

MBA Committee Meeting Minutes
Warrington College of Business Administration
Friday, 9/14/11
3PM
HGS338

Members attending: Andy Naranjo (chair), Deb Mitra, Virginia Maurer, Alex Sevilla, Jenny Tucker, Praveen Pathak, Doug Waldo

Also attending: Gwendolyn Lee, Tawnya Means, Kara Cupoli & Katie Beland

I. Approval of Spring 2011 meeting minutes

- The committee recommended we remove from Dr. Joel Houston's statement: "He also noted that the MSM.....more lenient when grading".
- Edit Dr. Houston's quote on page 2, line 4.

II. Curriculum Items

Dr. Maurer asked for clarification regarding the case studies work for REE6935: Real Estate Case Studies. Dr. Naranjo explained that the speaker series is central part of the class and that some of the speakers revolve around the cases that are studied in the class. Dr. Naranjo asked for clarification regarding the credits for Amanda Farmand. Kara Cupoli stated that Amanda wants both classes for the same credit. Dr. Naranjo stated that he wants to flesh out the deliverables required to complete the course successfully. The committee wants clarification of deliverables and tabled the vote on REE 6935 until the next meeting.

The MBA Committee approved REE 6930: Real Estate Research & Technology, both for Amanda Farmand and for all MBA students.

Regarding the proposed update of the Entrepreneurship concentration, Kara Cupoli stated that the requirement is not critical because MBA's come in with experience and Jamie Kraft does not need four required classes on entrepreneurship. Mr. Kraft is removing the required component to propose an additional global entrepreneurship course for credit. The Committee reviewed the memo from Jamie Kraft and approved the proposed update of the Entrepreneurship Concentration.

Kara Cupoli discussed the rationale for the proposed change to the HR concentration. The management department aims to differentiate HR from management by replacing the training course, taught by Jeff LePine, with employment law course. The person hired works for National Labor Relations in Tampa and there are about 15 to 20 students interested. The committee approved the proposed update of the HR concentration.

Dr. Mitra stated that the group work is heavy for the MAR6930 course, the Art and Science of Pricing, and asked if the high level of group work was appropriate, given the MBA Program's grade and performance standards. Alex Sevilla confirmed that the standards *recommend* MBA instructors have at least 50% of work be individual, but that this was a recommendation, and not a requirement. He stated that the MBA Program is comfortable with the individual participation weighted at 40%. Dr. Maurer asked if there is a way to account for people not contributing. Dr. Naranjo stated that in the final presentation students are asked to evaluate other teams. The committee approved MAR6930 Art & Science of Pricing.

III. MBA Grading Policy Memo

Alex Sevilla brought up the suggestion made by Dr. Berg at the last meeting to change the wording from rigor to challenge and wanted the committee to officially approve this change. Alex asked if anyone had any further questions, comments, or edits. With no further edits or suggestions, the MBA Committee approved the distribution of this memo to all WCBA faculty that teach in the MBA program.

Alex Sevilla recommended that in order for the Committee to give enough time during the meeting for the Assurance of Learning discussion, that the core MBA versus MSM grading issue be tabled until the next meeting. He also confirmed that the discussion on the grading policy is more of a Hough Graduate School question rather than an MBA question and Selcuk Erencuc should be in the meeting for this. Dr. Mitra stated that the grading scale is different between the MBA and MSM courses.

Dr. Mitra wanted to clarify that an "A" in one course is not the same as an "A" in another course, so faculty must grade differently to give the students the same grade. Alex Sevilla stated that at the last meeting, some of the core faculty commented that if they grade their core courses the same, MSM would be under a 3.0 GPA. Kara Cupoli stated that the question is if it is the same class. Dr. Naranjo stated that this is a larger question because it happens across the spectrum. Dr. Pathak asked if the students are in the same classroom. Dr. Mitra stated that they are not; it is just the same course. Dr. Maurer noticed that there was no difference and that she thinks that not teaching them at the same time isn't irrelevant and by the time we get to summer it's not an issue. Dr. Mitra stated that there is a stark difference when they are taught at the same time.

Dr. Pathak stated that MSM does not have the same GPA policy. Alex clarified to the committee that there is a cap on the GPA at 3.5 for all MBA courses. Alex and Kara stated that the concern centers around inconsistencies in grading and interpretation by faculty who teach the MBA and MSM sections. If a faculty member holds the MSM's to the same standard as the MBA's, their GPA's may suffer. If they have apply a different standard to MSM's and MBA's, and/or teach the sections at different levels, then the MSM's may appear to get better grades than the MBA's in what appears from the outside to be the same exact courses. One option would be to create different sections #'s for MBA and MSM sections of core, which would give faculty the ability to make changes in content and grading as they see fit.

Dr. Doug Waldo stated that the foreign exchange students are excellent in the courses he teaches. Alex stated that we will look at the data again, take students out of courses that are outside of college, discuss the issue with the core MBA faculty, and return to the MBA Committee with findings from those conversations. Dr. Mitra stated that combined degrees, MSM, and some accelerated degrees are impressive students. Dr. Tucker stated that, in terms of grading, if you give the same exam it is hard to justify different grading scales.

IV. Assurance of Learning

Dr. Gwendolyn Lee explained that the Assurance of Learning data was collected from the courses she taught and 10% of the student's grade was for AoL participation. Two more data collections will be done for experiment accreditation and the goal of correct data.

