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Executive Summary

In order to discover whether any commonalities, beyond the typical similarities between graduate business programs, exist between the M.B.A. programs and curricula of the network of Jesuit colleges and universities that could be leveraged to create a distinctive “Jesuit M.B.A.” brand identity, I have researched and summarized the standard course requirements of each of these M.B.A. programs at each respective Jesuit college or university. This written report and the attached spreadsheet contain a brief description and analysis of the breadth of requirements in the M.B.A. programs at different Jesuit colleges and universities, as well as analysis of the “average” or “typical” Jesuit M.B.A. program. A summary report of the course content of a typical M.B.A. program at a Jesuit institution is presented on the final page of this written report; a broader report of the individual course requirements of each Jesuit M.B.A. program is presented in the attached spreadsheet file. A final “reconfiguration” of the typical M.B.A. program, based on an effort to explicitly include coursework that reflects core Jesuit values such as entrepreneurship, ethical decisions, social justice, and global awareness, is developed throughout this report.

Throughout this report, “typical” refers to the modal response from the sample of 26 Jesuit M.B.A. programs surveyed. For example, the “typical” M.B.A. degree program at a Jesuit institutions is reported to contain a Financial Accounting “basic core” / “foundation” requirement and a Managerial Accounting “advanced” / “degree” core requirement, because those are the two accounting courses that were found most often among the institutions surveyed. A distinction is drawn between “typical” and “average” consistently throughout the report. When an “average” amount of coursework in a particular field or subject area is listed, it represents the average level of coursework required by all institutions surveyed, not only those with the “typical” or modal response for that particular field or subject area. The “average” coursework required is reported as credit hour requirements in each subject area, whereas the “typical” curricular requirements are reported as course titles. This combination of an average credit hour requirement with a typical distribution of course subjects is the basis for the final summary report of the overall “typical” M.B.A. curriculum at a Jesuit institution, as given in the table on the final page.

“Reconfiguration” suggestions arise only from the author’s imagination and are intended only to serve as creative and intellectual springboards into further discussions of the possibilities for the creation of a “Jesuit M.B.A.” brand identity. There are many more ways in which a truly “Jesuit” M.B.A. curriculum could be created than the few that are described in this brief report.

Core Requirements

Basic Core / Foundations

Of the 26 schools in the study, all but 3 required either a set of basic core business course work as part of the M.B.A. degree program or the completion of a similar foundational set of business course work at the undergraduate level. Of the 23 schools that required this basic core, the average amount of course work or undergraduate equivalent required was 19.5 credit hours.

Basic Core Accounting

All of the 23 schools that required a basic core had an accounting component in their basic core. The average amount of accounting course work required in the basic core was 3.2 credit hours. The most common accounting course required was Financial Accounting, with 12 out of 23 schools requiring such a course. A principles-level accounting course was required by 9 out of the 23 schools. Only 8 out of the 23 schools required a Managerial Accounting course as part of their basic core requirement. (That some schools required both the principles-level and the Financial Accounting course, for example, accounts for the total of “29 schools.”)

Basic Core Economics

Of the 23 schools that required a basic core, 21 had an economics component in their basic core. The average amount of economics course work required in the basic core was 2.8 credit hours. The most common economics course required was Managerial Economics, with 8 out of 21 schools requiring such a course (further, the Microeconomics course required by 4 out of 21 schools is probably similar in content to the Managerial Economics course, so the grand total is 12 out of 21 schools requiring a course in some kind of decision-making economics). A principles-level economics course was required by 7 out of the 21 schools. Only 6 out of the 21 schools required a Macroeconomics / Economic Environment course. (See note on total above.)

Basic Core Finance

Of the 23 schools that required a basic core, 19 had a finance component in their basic core. The average amount of finance course work required in the basic core was 2.3 credit hours. The most common finance course required was [Corporate] Financial Management, with 12 out of 19 schools requiring such a course. A principles-level finance course was required by 7 out of the 19 schools. 1 school required a course in Corporate Financial Reporting. (This sums to 19.)

Basic Core Law / Ethics

Only 7 of the 23 schools that required a basic core had a law or ethics component in their basic core. Further, the average amount of law or ethics course work required across all schools was therefore only 0.7 credit hours. The most common law or ethics course required was Legal and Regulatory Environment, with 4 out of 7 schools requiring such a course. The remaining 3 schools required courses in Business Law, Business Ethics, and Legal and Ethical Environment.

