

MBA Assurance of Learning Summary



AACSB Fifth Year
Continuous Improvement Review
AY2015-2020

MBA AoL Summary

During this accreditation cycle the MBA program has made great strides in both assessment methods and culture. Despite two personnel changes in the directorship of the program, college leadership and faculty have continued to implement program changes to improve learning outcomes. While the last cycle mostly examined performance for Early Career MBA (ECMBA) students, this cycle also initiated assessment for the MBA for Professionals (MBAP) as a separate student body. While curricula are largely the same, the additional experience required for the MBAP program makes its students distinct and warrants separate examination. The programs implemented several curricular enhancements and assessment tool improvements even when assessment targets were met. Additionally, broadening assessment's scope necessitated greater involvement of faculty; this participation has instigated a culture shift throughout the college that we hope will continue in next-cycle planning and engagement.

After introducing both a new Silicon Valley Experience (SVE) practicum and a new oral and written communications course as part of the MBA degree, the program has used this assessment cycle to examine SVE's impact in conjunction with core courses. Despite some performance inconsistency across the two programs, of the nine PLOs, the EC MBAs met or nearly met target performance in both measurements for six PLOs and met the target performance in the second measurement for seven PLOs. The MBAP met or nearly met target performance in both measurements for five PLOs and met the target performance in the second measurement for eight PLOs.

Business Concepts: The PLO was assessed using questions in exams in core courses BUS 270 (Financial Management) and BUS 220 (Financial and Managerial Accounting) and also with the ETS MBA Major Field Test. ECMBA students performed well on the whole with the standardized test but accounting and finance knowledge did not meet expectations. Moreover, in 2019 the LCoB partnered with Centro Community Partners' small business advisors program, allowing MBA students to assist business owners and entrepreneurs. Since many small business owners need help with financial aspects in particular, this will provide MBA students the opportunity to apply strategic business knowledge. MBAP students did not meet the target in the MFT in the second measurement. Such performance may be due to the small sample size (11 students enrolled in the capstone course BUS 290) but also due to the time gap between topics introduction and assessment. Nonetheless, in the next cycle faculty plan to examine courses where these concepts get reinforced and make additional emphasis.

Analysis and Decision Making: The application of decision methods like decision trees, expected value, risk and uncertainty, etc. was assessed by faculty through exam questions. Both the ECMBA and MBAP students met target performance on a first round measure and then were slightly short of the benchmark by only 1% during the second measurement. We will need to examine what has changed, either with pedagogy or class cohorts.

Cultural Awareness: To assess students' cultural awareness, faculty used a computer-based Global Competencies Inventory to measure personal qualities associated with effectiveness in intercultural situations, highlighting gaps where cultural friction and the need for adjustments may occur. For the dimensions where students showed relative weaknesses, the program is planning to organize specific workshops.

Ethical Awareness: The MBAP students exceeded the target but the ECMBA failed in both measurement rounds. The poor performance may be due to the specific assessment tool used, but

also to the fact that the course taught (Business/Employment Law and Ethics - BUS250) emphasized heavily the law component at the expense of the ethical topics. Between measurements the instructor discussed grading rubrics and clarified the assignment expectations. The performance improved significantly but was still below target. The curriculum might need a more direct approach to teaching ethics, especially considering the introduction of ethics-related cases across the courses and with targeted workshops in the SVE.

Leadership and Team Skills: Faculty administered CATME (Comprehensive Assessment of Team Member Effectiveness) surveys. The students exceeded the target performance. Opportunities to hear from executives, entrepreneurs, and industry leaders, in addition to case and business plan competitions facilitated through the Silicon Valley Experience, likely played a role in leadership and teamwork demonstrated. Furthermore, the MBAP program introduced a comparable course - SVE for Professionals - which included several team and leadership self-assessments.

Global Changes and Dynamics: In the area of global change and dynamics, students met or nearly met the target in several measurements. Faculty used case reports focused on international trade policy to assess students' ability to adapt to global market changes. Classes consistently exceeded expectations in both PLOs assessed through reports on real companies' strategic challenges. In order to further develop a global component in the learning experience the MBA programs introduced a new course based on the EMBA Consortium, which allows students to spend a week at a partner institution outside of the U.S. In preparation and to further international awareness, the MBAP also conducted international etiquette workshops.

Oral and Written Communications: The EMBA introduced an new core course (BUS 201 – Business Communications) to enhance communications skills of a student population that includes young professionals and a group of international students. Moreover, the program hired a writing consultant and a graduate tutor to provide continuous feedback on the written assignments in the SVE course. The students performed well in the assessment and exceeded the benchmark. MBAP students did not meet the target in the first measurements. Therefore, the program decided to introduce a new course (BUS 200L – Business Leadership) to target the appropriate professional communication skills for the specific profile of students in the program – working professionals in the mid-stage of their career. The course also piloted the use of an AI software – [Quantified Communications](#) - to evaluate the oral communication (verbal and non-verbal) skills of students.

