



MORAVIAN  
COLLEGE



MORAVIAN  
GRADUATE

Economics and Business Department

## **Student Learning Outcomes Assessment for Academic Year 2016-17**

### Department-level Assessment Tasks for AY 2017-18

1. Address AY 2016-17 findings (below) with reflection resulting in implementation of changes in pedagogy and andragogy, as well continue successful changes already identified.
2. Identify a department-level student learning objective to be studied in the AY 2017-18, inform all faculty of the choice, have faculty conduct assessment, and compile the end of year report.
3. Finalize the student learning objectives for all courses, standardizing the learning objectives for all sections of a course so as to allow comparisons and learning from different approaches to teaching course content.

### Department-level Student Learning Outcomes Assessed in AY 2016-17

#### *Undergraduate*

Critical Thinking – Students will identify problems, gather the necessary evidence from multiple sources, and then organize, reflect, and evaluate it to develop reasoned conclusions.

#### *Graduate*

Integration – Students will identify and apply connections among theories within their major discipline, across disciplines, and through the application of theory to practice in experiential fieldwork.

Collaborating -- Students will further develop the knowledge and skills needed to create collaborative processes in the workplace leading to the achievement of personal and organizational goals, including managing change, developing subordinates, understanding different cultures, ethnicities and lifestyles, and displaying ethical leadership in their organizations.

# Assessment Findings for AY 2015-16

## Undergraduate Assessment

### *Statistics*

Economics and Business Statistics is a prerequisite course for the graduate business degrees in the department, as well as for various courses in the undergraduate curriculum, including ECON 256 Econometrics. Dr. Terrizzi found that students entering ECON 256 had poor skill levels in statistics. Similarly, graduate students taking MGMT 555 Business Research Methods have poor skills in statistics. Moravian alumni entering the graduate program may have taken statistics via ECON 156 or MATH 107.

Are students completing introductory statistic courses reaching a sufficient level of skill to be successful in 200-level and 500-level courses for which the 100-level course is a prerequisite?

All students entering MGMT 555 Business Research Methods take an online refresher module in basic statistics. That module includes a pre-test. Data from all students who took the pre-test was collected and the students who earned their undergraduate degree at Moravian and those who earned it elsewhere were noted. A t-test comparing the pre-test scores between the two groups as shown in the table below. The t-test showed the means were statistically different at the  $p = 0.02$  level.

Group	n	Mean
Moravian Undergraduates	14	33.9
Non-Moravian Undergraduates	35	43.7

Students who took their statistics course as undergraduates at Moravian did less well in the pre-test than student who took their undergraduate statistics course elsewhere. The results suggest that more needs to be done in introductory statistics courses to meet knowledge and skill levels in statistics for use in advanced courses.

No effort was made because of the small number of cases to look at other explanatory variables, such as the number of years since the student took statistics until taking the pre-test. Such examination of pre-test data is needed when more cases are available. The requirement that MGMT 555 students take the refresher module is being maintained. The data from the module's pre-test will continue to be used to assess differences in students' statistical knowledge.

The results of the study suggest that more needs to be done in introductory statistics courses to meet knowledge and skill levels in statistics in preparation for advanced courses in the

Department. Dr. Terrizzi identified this deficiency with econometrics undergraduate students leading to discussion among the faculty that is ongoing.

Next Steps

1. Continue data gathering and reporting.
2. Reflect on results.
3. Define, review, and select interventions with the goal of increasing students' retention of statistical knowledge and skills. Currently defined interventions include:
  - a. Require calculus as a prerequisite for statistics. Being able to solve problems successfully in calculus is an indicator for success in applying statistical methods.
  - b. Use the scores on the placement test ALEKS for student placement statistics. There are minimum levels of proficiency for which students are expected to succeed in statistics. Students should achieve this minimum proficiency before entering statistics. [ALEKS proficiency levels](#).
  - c. Require a minimum grade of C- in statistics in order to take econometrics AND require calculus in order to take econometrics.
4. Implement interventions.
5. Assess outcomes associated with the interventions.

