

**MBA Program  
2009 Annual Update**

## 1. Executive Summary

The College of Business' strategic activities for the 2009-2010 calendar year were focused on addressing the concerns of the AACSB Maintenance of Accreditation peer review team that visited campus during the period of February 8-10, 2009. Although their review was labeled a "fifth year visit," it was the first time an audit team had been on campus in 13 years because Loyola was one of the last schools operating under the prior 10-year AACSB assessment cycle and the college received two postponements following Hurricane Katrina.

Both AACSB International and the team received a 125 page self-report prior to the visit. The self-report attempted to account for the thirteen year lapse between visits. Primarily, however, it reviewed and documented the College's operations, state-of-affairs, resource deployments, vision, strategic plans, assessment & learning assurance and student, faculty, alumni, and staff success stories. The document also addressed the lengths to which the College went to stay accreditation compliant during and after the devastation of Katrina. The entire report can be found at <http://www.business.loyno.edu/aacsb-accreditation>.

By almost any measure, the self-report document and visit were a success, particularly given the interval between visits and the devastation which befell Loyola and New Orleans. Nevertheless in a letter from Caryn Beck-Dudley, Maintenance of Accreditation Committee Chair, the College was informed that "the Maintenance of Accreditation Committee concurs with the Team's recommendation that the maintenance review of the undergraduate and master's degree programs in business offered by Loyola University New Orleans be continued for an additional year." The letter went on to say that a Sixth Year Review would allow additional time to address the resolution of the following educational quality issues:

"1. Strategic Planning – A formal strategic plan should be developed to more clearly specify future goals and objectives along with the sources and uses of scarce resources.

2. Assurance of Learning – Completion of several assessment cycles of all learning goals, with clear documentation of changes to curriculum and pedagogy based on outcomes

3. Student Retention – Specific goals for retention should be established by the College and outcome assessments should be reviewed to indicate which elements of the Freshmen Experience should be retained or modified to achieve these goals."

The College worked to address these three concerns of the AACSB peer review team and submitted a Sixth-Year Maintenance Report in January of 2010. This annual report contains documentation of activities directed toward maintaining AACSB accreditation.

[UPDATE: The Sixth-Year report and related strategic activities addressing areas of concern were successful in maintaining the College's AACSB accreditation for another five years.]

## 2. Unit Identification and Profile

### 2.1-2 Mission and Unit Description

Graduate programs of the College of Business at Loyola University New Orleans develop leaders capable of adding value to organizations and society through the application of theory and practice. Building on a rich Jesuit tradition of rigor and spirituality, knowledge is provided through a coordinated and integrated curriculum taught by academically qualified faculty members and professionally qualified practitioners. Program graduates are dedicated to values-driven leadership, systematic approaches in facing challenges and the virtues of innovation, change and entrepreneurship in improving the human experience.

### 2.2.1-2 Staff and Faculty Employment

Nearly all faculty employed by the College of Business teach in the graduate program with varying frequency. The College employs 3 full-time staff positions related to the program.

### 2.2.3-6 Headcount, Retention, and Graduation

<b>Headcount</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
Graduate programs	37	57
<b>Retention</b>	<b>Fall-to-Spring</b>	<b>Fall-to-Fall</b>
Graduate programs	*	91%
(Retention in graduate study is measured fall-to-fall only)		
<b>Graduation</b>	<b>2-year</b>	<b>4-year</b>
Graduate programs	47%	*
(2006 cohort)		

## 3. Assessment of Unit Goals

### 3.1 General Assessment Plan

Assessment of graduate programs takes place primarily through course evaluations, faculty deployment metrics (AACSB-mandated Tables 9 and 10), and curricular review. Students also complete exit interviews with the associate dean annually. Direct assessment of learning has been weak, but improvements are being made.