Basic Core Management

Of the 23 schools that required a basic core, 18 had a management component in their basic core. The average amount of management course work required in the basic core was 3.9 credit hours. The most common management courses required were Operations Management, with 12 out of 18 schools requiring such a course, and also Management and Organizational Behavior, with at least 9 out of 18 schools requiring such a course (it is likely that the 5 schools that required a principles-level management course had Mgt. & O.B. in mind as the topic of that course). The remaining course requirements in management included such courses as Human Resource Management (1 out of 18 schools), International Business / Global Management (3 out of 18), Managerial Communication (2 out of 18), and Team Management (2 out of 18).

Basic Core Marketing

Of the 23 schools that required a basic core, 19 had a marketing component in their basic core. The average amount of marketing course work required was 2.2 credit hours. A principles-level marketing course was the most common marketing course required, with 12 out of 19 schools requiring such a course. The remaining 7 schools required Marketing Management.

Basic Core Statistics

All of the 23 schools that required a basic core had a statistics or applied mathematics component in their basic core. The average amount of statistics course work required was 3.2 credit hours. A principles-level business statistics course was the most common statistics course required, with 12 out of 23 schools requiring such a course. Other courses required were equally common (5 or 6 out of 23 schools), and included such courses as Managerial Statistics, Applied Mathematics for Business, and Quantitative Methods and Statistical Analysis. (It is possible that the content of the Managerial Statistics and the Quantitative Methods and Statistical Analysis courses are sufficiently similar to count these two courses together as a “decision-making” statistics requirement, in which case 11 out of the 23 schools have such a requirement.)

Basic Core Technology

Of the 23 schools that required a basic core, 11 had a technology component in their basic core. The average technology coursework required across all 23 schools was therefore only 1.3 credit hours. The required technology courses were equally common (6 out of 11 schools each, so 1 school necessarily required both courses), and included such courses as Computer-Based Decision-Making and Spreadsheet Business Modeling, and Management Information Systems.

Basic Core Summary

If the averages and school counts are used as a guide for developing a “Jesuit M.B.A.” basic core of foundational courses, such a core should include approximately 3 credit hours in Financial Accounting, 3 hours in [Mgrl.]/Microeconomics, 2 hours in Financial Management, 1 hour in basic Business Law / Ethics, 2 hours each in Management and Organizational Behavior and in Operations Management, 2 hours in Marketing Principles, 3 hours in Statistics Principles, and 1 hour in some technology-related course, for a total of 19 hours of basic core requirements.

The basic core recommendation from a strictly statistical perspective is as follows:

Financial Accounting	3	Principles of Marketing	2
Mgrl./Microeconomics	3	Principles of Statistics	3
Financial Management	2	Spreadsheet Modeling or	
Business Law / Ethics	1	Mgmt. Info. Systems	1
Management and O.B.	2		
Operations Management	2	Grand Total:	19

This overview shows an emphasis on analysis and on a foundational understanding of the inner-workings of a typical business. The favored courses, from a credit-hour perspective, are those that will give the entering M.B.A. student a solid background in the basic analytical and theoretical tools that their various advanced core courses in decision-making, strategic planning, business policy, and entrepreneurial leadership will build on. For example, knowledge of basic accounting methods and relationships, foundational economic theories of the firm, and statistical tools for deep data analysis will serve students later in advanced financial management classes as they choose among differing projected financial scenarios, advanced management classes as they develop strategies for gaining competitive advantage, and advanced marketing classes as they create and attempt to measure customer relationships. That is what a basic core should do.

There are some areas that are not covered by this statistically-suggested basic core that would be helpful to second-year M.B.A. students in advanced core courses and would be in-line with the Jesuit tradition and values. The Jesuits have a long, long history of entrepreneurship, yet only 3 out of the 26 schools in the study require a course explicitly in entrepreneurial innovation. 13 out of 26 schools require a course in the nebulous “leadership” category, but the concepts are different and even those courses do not show up until the advanced core. In the attempt to create a distinctively Jesuit M.B.A. and to cater to a business community that is becoming increasingly driven by small businesses and entrepreneurial ventures, it might be wise to build a basic core that introduces first-year M.B.A. students to entrepreneurial ideas that can guide their advanced study. A basic core course in “Corporate Entrepreneurship” or “New Venture Management,” for example, would offer a more highly differentiated basic core experience from other programs.