Timeline

- Implement interventions in the Spring 2018 semester.

*Setting a Baseline - MGMT 310 Doing Good at Work, Fall 2016, Dr. Marabella*

Course Student Learning Objective Assessed: Students will identify problems, gather the necessary evidence from multiple sources, and then organize, reflect, and evaluate it to develop reasoned conclusions.

Through each of the assignments, students were assessed on how well they did this. In Assignment #1, students were asked to develop a research question (a problem), review the literature that would help them answer their question (multiple sources), and then respond to the question they posed (reasoned conclusions). They were also asked to consider the implications for the future revealed by the answer they uncovered.

n = 25  
Mean = 4.63  
Median = 4.74  
Mode = 4

Conclusions

Generally students create research questions that are either too broad or too complex. Most students are able to develop a response that directly answers the question; some do lose focus and add interesting but irrelevant information that distracts from a reasonable response. Students generally find it difficult to consider the future implications, and it becomes a rehash, or

summary, of their response, rather than a “pushing forward” of what they learned to possible future scenarios.

Students need more guidance in developing their question - the professor personally approves each question so there is a dialogue, but more upfront work on how to craft a focused mini-research question might be helpful.

Students also may benefit from more help in understanding and articulating the future implications of a question’s response. For example, if the question deals with what factors perpetuate a culture of fear, and the response includes intolerance of failure, then, future implications would include how the organization’s environment might thwart productivity and morale if failure continues to be branded as an indicator of incompetence instead of innovation.

#### Next Steps

1. Make the research question process more structured as a formal discussion and practice session.
2. Do more to explain what it means to understand future implications of an issue, share examples and provide opportunities to practice the articulation of future implications for these examples.

#### Timeline

- Implement changes in the Fall 2017 offering of the course.

## Graduate Assessment

### *Full Semester or Eight Week Course Offering: Assessment Data for Decision Making for MGMT 517 Corporate Financial Management*

Corporate Financial Management is a core course required of MBA students and leadership concentration students of the MSHRM program. The course is considered to be very difficult by many students.

Corporate Financial Management was offered in an eight week format. Students suggested that the course instead be offered in a full semester format. Assessment data was used to answer the question “Do students experience significantly better outcomes from the full semester format in comparison to the eight week format of the course?”

Two sections of the course were offered in each Fall semester of 2015 and 2016. All sections of the course were offered in blended format of eight weeks but one section was offered as a full semester course in the Fall 2016. An indirect, internal, formative comparative pre-test, post-test self assessment by students taking the classes was used to assess student outcomes. The self-assessments focused on three student learning objectives in the course - gathers information, applies financial data, and creates a value proposition.

Although there was a slight reduction in the average final self-assessment scores in 2016, students indicated their skills and knowledge increased from the pre-test to the end of the course consistently in each class offering. In the full semester version of the course students showed an equal increase in skills and knowledge as in the eight week versions of the course.

The data actually shows that in two of the eight week versions of the course, outcomes exceeded those of the students in the full semester class.

### Conclusions

Based on the results, Corporate Financial Management will be offered in the eight week, blended version of the course. Students concerns will continue to be monitored through feedback in student course evaluations and annual student satisfaction surveys, as well other feedback channels.

### *Assessing Collaboration Among Team Members in the MBA Capstone Course*

MGMT 571 Leading Change in Organizations is the capstone course of the MBA program. The course is also required for students in the MSHRM and MHA degree programs.

A significant component of the class involves students working as consultants with start-up businesses in Bethlehem and Allentown. Those businesses may include not-for-profit organizations. Students are organized into self-governing, self-directed work teams. The participating businesses are referred by the City of Bethlehem's Community and Economic Development Department or are organizations that contacted the instructor directly.

The students work in teams on a strategic level project for ten weeks. They observe each other during the project and are in a position to provide feedback about their team members and their own performance. Indirect, internal, summative comparative 360 degree assessments were conducted in student teams at the end of their consulting project. Data from the 360-degree assessment was compared year-over-year to identify the degree of student attainment of various program-level outcomes.