### ***3.2 Outline of Program Goals***

“Loyola 2012”, the comprehensive strategic plan for the University, was completed and approved by the Board of Trustees in May, 2009, and has three overarching strategies: 1) Enhance Jesuit values; 2) Improve student retention; 3) Enhance Loyola’s reputation. The College of Business drafted a revised Strategic Plan in Fall of 2009 that addresses these three initiatives and the areas of concern identified by the AACSB peer-review team: 1) Strategic Planning; 2) Assurance of Learning; 3) Student Retention. The plan can be found at <http://www.business.loyno.edu/aacsb-accreditation>.

The following is a report of some of the significant achievements of the College of Business toward fulfilling its strategic objectives during the period March 1 to December 31, 2009, particularly in regards to graduate programs. This list is not intended to be exhaustive. Rather it is representative of that which has been and will continue to be our effort to uphold and perpetuate the high standards associated with AACSB and our Jesuit heritage, as well as to support the University’s strategic plan.

#### ***Recruiting & Retention***

- Over the past 18 months, MBA student enrollment increased from 68 to 95 students.
- Approved and began to market a dual MBA and Master of Pastoral Studies program similar to the joint MBA/JD program.

#### ***M.B.A. Program Pedagogy***

- A 75 page communication manual was developed and distributed to MBA students.
- In Spring, 2009 a team of faculty assessors identified areas for improvement in regard to MBA learning goals related to Systems Thinking, Critical Analysis, Value Chain, Managerial Perspective and Communication. Enhancements and improvements are currently being developed and implemented as the courses to which they correspond are offered.

#### ***Assessment Process***

- Rubrics for many graduate learning goals were updated.
- Recommendation reports for graduate learning goals were disseminated.
- Ad hoc assessment teams were created for previously under-assessed learning goals.
- A planned assessment cycle for the graduate learning goals has been created and approved to ensure consistent measurement across over time.

### **3.3 Student Learning Outcomes**

The graduate programs of the College of Business have the following learning goals:

- Graduates will be able to engage a business problem head-on and make an informed and implementable decision based on a thorough analysis of the situation from multiple perspectives.
- Graduates will be able to analyze the value proposition of a firm's marketplace offerings, understand the strategic fit of the firm, and create a comprehensive plan to deliver customer value.
- Graduates will be able to act with a managerial perspective, synthesize information from many varied sources, communicate business information persuasively, and influence others to achieve goals.
- Graduates will be able to confront ethical dilemmas with a balanced and coherent perspective, apply a principled method for responding to ethical issues, and reflect on bias in their ethical decisions.

### **3.4-6 Assessment Activities and Results**

The 2009 AACSB Peer Review Team (PRT) letter to the College of Business stated that an issue to be addressed was assessment and assurance of learning. The team wrote: "While an assessment plan is clearly in place, there are varying degrees of implementation among programs. Greater experience in assurance of learning will be acquired with the completion of several assessment cycles of all the learning objectives." Significant input from the faculty, ad hoc assessment teams, the Dean and Associate Deans, and our assessment coordinator have been sought to meet the spirit and intent of these Assurance of Learning Standards.

In Spring of 2009, a team of faculty assessors rated student achievement of MBA learning goals related to Systems Thinking, Critical Analysis, Value-Chain Understanding, and Managerial Perspective and Communication. The team identified the following weaknesses:

- 1) Holistic / Comprehensive Perspective of Business
- 2) Ability to Make and Convincingly Defend a Solution
- 3) Realistic Understanding of Consequences / Risks
- 4) Ability to be Concise in Business Communication
- 5) Persuasive Presentation of Business Concept / Call to Action
- 6) Ability to Make Professional Impact in Presentation

To address these concerns, Jerry Goolsby [Marketing] and Daphne Main [Accounting] gave assignments in the "Writing Boot Camp" portion of the Fall 2009 Managerial Communication course that required students to generate ideas and convincingly defend them. The Marketing assignment was to draft an Executive Summary and Table of Contents for a marketing plan. This required students to consider every aspect that would be necessary to address in a comprehensive marketing plan, as well as to write a convincing Executive Summary without the limitations of being bound to a real product that must be explained or presented in a particular way. The Accounting assignment was a quantitative memo that required students to convincingly explain difficult quantitative information.