Two other areas of concern that are historically dear to the Jesuits are social justice and the global environment. Conveniently, these are two of the greatest concerns to modern business managers, as well. Although many of the schools in the study require an advanced core course in business ethics with a social responsibility focus, it should perhaps be introduced earlier in the curriculum to give the student the decidedly Jesuit background of working for social equity and justice that could guide them through the rest of their course work, or extended and applied to more diverse course areas than strictly ethics. Certainly none of the schools in the study neglect ethical considerations in applied business disciplines entirely, but it could be embedded more strongly with courses such as “Corporate Financial Responsibility” or “Ethical Organizational Leadership” in place of more mundane basic core concepts that will be expanded later anyway. The globe-trotting history of the Jesuits is another element of Jesuit tradition that could further serve the two-fold purpose of creating a distinctively Jesuit M.B.A. and leveraging a stronger competitive advantage in light of the changing business world. Only a handful of schools in the study, however, explicitly require a course in international business or even with a global focus before the capstone course. Courses such as “Global Operations Management” or “International Information Technology Management,” could take the place of other basic core requirements.

Basic Core Proposal

Based on the statistically-derived basic core recommendation and on the analysis of potential alternate courses to introduce a stronger focus in areas consistent with Jesuit values – such as entrepreneurship, social justice, and global awareness – and tradition, presented below are potential reconfigurations of the “average” basic core requirement of a Jesuit M.B.A. degree:

1.	Financial Accounting	3	Global I.T. and Ops. Mgmt.	3
	Mgrl./Microeconomics	3	Principles of Marketing	2
	Corp. Fin. Responsibility	3	Principles of Statistics	3
	Corporate Entrepreneurship	2		
			Grand Total:	19

In this example, the 1 credit hour law/ethics requirement has been taken into the finance requirement, adding an applied ethical element to the basic foundational financial management course. In addition, the 1 credit hour information technology requirement has been taken into the operations requirement, broadening the focus of the basic foundational operations management course. An element of international business has also been added to the operations management course. Finally, the 2 credit hour basic management and organizational behavior course has been replaced with a 2 credit hour course in entrepreneurship in a corporate setting. The topics taught in such a course would certainly be similar to those taught in a basic foundational management and organizational behavior course, but the new emphasis on entrepreneurship in the corporate environment would better prepare students for later advanced entrepreneurial course work. The foundational core of analytical accounting, economics, and statistics courses remains unchanged.

2.	Financial Accounting	3	Intl. Ops. Management	2
	Mgrl./Microeconomics	3	Marketing & Info. Sys.	3
	Corp. Fin. Responsibility	3	Principles of Statistics	3
	Ethical Mgmt. Practices	2		
			Grand Total:	19

In this example, the 1 credit hour law/ethics requirement has been taken into the finance requirement as before, but also extended into the basic management and organizational behavior requirement. The expansion of the ethical dimension of the new basic core into two distinct areas of applied business functions will strengthen the emphasis on social justice in the new basic core. In addition, the 1 credit hour information technology requirement has been taken this time into the marketing requirement, adding an element of data analysis and information management in the applied area of marketing informatics in place of the non-applied information technology requirement of the old basic core. The application of basic information technology and systems practices to a specific business discipline, marketing in this case, will better serve students than a typical 0 or 1 credit hour technology lab requirement tacked on to a basic general business course would. Finally, the scope of the operations management requirement has been expanded to very explicitly include the discussion of the management of international operations and processes.

In either of these two options or any other similar option, three core values of the Jesuit tradition – entrepreneurship, social justice, and global awareness – have been explicitly inserted into the nondescript statistically-derived basic core to create a distinctly Jesuit basic core for a distinctly Jesuit M.B.A. program. This change also better prepares students for advanced work.

Advanced / Degree Core

The advanced core or degree core is the cornerstone of an M.B.A. program, and, as expected, all 26 schools in the study require such a core of advanced courses in the various functional areas of business as, on average, the largest component of their M.B.A. programs. The average of course work required in the advanced core or degree core was 22.3 credit hours.

