills were not assessed on a comprehensive case in MBA 660 during the 2010-2011 cycle.

M 12: Exam questions in MBA 611

Examination questions in MBA 611 will be aggregated and used to assess fundamental knowledge of accounting (O1) and the ability to utilize accounting information in performing analyses required for business decisions (O5).

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

Achievement Target:

MBA students will correctly answer 75% of these exam questions.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Not Met

Results are reported for the Fall 2010 semester. Only one section of MBA 611 was

offered, so results are for a combined cohort of Hattiesburg and Coast MBA students (n=19). In 2010, there was a small drop in performance on questions used to assess LO5. Students correctly answered 74% of the exam questions used to assess this learning outcome; in 2009, students correctly answered 76% of these questions. Therefore, the achievement target was not met by a narrow margin (1% of questions).

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

For full information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

Review exams and assignments in MBA 611

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010

The 2009 assessment results in MBA 611 signal a need to reevaluate course material and examinations. In the future, the inclusion...

Continue measuring accounting knowledge

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011

In the Fall, 2011 semester the MBA program consolidates to the Coast campus and the cohorts will be combined. A new professor w...

M 13: ETS Mean Composite Score National Percentile Rankings

MBA ETS Major Field Exam Mean Composite score is used to assess functional knowledge and critical thinking skills of all students in the MBA program. The trend over time will be analyzed for continuous improvement, and successful loop closing.

Source of Evidence: Standardized test of subject matter knowledge

Achievement Target:

The mean composite score will meet or exceed the 70th percentile nationally.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Partially Met

In 2011, the mean composite scores on the ETS major field test for the MBA program were analyzed for the Hattiesburg cohort (n=23) and the Coast cohort (n=16). The Hattiesburg cohort achieved a mean composite score of 256, ranking at the 65th percentile nationally. The Coast cohort achieved a mean composite score of 259, ranking at the 80th percentile nationally. Therefore, this achievement target was partially met.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

For full information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

Continue analysis of ETS percentile rankings

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011

We will continue to analyze national percentile rankings based on the ETS mean composite scores. The MBA program is being conso...

M 17: Case presentations in MBA 611

Group case presentations in MBA 611 will be evaluated to depth of content and ability to respond to case presentations, and used to assess LO 5.

Source of Evidence: Presentation, either individual or group

Achievement Target:

85% of MBA students will meet or exceed expectations on case presentations in MBA 611, scored for depth of content and ability to answer case questions.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met

Results are reported for the Fall 2010 section of MBA 611 and for a combined cohort of Hattiesburg and Coast MBA students (n=19). In 2010, the syllabus was revised to include multiple case analyses and presentations of the cases as a new assignment. Results were averaged across 7 case assignments. On average, MBA students scored 89% for content and 90% for responding to questions raised in the case presentations. Content scores on individual cases ranged from a high of 93% to a low of 82%; responding to questions scores ranged from a high of 100% to a low of 78%. Therefore, the achievement target was met; more than 85% of students met or exceeded expectations on these two dimensions.

Action Plan Details for This Cycle (by Established cycle, then alpha)

Monitor ETS results and test conditions

Continue to monitor ETS composite scores for MBA students through the 2010-2011 year.

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010

Implementation Status: Finished

Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):

Measure: MBA ETS Major Field Exam - Composite Score | **Outcome/Objective:** Creative Critical Thinking Skills

Completion Date: 05/31/2011

Responsible Person/Group: MBA Director, GPAC

Review exams and assignments in MBA 611

The 2009 assessment results in MBA 611 signal a need to reevaluate course material and examinations. In the future, the inclusion of a case will add additional emphasis to O1.

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010

Implementation Status: Finished

Priority: Medium

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):

Measure: Exam questions in MBA 611 | **Outcome/Objective:** Creative Critical Thinking Skills

Completion Date: 08/01/2010

Responsible Person/Group: Individual faculty member

Review measurements of O1 in MBA 660

Minor adjustments in exam questions may be needed to capture knowledge of strategic concepts in MBA 660, or further class time may be needed on these concepts to improve performance.