In Fall of 2009, the Managerial Communication weekend that serves as the bulk of the requirements for the MGT-B605 course and as the orientation to the MBA program introduced a faculty-created Leadership Communication Handbook to supplement the text.

The Handbook is 75 pages long, presented in a workbook style for ease of reference and notetaking, and covers Presentation Skills [including Preparing, Organizing, Creating, and Delivering presentations], Listening Skills, Feedback Skills, Meeting Skills, and Writing Skills. Every MBA student was given a copy of the Handbook and it was used as the basis for the communication skills lectures given by Michelle Johnston for the workshop. The Handbook gives very practical techniques for improving MBA-level leadership and communication skills.

To our knowledge, this is the most comprehensive internally-created communication skills course workbook currently in use in any MBA program in the country. It addresses the full complement of communication skills that we expect our MBA graduates to be able to use.

#### **4. Summary of Achievements**

Multiple positive articles about the CoB appeared in the New Orleans Times Picayune including features on Stephanie Mansfield and the MBA program.

Dr. Kendra Reed, Stephanie Mansfield and 10 MBA students participated in the national Jesuit MBA Day of Service, a day in which all Jesuit MBA programs give a unified effort to give back to the community.

Dr. Len Treviño and Dean William Locander traveled to Puerto Rico in October to visit with two universities. The purpose of the trip was to explore opportunities for an MBA partnership with Loyola's College of Business.

Dean Locander, Dr. Wing Fok and Dr. Lee Yao made a variety of campus visits in Hong Kong and China to explore MBA partnerships, faculty / student exchanges and other cooperative ventures. The meetings were very productive.

#### **5. Discussion of Budget for Previous Fiscal Year**

The College of Business does not have any separate budget for graduate programs.

## **6. Planning and Goals for Upcoming Year**

### ***6.1 General Statement on Strategic Planning***

The Strategic Planning Process for the College of Business started in Spring 2008 with a series of meetings with faculty, ultimately leading to the Fall 2008 plan. The central elements of that plan – a host of mental models with explanatory text – was embedded in our fifth-year maintenance of accreditation report to AACSB. That plan was revised by the CoB Strategic Planning Committee in Fall 2009. The Fall 2009 Committee was a cross-functional / cross-rank committee comprised of: Bill Locander (Dean), David Luechauer (Associate Dean), Angie Hoffer (Associate Dean), Lee Yao (Accounting, Area Chair), Kendra Reed (Management, Area Chair), Jerry Goolsby (Hilton / Baldrige Chair), Wing Fok (Intl Business), Kathy Barnett (Communication), Dan D’Amico (Economics), Mehmet Dicle (Finance), Kate Lawrence (Marketing), Amy Keeler (Dean’s Assistant), and Nate Straight (Assessment). The group worked to ensure that this version of the CoB plan was brought it into strategic alignment with the new Loyola University strategic plan.

### ***6.3 Program Goals for Upcoming Year***

- Apply value chain approach to retention and placement (Strategic Initiative 1.II.A).
- Map key administrative processes to support handbook (Strategic Initiative 1.II.B).
- Internal and external marketing communications plan (Strategic Initiative 1.IV.E).
- Launch Center for Spiritual Capital using raised funds (Strategic Initiative 5.I.A).

### ***6.4 Student Outcomes for Upcoming Year***

The College of Business has the support of the University in addressing the issues raised by the AACSB peer review team. To support the development of College programs of distinction, such as enhanced graduate programs and executive outreach, the College will seek to fill the vacant chair in International Business in 2010 in order to reinvigorate the International Business Center. The Center for Spiritual Capital will also be launched in 2010.

### ***6.7 Assessment Plan for Upcoming Year***

In 2010, the College of Business will continue the effort to address the AACSB peer review team’s concern for the quality of assurance of learning programs. Assessment in the College of Business going forward will take the form of internally-developed comprehensive examinations. Emphasis will be placed on the “Business Disciplines” and “Critical Thinking” learning goals. The assessment of communication will be more widespread in the curriculum.