Advanced Core Accounting

Of the 26 schools in the study, 17 had an accounting component in their advanced core. The average amount of accounting course work required in the advanced core across all schools, including those not requiring any such work, was 2.0 credit hours. The most common accounting course required was Managerial Accounting, with 16 out of 17 schools requiring such a course. In addition, 2 out of 17 schools required an advanced course in Financial Accounting topics.

Advanced Core Economics

Of the 26 schools in the study, 17 had an economics component in their advanced core. The average amount of economics course work required was 2.0 credit hours. The most common economics course required was Managerial Economics, with 12 out of 17 schools requiring such a course. In addition, 6 out of 17 schools required a course in the Economic Environment of the Firm or Managerial Macroeconomics. At least one school required both advanced courses.

Advanced Core Finance

Of the 26 schools in the study, 25 had a finance component in their advanced core. The average amount of finance course work required was 3.2 credit hours. The most common finance course required was [Advanced] Corporate Financial Management, with 16 out of 25 schools requiring such a course. In addition, 7 out of 25 schools required a Managerial Finance or Financial Decision-Making course. Other courses required included Investment Management (2 out of 25 schools), Financial Institutions (3 out of 25), and Financial Reporting (2 out of 25).

Advanced Core Law / Ethics

Of the 26 schools in the study, 21 had a law or ethics component in their advanced core. The average amount of law or ethics course work required was 2.6 credit hours. The required courses in this area were very similar in nature and were relatively evenly distributed. Out of these 21 schools, only 2 required a course with no explicit social or ethical component (that is, only a legal or regulatory component). Required courses included Business Ethics (6 out of 21 schools), Legal and Ethical Environment (5 out of 21), Legal and Regulatory Environment (2 out of 21), Social and Political Environment (3 out of 21), and Social and Ethical Environment (8 out of 21). Most of these courses are probably very similar in content, despite title differences.

Advanced Core Management

All of the 26 schools in the study had a management component in their advanced core. The average amount of management course work required was 6.5 credit hours (more than twice as much as required in any other business discipline). The most common management courses required were Organizational Leadership (13 out of 26 schools), Operations Management (13 out of 26), and Management and Organizational Behavior (11 out of 26). Courses less common, but still relatively popular, included Human Resource Management (7 out of 26) and International / Global Business (5 out of 26). Other courses included courses Change Management (2 out of 26), Entrepreneurship / Innovation Management (3 out of 26), Managerial Communication (2 out of 26), Social Issues in Management (1 out of 26), and Strategic Management (1 out of 26).

Advanced Core Marketing

Of the 26 schools in the study, 24 had a marketing component in their advanced core. The average amount of marketing course work required was 2.7 credit hours. The most common marketing course required was Marketing Management, with 17 out of 24 schools requiring such a course. 5 out of 24 schools required a Marketing Strategy course, and 2 required a CRM course.

Advanced Core Statistics

Only 9 of the 26 schools in the study had a statistics component in their advanced core. The average amount of statistics course work in the advanced core across all 26 schools in the study was therefore only 0.9 credit hours. The most common statistics course required by the 9 schools that had statistics requirements was Quantitative Methods, with 7 out of 9 of the schools requiring such a course. The remaining 2 out of 9 schools required a Managerial Statistics course.

Advanced Core Technology

Of the 26 schools in the study, 21 had a technology component in their advanced core. The average amount of technology course work required was 2.4 credit hours. The most common technology course required was Management Information Systems, with 15 out of 21 schools requiring such a course. 5 out of 21 schools required a course in Technology Management or Policy in High-Tech Firms / Industries, and 1 school required a course in Computer-Based Decision-Making through Spreadsheet Modeling. In addition, 1 school had a special topics requirement in technology in addition to their other advanced core technology requirements.

Advanced Core Summary

If the averages and school counts are used as a guide for developing a “Jesuit M.B.A.” advanced core of courses in the various program areas of the degree, such a core should include approximately 2 credit hours of Managerial Accounting, 2 hours of Managerial Economics, 3 hours of [Advanced] Financial Management, 3 hours of Legal and Ethical Environment, 3 hours of either Organizational Leadership or advanced Organizational Behavior, 3 hours of advanced Operations Management, 3 hours of Marketing Management, 1 hour of Quantitative Methods for Decision Analysis, and 2 hours of Management Information Systems or Technology Management, for a total of 22 hours advanced core requirements. (Note the areas that receive greater emphasis in credit hour requirements as compared to the areas that received emphasis in the basic core.)