Two specific measures of teamwork were used from the assessment instrument to examine collaboration skills.

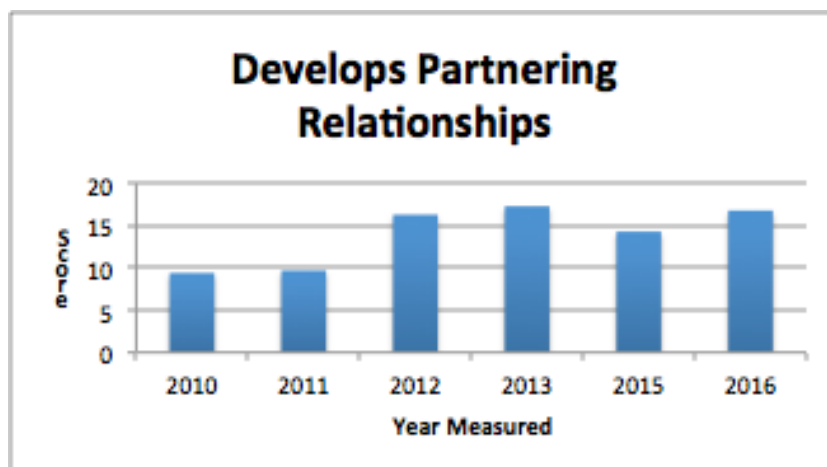
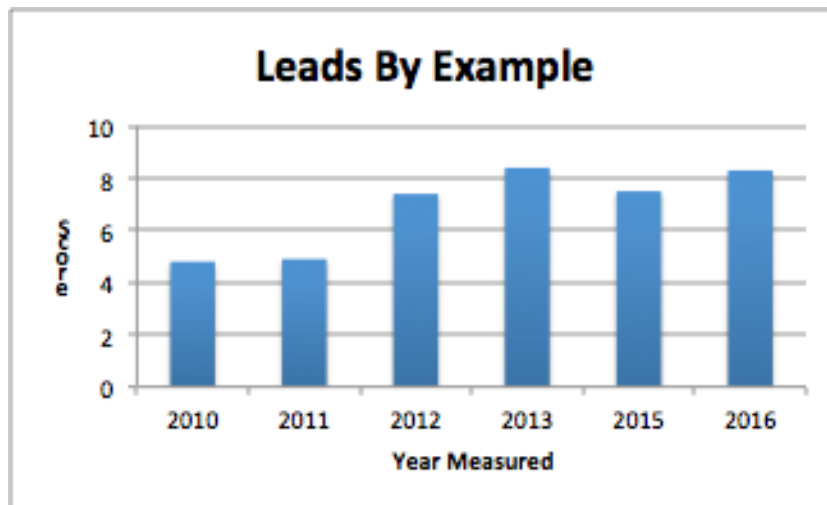
1. Leads by Example -- Serves as a role model for values; takes responsibility for delivering on commitments; gives proper credit to others; acknowledges own mistakes rather than blaming others
2. Develops Partnering Relationships - Establishes strong interpersonal relationships by staying in close contact with key individuals and working cooperatively; helps others feel valued and appreciated by monitoring their needs and exchanging occasional favors (for example, providing a sounding board to test proposals or learn what's happening in other parts of the industry).

Two sections of MGMT 571 were offered in the academic year, one in Fall and one in Spring. There were a total of 30 students taking the course this year. Students completed the assessment as part of the course requirements.

## Results

Students' development of their collaboration skills is a significant program learning objective for the graduate business program. Measurement of collaboration skills is an important step in assessing graduate outcomes.

The measures of collaboration were collected for the past six years of offering MGMT 571. The annual data allows for trend analysis of the results to indicate how well students are achieving the collaborating learning outcome. The two charts that follow show the trend in the results since 2010. Generally the trend has been positive, though there was a drop off in scores from 2013 to 2015 (data were not compiled for 2014 for these measures).