Kara Cupoli stated that Dr. Lee created the final exam and the students were told it was worth 10%. We have a total average of 62% for Option A and 58% for Option B. Dr. Mitra asked if Dr. Lee took note if there was any relationship with the students that took the class with the person that wrote the questions. Dr. Naranjo noticed that Option A does better than any of the other cohorts. Kara stated that they are typically older students and another part of the reason is timing. Dr. Mitra stated that the Option B did fine.

Kara stated that the test determined what they wanted it to. They wanted to create their own measurement and find out whether or not this is an accurate measure of knowledge and proficiency in these areas. She wants the committee to discuss this measurement, find out if there is there another way that they can collect data better, and if there is another option to roll this out to more cohorts such as executive and professional students. Dr. Pathak asked if the proficiency measured what was learned. Tawnya Means stated

that she did not recommend scoring the same the next time students take the exam, but possibly increase standards or difficulty of the courses. She stated that the College can advise the AACSB accreditation team that the numbers are low because they are looking at the right thing so are they measuring what we think they are, another way of looking at it is the score is accurately reflecting proficiency. Dr. Maurer stated that there is difficulty in writing questions, and the numbers by themselves do not mean much without pre- and post-tests. Dr. Mitra asked if this is an accurate measure of what the students know. Dr. Maurer stated that we need a better sampling. Tawnya stated that if you have two questions and one is answered wrong then you have failed. Dr. Naranjo suggested that the students may take it more serious if they were told their grade had a direct input from this exam. Kara noted that some of the students were not prepared and some left angry and they also don't know if they looked at the questions and just said they don't know the answers. Alex stated that this was essentially a deep dive pop quiz, and the students were not told the specific areas to review. During a time when students are looking for jobs, finishing courses, and focusing on graduating, doing well on this exam is not a priority for them.

Dr. Mitra asked if we can buy an assessment instrument so the instructor doesn't have to make up the questions. Alex mentioned the ETS exam, but confirmed that it was not a viable option given that currently no other peer schools were using the ETS exam for Assurance of Learning purposes. Tawnya stated that she thinks it would have been a better experience for the students if the exam was broken up throughout the mod so it is not one exam at the end. When the course was envisioned, the design was to ask for assignments during the term and we would be able to take data from the assignments.

Alex stated that, on the most basic level, we need to pass ac by 2014 and have faculty lead discussions as to why we did this, how we did it, and what we learned. It is important that we are assessing what's going on as we move forward and make judgments of the students and the program. Dr. Pathak stated that we shouldn't make it more confusing than it needs to be. Dr. Mitra asked if the assessment can start over. Alex stated that we do not have time to completely start over and we need to deliver the results in 2014. Kara stated that there are classes that are going on that we are not collecting data from and we need to collect at least two data sets in total. Alex suggested that they keep the current format and introduce the information to the students at the beginning so that they would have clarity on what knowledge they will be expected to know. This would allow students at the beginning of the term to go back to their notes and review their understanding and competency in the key areas that will be assessed. Dr. Naranjo compared this to studying for the SAT.

Dr. Tucker stated that she doesn't expect students to do well with accounting questions they may have seen two years earlier. Tawnya stated that part of the assessment is ensuring that students remember things at the end of their program. She also stated that she has seen a capstone course, conference day, or day seminar where individuals come in and conduct a simulation or seminar to evaluate learning objectives. During the assessment, you have a rubric, build in activities during the day to assess objectives, and expect certain things that are completed on a team and individual basis. The faculty come in and run simulations, as well. Everything is focused at that one day. We are trying to avoid things that are resource intensive. Dr. Mitra confirmed that this model would take a tremendous buy in from the faculty. Alex stated that we are on a limited timeline and even if we did pilots we can count it towards the data and can make adjustments. The first time we did it still counts and we must have two data collections.

Tawnya asked if we want to continue with the same way of testing. Dr. Naranjo suggested they change the format, add questions and give the students preparation time in advance. Alex stated that at the beginning of each core course, students could be given a document that states the things that are important in the course as well as the things they may see in the AoL assessment questions. This would give the core faculty a chance to review this key material, minimizing surprises for the students when they take the assessment in the capstone course. We can redistribute this to them at the beginning of the strategic management course as a reminder of the AoL assessment they will see in this course. Dr. Lee also suggested the students take the exam after they submit their faculty evaluations.

Tawnya suggested that students could consider developing a portfolio of this key information taken from each core course, and at the end of the program, they have a review portfolio with a written paper about how they've grown through the course and the program. Alex asked who creates portfolio piece. Tawnya stated that the student creates the portfolio themselves and that a lot of schools do this. Alex stated that he didn't think the professional students would do it unless it was required, and that many would not see the value in this exercise.

Alex stated that in the interest of time he wanted to make sure they have discussed the big picture stuff before the November meeting. We have a document score card in which we have five objectives. 2a and 2b are merged into one which should make things less complicated. He asked the committee if they were comfortable with where we are for both objectives and asked if anyone had any questions objectives on 2a. Alex read objective a and objective b. The merger of 2a and 2b was approved by the committee.

Alex stated that the next meeting will be in November and we can continue to have the discussion of measuring programs and make a decision as to how to measure the WPMBA. Dr. Lee asked each committee member to communicate with the core course faculty to anticipate the exams at end of Mod 4.

V. MBA Program Update

Meeting Adjourned (minutes – Katie Beland)