The advanced core recommendation from a strictly statistical perspective is as follows:

Managerial Accounting	2	Marketing Management	3
Managerial Economics	2	Quantitative Methods	1
Adv. Fin. Management	3	Mgmt. Info. Systems or	
Legal / Ethical Environ.	3	Technology Management	2
Leadership / Adv. O.B.	3		
Adv. Ops. Management	3	Grand Total:	22

This overview shows an expected emphasis on managerial topics with decision-making emphases. Furthermore, whereas the basic core focused, from a credit hour perspective, on those courses such as accounting, economics, and statistics that provided an understanding of business processes and basic relationships, this advanced core focuses more on the higher-level topics of strategy and management. The greater emphasis on law / ethics in the advanced core, compared to the basic core, is in-line with this higher-level focus of business policy-making and systems-level thinking, as well as with the Jesuit tradition. Lacking from the advanced core, as it was from the basic core, is a distinct emphasis on international business or on entrepreneurship.

Advanced Core Proposal

Greater emphasis on the important disciplines of ethical decision-making, global awareness, and entrepreneurial thinking could be added to the advanced core curriculum in a number of ways. Some methods for doing so include greater use of “applied” ethics courses or explicitly globally-oriented or entrepreneurship-focused courses. One possible reconfiguration of the average advanced core requirement of a Jesuit M.B.A. degree is presented below:

1. Managerial Accounting	2	New Product Marketing	3
Intl. Macroeconomics	2	Info. Systems for Decision	
Adv. Fin. Management	3	Analysis / Quant. Methods	3
Social Resp. of the Firm	3		
Ethical Orgl. Leadership	3		
Global Supply Chain Mgmt.	3	Grand Total:	22

In this example, the emphasis of many courses has been changed from that of standard upper-level graduate business coursework to a more ethically, globally, and entrepreneurially aware focus. A greater emphasis on social justice has been added to the course in legal and ethical environments to provide a stronger focus on that distinctly Jesuit value, and a greater emphasis on ethical business practices in general has been added to the course in organizational behavior and leadership. A higher level of global awareness has been added to the advanced core by substituting the Managerial Economics course (which was included in many of the basic cores studied) with a course in International Macroeconomics (“International Economic Environment of the Firm”) and by substituting the advanced Operations Management course (which also was covered in many of the basic cores studied) with a course in Global Supply Chain Management (which is also a very desirable course in today’s business marketplace). Finally, greater emphasis on entrepreneurship and new venture management has been added by substituting the advanced Marketing Management course with a course specifically in New Product Marketing and by combining the previous advanced statistics and advanced technology requirements into a new decision-making course for managers and entrepreneurs based on new information technology.

Elective Requirements

All of the 26 schools in the study had elective requirements in their M.B.A. curriculum. Most schools used a simple “free elective” system, offering concentrations or specializations if students elected to take a certain number of courses in a particular field. Some schools utilized a “breadth elective” system, requiring students to take a certain number of elective courses in each of a number of separate business disciplines. Still other schools required all students to select a concentration and select elective courses based on their selection. A few schools only required electives in the event that a student wished to obtain a concentration, offering the student the ability to opt out of other advanced core courses to take elective courses in their concentration area. In all, the average elective requirement across all schools in the study was 12.4 credit hours.

The demand for well-rounded business leaders in today’s interdisciplinary business world is diminishing the relevance of traditional concentration-based elective requirements. Particularly at the executive and managerial levels, at which M.B.A. degrees are directed, individuals with a wide range of expertise and functional skills are more desirable than those with very specialized knowledge. The elective requirement section of an M.B.A. curriculum is a good place to develop the broad range of skills desired by the market, as well as to enhance the curricular emphasis on traditional Jesuit values. There could be ways to combine the breadth desired by the market, the emphasis on distinctly Jesuit values, and the ability to specialize in one’s chosen field into one integrative elective requirement. For example, rather than implementing a traditional “breadth elective” system that requires all students to take one elective course in each of the functional areas of accounting, finance, management, and marketing, a different kind of breadth elective system could be developed that required students to take one elective course in each of the core “value areas” of entrepreneurial action, global awareness, social justice, and ethical leadership.