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010

Implementation Status: In-Progress

Priority: Low

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):

Measure: Exam questions in MBA 660 | **Outcome/Objective:** Concepts and techniques in all functional areas

Completion Date: 05/31/2012

Responsible Person/Group: Individual faculty member

Communicate the RCR training requirement to MBA students

During the next year, we will communicate the need to complete this mandatory training at several points during each semester. Our communications will include the expectation that training is to be completed during the first semester in the MBA program. We will continue to monitor completion rates.

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011

Implementation Status: Planned

Priority: Low

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):

Measure: RCR Training Completion | **Outcome/Objective:** Ethical and Cultural Awareness

Completion Date: 06/15/2012

Responsible Person/Group: MBA Director, Dean of the Graduate School, Provost, Vice President for Research

Continue analysis of ETS percentile rankings

We will continue to analyze national percentile rankings based on the ETS mean composite scores. The MBA program is being consolidated to the Coast campus in Fall, 2011. Although future assessments will be based on one combined cohort of MBA students, the GPAC will continue to study differences between full time students and working professional students. The consolidation strategy for the MBA program should elevate the performance of the full time students.

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011

Implementation Status: Planned

Priority: Medium

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):

Measure: ETS Mean Composite Score National Percentile Rankings | **Outcome/Objective:** Creative Critical Thinking Skills

Completion Date: 08/01/2012

Responsible Person/Group: MBA Director and GPAC

Continue analysis of ETS total score performance

The MBA cohorts will be combined in the Fall, 2011 semester since the program has been consolidated to the Coast campus. We will continue to monitor composite score performance on the ETS exam, and study performance differences between the full time students and the working professional students. We hope to observe improved performance in the full time student group, when the two cohorts are combined into one.

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: Medium

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):

Measure: MBA ETS Major Field Exam - Composite Score | **Outcome/Objective:** Creative Critical Thinking Skills

Completion Date: 08/01/2012
Responsible Person/Group: MBA Director and GPAC

Continue measuring accounting knowledge

In the Fall, 2011 semester the MBA program consolidates to the Coast campus and the cohorts will be combined. A new professor will teach the MBA 611 course and will continue to assess performance on LO1 relative to accounting knowledge.

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: Low

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):

Measure: Exam questions in MBA 611 | **Outcome/Objective:** Concepts and techniques in all functional areas | Creative Critical Thinking Skills

Completion Date: 12/20/2011
Responsible Person/Group: Individual faculty member

Meet with graduate management faculty

Given the decline in management national percentile rankings, a meeting will be held with the graduate management faculty to discuss assessment results. Early reviews of ETS question types in the management area indicate that more attention should be paid to coverage of human resource and production management/logistics content. Minor adjustments in three courses (MBA 600, 650 and 660) should address these deficiencies.

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):

Measure: MBA ETS Major Field Exam - Specific Areas | **Outcome/Objective:** Concepts and techniques in all functional areas

Completion Date: 09/30/2011
Responsible Person/Group: MBA Director and Management Faculty

Modify course content to improve performance

The plan is to modify the course content and coverage to place more emphasis on the sections of the business plan where performance was weak (target market analysis, financial plan, operational plan and marketing plan). Performance should improve in future iterations of the MBA 605 class, beginning with the Fall 2011 semester offering of the course.

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: Low

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):

Measure: Business Plan Assignment | **Outcome/Objective:** Concepts and techniques in all functional areas

Completion Date: 12/20/2011
Responsible Person/Group: Individual faculty member

Monitor team performance during semester

The Coast MBAs are working professionals. Therefore, teamwork can be more difficult than in the Hattiesburg cohort (largely full-time, non working students). Faculty members requiring teamwork should monitor team progress during the semester, and facilitate improved team performance/meetings among working professional students. The professor in MBA 605 will monitor team performance during the Fall 2011 semester.