Table A below illustrates the assessment target, performance and tools employed in the ECMBA program. It also includes a summary of the curricular and assessment tool enhancements. Table B presents similar information for the MBAP program.

Table A - ECMBA AoL Summary Table - Target and Result data refers to the % of expected or actual students who scored in the acceptable and exceptional category

MBA PLO	Target	1 st Measurement		2 nd Measurement		Assessment Tool	Enhancements
		Semester	Result	Semester	Result		
1 – Business concepts*	85%	FA16	93%	FA17	96%	Final Exam	Partnership with Centro Community Partners' small business advisors' program, allowing MBA students to assist business owners and entrepreneurs
2 – Analysis and Decision Making	90%	FA17	92%	FA19	89%	Final Exam	
3.a – Cultural Awareness	75%	SP18	74%	SP19	81%	Global Competencies Inventory (GCI)	Co-curricular Soft-skills workshops focused on the areas where students performed weakest: perception management and self-management. Pilot workshop in FA20.
3.b – Ethical Awareness	75%	SP19	45%	SP20	69%	Case Analysis	Revision of the assessment tool to allow more detailed analysis of ethical considerations. Presentation and in-class discussion of the grading rubric to set expectations. Set to introduce in the next cycle curricular insertion of ethics-related short cases in core courses.
4 – Leadership and Team Skills	85%	SP19	100%	SP20	100%	CATME	SVE speakers and workshops.
5.a – Global Change	90%	SP19	94%	SP20	86%	Case Study and Essay	Introduction of an elective course (BUS 203 – International Experience for American Executives) based on the EMBA Consortium one-week executive education experience.
5.b – Global Dynamics	90%	SP19	93%	SU19	100%	Strategic analysis report	Introduction of an elective course (BUS 203 – International Experience for American Executives) based on the EMBA Consortium one-week executive education experience.
6.a - Oral Communication Skills	85%	FA16	98%	FA18	98%	In-class ethics case presentation	Pilot adoption of Quantified Communications software in FA20.
6.b – Written Communication Skills	80%	FA17	83%	FA19	84%	Written Case Analysis	Writing consultant and graduate tutor embedded in SVE course providing feedback on assignments.

*The PLO was assessed across multiple core courses using five measurements during the accreditation period. The reported data above is only for two measurements across the BUS 270 – Financial Management – core course. The PLO was assessed twice more in the BUS 220 – Financial and Managerial Accounting course and also once using the MFT (standardized MCQ test) in the capstone course BUS 290 – Strategic Thinking. In all the AoL measurements for the PLO the target was met

Table B - MBAP AoL Summary Table - Target and Result data refers to the % of expected or actual students who scored in the acceptable and exceptional category

MBA PLO	Target	1 st Measurement		2 nd Measurement		Assessment Tool	Enhancements
		Semester	Result	Semester	Result		
1 – Business concepts	80%	SP16	93%	SU19	64%%	Final Exam and Educational Testing Service (ETS) MBA Major Field Test (MFT	
2 – Analysis and Decision Making	90%	SP18	95%	SP19	89%	An exam question covering simulation using Excel	
3.a – Cultural Awareness	75%	FA17	93%	FA18	92%	Global Competencies Inventory (GCI)	Co-curricular Soft-skills workshops focused on the areas where students performed weakest: perception management and self-management. Pilot workshop in FA20.
3.b – Ethical Awareness	80%	SU19	89%	SU20	100%	Final Exam	Revision of the assessment tool to allow more detailed analysis of ethical considerations. Presentation and in-class discussion of the grading rubric to set expectations. Set to introduce in the next cycle curricular insertion of ethics-related short cases in core courses.
4 – Leadership and Team Skills	85%	FA18	100%	FA19	100%	CATME (and High-Performance Team Scorecard	Career Coach providing one-on-one coaching and monitoring the professional leadership development plans. Introduction of the Silicon Valley Leadership Experience for Professionals. Pilot program in SP20 and introduction of the course in the core curriculum starting in FA20.
5.a – Global Change	90%	FA17	93%	SP19	94%	Case Study and Essay	Introduction of a core course (BUS 203 – International Experience for American Executives) based on the EMBA Consortium one-week executive education experience.
5.b – Global Dynamics	90%	SU19	80%	SU20	100%	Business Plan and Strategy Report	Introduction of a core course (BUS 203 – International Experience for American Executives) based on the EMBA Consortium one-week executive education experience.
6.a - Oral Communication Skills	90%	FA19	82%	SP20	95%	In-class and Recorded presentations	Presentation and discussion of rubric. Pilot adoption of Quantified Communications software in FA19 session B. Introduction in the core curriculum of BUS 200L – Leadership Communications.
6.b – Written Communication Skills	90%	FA17	77%	SU20	100%	Written Case Analysis	Introduction in the core curriculum of BUS 200L – Leadership Communications Writing consultant and graduate tutor embedded in SVEP course providing feedback on assignments.