

## **Program Performance Review: Culmination Meeting Memo**

### **AACSB accredited programs:**

Business Administration BA, MBA  
International Business BA  
Information Systems MS  
Information Technology MS

The 2018-2019 Program Performance Review (PPR) process for the following AACSB accredited programs are concluded with a culmination meeting on February 28, 2020:

- Business Administration BA, MBA
- International Business BA
- Information Systems MS
- Information Technology MS

The following people attended the meeting: Pamella Oliver (Provost), Mark Filowitz (AVP of Academic Programs, AVPAP), Morteza Rahmatian (Dean, MCBE), Jenny Zhang (Associate Dean, MCBE), Do Minh (Chair, ISDS), and Su Swarat (Assistant VP for Institutional Effectiveness).

The Provost congratulated the programs for completing the AACSB accreditation process. She specifically commended the programs for the following accomplishments:

- Maintains strong faculty qualifications and easily meets most AACSB expectations across its various programs and locations.
- Excellent leadership has instilled a high level of trust and confidence across faculty, staff, students, alumni, and the business community.
- High level of engagement among faculty and staff and a strong commitment to the mission.
  - The Dean and Associate Dean especially commended the advisors at all levels for being very dedicated and supportive of student success.
- Collegial and collaborative culture among faculty and staff.
- Significantly increased staff FTE devoted to undergraduate advising and placement.
- Impressive mission of serving many first generation/Pell eligible/transfer undergraduate students.
- Pursued a number of initiatives to improve student success, e.g., increasing advising staff, offering new career professional development courses, and creating networking events. This is particularly impressive given the large number of students that MCBE has.
- Dedicates significant resources to Assurance of Learning (AoL) activities with faculty support.
- Maintains an impressive roster of centers (n=14), connecting students and faculty closely with the local business community, and an important mechanism for garnering financial support.
  - The Dean added that the centers are “bridges to community”, both in terms of connections to the students and connections to the community. The college is committed to support the centers as long as they contribute to student success.
- Strong portfolio of peer reviewed publications, including publications in some of the top journals of a number of business disciplines.
- Curriculum is current and relevant with a focus on applied learning.
- Consults closely with business community through the Dean’s Advisory Board to address needed changes to curriculum in order to make sure the curriculum meets market needs.

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- Research productivity of the Department of Information Systems and Decision Sciences is impressive with its high global ranking (84<sup>th</sup>) by the Association of Information Systems.

Major recommendations and issues raised through the PPR process were discussed as follows:

#### 1. Staffing needs for student advising and placement:

- The AVPAP commended the college for having an effective advising system that is a model for the campus. But he asked the college to consider how to ensure sustainability of the model, particularly in terms of one-time funding for staff.
- The external reviewers also recommended converting all current Business Advisor and Career Advisor positions from fiscal renewable to on-going. Currently all the positions are supported through the college's professional fees for AACSB accredited graduate programs.
- The Dean and Associate Dean stated that current funding model is not sustainable. The advisor positions are essential for college operation and for AACSB accreditation, thus inappropriate to have them as temporary. The temporary nature of these positions also makes it difficult to attract qualified candidates. Additionally, any general salary or benefit increases for these positions come from the college operation funds. The college currently has 23 positions that are not baselined.
- The Associate Dean indicated that the external reviewers recommended the college to increase the number of advisors. Currently, the college has over 8,000 enrolled undergraduate students, with only have 2 career advisors and 5 business advisors. The college also has 1 retention specialist and 2 graduation specialists that work with undergraduate students. The college has over 600 enrolled graduate students, with only 1 graduate career advisor and 1.5 academic advisor. The college needs at least 2 undergraduate career advisors, 2 undergraduate academic advisors, and 1 graduate career advisor to be able to better support students need.
- The Dean also discussed the concern over funding for these one-time positions. Since the funding currently comes from the professional fees from graduate enrollment, the trend of declining graduate enrollment, coupled with increasing salaries, makes it challenging to sustain these positions over time.
- The Provost indicated that she is working with the Division of Administration and Finance to get part-time compensation increase baselined. She also encouraged the college to work with the new Assistant Vice President in Graduate Studies to revive graduate programs and increase graduate enrollment.
- The Dean and Associate Dean agreed that targeted recruitment and revision of program offerings are needed to revive graduate programs. One way the college has responded to the market needs is the addition of the Business Analytics focus. The college is also in the process of rethinking the FEMBA program since the demand has been flat.

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#### 2. Student learning assessment:

- The external reviewers recommended the programs to ensure that all assessment instruments and rubrics adequately examine student learning outcomes at the program level.
- The Associate Dean agrees with the reviewers' comments, and would like to use assessment to promote program-level changes. She is currently leading the effort of changing assessment structure for all programs. The work for MSIS and MSIT is done; the work for BABA and BAIB is almost done; and the work for MBA is 40% done. One of the changes is to move assessment instruments away from multiple choice questions, which are not suitable for higher order learning.
- The external reviewers also recommended the programs to ensure that student assessment data are analyzed by faculty committees, not individual faculty members.
- The Associate Dean stated that changes have taken place with faculty committees scoring student artifact with rubrics.

#### 3. Faculty recruitment:

- The external reviewers recommended the programs to strategize to attract and retain faculty, if possible, through higher starting salaries or consider professorships and similar enhancements.
- The AVPAP commended the programs for attracting and retaining high quality faculty, but asked about the associated challenges.
- The Chair stated that the timing for recruitment approval is not optimal. Most recruitment events take place in the summer, thus would appreciate the approval to take place earlier than the beginning of fall semester.
- The Provost acknowledged the need, and indicated approvals this year will go out earlier.

#### 4. ISDS361A/B:

- The AVPAP asked the Chair to comment on ISDS361A/B regarding the reputation of being "bottleneck courses".
- The Chair reported the issue being not having enough instructors teaching the class every semester. He is concerned about course sustainability over the long run.
- The Associate Dean stated that the college has used the teaching innovation grant from the CO to align the 361A curriculum across sections, and provided common resources to all instructors. Adding consistency to the course sections has helped alleviate the "bottleneck" problem. She is currently working with 361B as well.

The Provost concluded the meeting by thanking the programs for their excellent performance, and thanking the faculty for their hard work.

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