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: Low

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):

Measure: Leadership Skills Assessment | **Outcome/Objective:** Leadership and Team Building Skills

Completion Date: 12/20/2011
Responsible Person/Group: Individual faculty member

[Analysis Answers](#)

What specifically did your assessments show regarding proven strengths or progress you made on outcomes/objectives?

The 2010-2011 assessment results continue to document strengths in business foundational knowledge, communication abilities, leadership and team building, and critical thinking skills. Our assessments document continued improvement in fundamental business knowledge and strategic integration, based on the 2011 MBA ETS Major Field Test results. This provides a second year of evidence that the MBA program revision was successful. ETS results from the Spring, 2011 semester showed significant improvement in overall performance. In 2010, MBA students ranked at the 70th percentile internationally (normed against almost 30,000 MBA students who took the exit exam). In 2011, our mean composite ETS scores increased; the 2011 cohort ranked at the 75th percentile nationally. This is an outstanding result of earlier assessment and loop closing activities. The Coast cohort continued to outperform the Hattiesburg, full time cohort. The national percentile ranking for the Coast cohort was at the 80th percentile and the Hattiesburg cohort was at the 65th percentile. Continued improvement in accounting knowledge and strategic integration/critical thinking occurred in 2011; the most significant sub score improvement was in the financial knowledge area (from the 55th percentile in 2010 to the 80th percentile in 2011). Marketing percentiles were stable (75th). Collectively, our results show continued improvement in 4 of 5 learning outcomes for the MBA program.

What specifically did your assessments show regarding any outcomes/objectives that will require continued attention?

In spite of excellent results in 2011, we must monitor performance on an annual basis. The current year findings indicate 2 areas that deserve immediate attention. In 2011, we noted a significant decline in Management sub scores on the ETS. National percentile rankings fell from the 75th percentile in 2010 to the 50th percentile in 2011. While this result could be normal variation in student performance from year to year, it also signals a result that requires attention. Performance on this indicator fell in both the Hattiesburg and Coast cohorts. A review of the questions used by ETS for this assessment indicator revealed increases in questions dealing with human resource issues and logistics/production management. Therefore the immediate plan is to meet with the graduate faculty in Management and devise a strategy to include more of this content into existing required MBA classes (specifically MBA 600 and MBA 650) during the 2011-2012 academic year. This should address the deficiency. There is also a need to collect more direct measures of LO3 - Ethical and Cultural Awareness. While this has been assessed twice during the 5-year cycle, there is room for improvement. In the Fall, 2011 a new professor is teaching MBA 600 for the first time. The MBA Director (and GPAC) will work with him early in the semester to develop/capture a direct assessment of this LO. This also provides an opportunity to develop a richer rubric for assessment of leadership knowledge and skills (LO2) since the MBA 600 content is Organizational Behavior Leadership -- and to continually evolve and improve our direct assessment measures.

Annual Reports

Program Summary

The 2010-2011 year was the second year of new MBA program requirements. Our assessment results indicate continued improvement in learning outcomes in accounting, marketing, financial and strategic integration/critical thinking. Overall performance on the ETS increased for the second year since program revision; the mean composite score for all MBA's who took the ETS MBA Major Field Test improved from a national ranking of the 70th percentile in 2010 to the 75th percentile in 2011. This provides a second year of evidence documenting the success of the MBA program revision and earlier loop closing activities. Strengths in communication abilities, leadership and team building and creative critical thinking were also documented by assessment activities during the 2010-2011 year. Work continued to develop the MBA program by offering diverse elective choices to MBA students. During the 2010-2011 year, graduate electives in human resource management, financial statement analysis, regulation and ethics, and international business were offered for the first time. In addition, new programs aimed at globalizing the faculty, students and programs were initiated. Graduate students participated in 2 study abroad programs: the British Studies Program, and a new study abroad program in Panama. During the year the GPAC continued to improve the applicant review and admissions process, and to review assessment results and elective courses in the MBA program. In addition, more graduate faculty members worked with MBA students on directed study projects that resulted in manuscripts. Submissions by MBA students increased to the Graduate Research Symposium, and to Synergy (the graduate student journal at Southern Miss). MBA students published several manuscripts in Synergy during the 2010-2011 year, resulting in the highest rate of participation to date. While not directly linked to assessment results, this was an important continuous improvement for the MBA program.