Electives could be taken in any number of business disciplines, allowing, for example, finance students to take courses in topics like “New Venture Funding,” “International Financial Management,” “Corporate Financial Responsibility,” and “Financial Regulatory Environment.” Such a system of breadth electives based on core values rather than business disciplines would provide students with much of the breadth of perspective demanded by the marketplace, as well as the ability to specialize in their desired field, while emphasizing traditional Jesuit core values.

Capstone Requirements

Except for 1 school which used the final step in a 4-course management workshop series as a capstone, all of the schools in the study had a separate and distinct capstone course required at the completion of the rest of the degree requirements. These courses are probably very similar in content, but differed enough in description and course title to merit three classifications. Some capstone courses seemed to emphasize management or leadership practice, others focused on the formation of policy and strategic planning, and others focused on the global environment of the firm. The capstone course focused on policy and strategic planning was the most common, with 10 out of 25 schools requiring such a course, and is probably the most traditional capstone course configuration. Nevertheless, the entrepreneurial focus of the leadership practice capstone course and the global awareness of the global competitive strategy capstone course are more closely in-line with traditional Jesuit values. These options would probably better serve an M.B.A. program seeking to add a distinctly Jesuit focus to its curriculum. These latter two capstone course options averaged approximately 4 credit hours, while the more traditional policy and strategic planning course averaged 3 credit hours. A global, entrepreneurial 4-hour capstone is the recommendation.

Total Course Requirements

According to the averages and frequency counts, the typical M.B.A. degree program at a Jesuit university consists of approximately 19 credit hours of basic core work, 22 credit hours of advanced core work, 12 credit hours of electives, and a 3 credit hour capstone, as outlined below:

<i>Basic Core Requirements</i>		<i>Advanced Core Requirements</i>	
Financial Accounting	3	Managerial Accounting	2
Mgrl./Microeconomics	3	Managerial Economics	2
Financial Management	2	Adv. Fin. Management	3
Business Law / Ethics	1	Legal / Ethical Environ.	3
Management and O.B.	2	Leadership / Adv. O.B.	3
Operations Management	2	Adv. Ops. Management	3
Principles of Marketing	2	Marketing Management	3
Principles of Statistics	3	Quantitative Methods	1
Spreadsheet Modeling or		Mgmt. Info. Systems or	
Mgmt. Info. Systems	1	Technology Management	2
Basic Core Total	19	Advanced Core Total	22
<i>Capstone Requirements</i>		<i>Elective Requirements</i>	
Policy / Strategic Planning	3		12
Elective / Capstone Total	15	Grand Total	56

Summary Reconfiguration

One possible reconfiguration of the typical curriculum to better reflect many traditional Jesuit core values and create a more distinctly Jesuit M.B.A. degree program is outlined below:

<i>Basic Core Requirements</i>		<i>Advanced Core Requirements</i>	
Financial Accounting	3	Managerial Accounting	2
Mgrl. Microeconomics	3	Intl. Macroeconomics	2
Corp. Fin. Responsibility	3	Adv. Fin. Management	3
Corp. Entrepreneurship	2	Social Resp. of the Firm	3
Global Ops. Management	2	Ethical Orgl. Leadership	3
Marketing / Mkt. Info. Sys.	3	Global Supply Chain Mgmt.	3
Quantitative Methods	3	New Product Marketing	3
Basic Core Total	19	Info. Sys. for Dec. Analysis	3
<i>Elective Requirements</i>		<i>Advanced Core Total</i>	
Entrepreneurship focus	3		22
Ethical behavior focus	3	<i>Capstone Requirements</i>	
Global business focus	3	Entrepreneurial Leadership	2
Social justice focus	3	Global Competitive Strategy	2
		Elective / Capstone Total	16
		Grand Total	57

This is only one possible reconfiguration and is a drastic change. This outline has been developed as a model to demonstrate how Jesuit core values such as entrepreneurial leadership, social justice, ethical decision-making, and global awareness could be integrated into an M.B.A.