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

During the 2010-2011 year there were three continuous improvement initiatives not directly linked to the assessment of learning outcomes in the MBA program.

1. Increase study abroad opportunities for MBA students. The graduate director worked with the International Office on campus, and partnered with the masters degree program in Logistics, Trade

Transportation to offer a new study abroad program in Panama. In May of 2011, the first group of MBA students traveled to Panama (with the MBA Director) to participate in this program. Four MBA students joined 2 masters students in LTT and a senior student in International Business on this study abroad program. All involved were pleased with the new study abroad program; plans are to continue this program in future years.

2. Increase MBA student involvement in graduate research activities/publishing. The 2010-2011 year saw the highest participation rate in these activities to date. Four graduate students submitted competitive proposals to the Graduate Research Symposium in 2011, and two MBA students published sole-authored papers in Synergy during the academic year. The goal was to improve the participation rate of MBA students in the research activities/programs/opportunities of the Graduate School and considerable success was realized during the year.

3. Develop a more dynamic scheduling model for the MBA program. During the 2010-2011 year, the university engaged in program reviews that were provoked by budgetary constraints. As a result of this review, the decision was made to consolidate the MBA program to the Gulf Coast campus. The full time MBA program in Hattiesburg would be eliminated in the Fall of 2011. Therefore, a new scheduling model was needed to meet the needs of both full time students and part time, working students. During the 2010-2011 year the MBA Director worked with the Executive Committee in the College of Business to propose and to refine the scheduling model for the MBA program. A new, hybrid scheduling approach was developed and is being implemented in the Fall, 2011 semester. During the spring, 2011 and summer, 2011 terms meetings were held with the faculty teaching in the MBA program to discuss the hybrid model and to develop strategies for student success. Plans are to continue training of graduate faculty during the year to ensure faculty, student and program success.

Closing the Loop

The 2010-11 year provided more evidence of the successful MBA program revision, and improved learning outcomes. Faculty participation in assessment activities increased, as did systematic review of assessment results. Major assessment results (ETS) documented improved learning outcomes when compared to the 2009-2010 year. The 2011-2012 year will begin a third round of loop closing for the MBA program. Collectively, our assessment results have documented better outcomes in the Coast MBA cohort (working, professional part-time students) compared to the Hattiesburg MBA cohort (full time students with little to no work experience). Beginning in the Fall 2011, the cohorts will be combined into one MBA program -- the Professional MBA Program on the Southern Miss Gulf Coast campus. We believe this combined cohort will strengthen the program in two ways: by developing a common network of MBA students, and by encouraging higher performance among the full time MBA students. We will continue to review assessment indicators in each group, to review any changes in learning outcomes due to the program's consolidation. During the year we also closed loops regarding further globalization of our MBA program. For many years, graduate students have participated in the British Studies Program at Southern Miss. This is an excellent program, but has an extended time frame that most working MBA students cannot afford. The Panama program in 2011 offered an alternative to working MBA students; since only 10 days are spent in-country, our working MBA students could participate in this study abroad. Four MBA students, all with full-time professional jobs participated in the Panama Study Abroad Program in 2011. Our plans during the 2011-2012 year include continuing the Panama program, and also offering the option of a Caribbean Studies program in Jamaica in January of 2012. We will continue to market these programs to MBA students, in an effort to continuously improve and globalize our curriculum.