The assessment results showed improvement in the outcome from 2015 to 2016. An increased focus on team building work in the class may be the reason. There is now better preparation for students in the class; they were assigned to their teams at the beginning of the semester instead of five weeks into the semester as was the case in previous years. This provided students with the opportunity to work together in various activities before beginning their consulting project, including discussion of case assignments and team building exercises, such as building towers (see photo below).

### Next Steps

1. Because of the trend results, the change in approach to team building from this year will be maintained in the course offerings in the upcoming academic year.
2. While data will be collected on collaboration through the 360° assessment, the focus of the assessment should change to another program outcome.

### Timeline

- Maintain changes and redirect assessment beginning in the Fall 2017 semester.

*Freebowler Project Team participating in team building activity of tower building, Spring 2017*



### *Post-Graduation Survey*

The College does not conduct a follow-up survey with students who graduate from the MBA, MSHRM, or MHA degree programs. In the Fall of 2016, for the first time a post-graduation survey was sent to alumni. Seventeen May 2016 graduates were solicited for participation in the survey with six responding, a 35% response rate. This group of respondents formed the baseline for an ongoing, post-graduation survey to measure attainment of program outcomes.

### *Respondents*

Of the respondents, 50 percent were MSHRM, 33 percent were MBA, and 17 percent were MHA program graduates. Eighty-three percent of these graduates were employed full-time while 17 percent were seeking full-time employment. Of the respondents, 80 percent reported working in the Allentown area with one person working in Breinigsville, PA. Companies employing the respondents were medium to large companies, including Coca-Cola North America, Lehigh Valley Health Network, Computer Aid, Inc., Air Products, and Nestle USA. The salaries of respondents ranged from \$30,000 to \$100,000 with an average of \$65,000.

Sixty percent of respondents reported they were not seeking new career opportunities while 40 percent responded that they were seeking new opportunities. After graduating from the

program, 60 percent of respondents received one new job offer while 40 percent received two new job offers.

### *Analysis and Takeaways*

Overall, graduates of the MBA, MSHRM, and MHA programs viewed their degree as being very related to their current work status and moderately valuable personally. All respondents indicated that their employers perceived value in the degrees they earned. Employers, though, saw less value for the degree than graduates. A majority of the graduate students work full-time while also attending classes. Employers may perceive lesser value for the degrees than graduates as the degree is only one component of graduates' work-related competencies.

Respondents noted that the master's programs in the Economics and Business Department should include more career services to supplement their education, as some respondents were seeking employment or new positions post-graduation. This is an area to focus upon for expanding and further tailoring the programs.

The positive responses about the value of the leadership components of the curriculum to the graduates supported the decision to have such a focus in the curriculum. The focus on leadership is a distinction of the Moravian MBA program in comparison with the programs at other area college and universities.

Prospective candidates for the graduate program often ask what related job outcomes students experience after completing their graduate program. The results of this survey provide an answer to that inquiry. All of the respondents received an offer for a new job after graduation; 40 percent received two new job offers. Although the small number of respondents limits generalizability of these results, there is here the suggestion that graduates benefit from completing their MBA, MSHRM, or MHA degrees.

### *Limitations*

The number of potential respondents was limited by the number of graduating students in the 2015-16 academic year. While the response rate was good at 35%, that is only six respondents very much limiting the generalizability of these results, though there are takeaways that are actionable. The value of these results are in the baseline created for comparative purposes with future administration of the instrument.

This instrument will be administered to future graduating students with the purpose of creating year-to-year comparisons of outcomes, as well as a larger data set to use for assessing the outcomes of the program for alumni.

### *Follow-Ups*

1. Career Services - a need for career services support was identified by the survey. A follow-up with the The Center for Career and Civic Engagement (Center) identified only one graduate student using the services of that center last year.

The focus of the Center was on individual meetings with students. Workshops previously offered to graduate students had little or no attendance. Center employees would come on weekends for workshops if graduate students would attend.

Making information about the Center more visible to graduate students would assist in meeting the needs of the students desiring such a service. A newsletter will be prepared in the summer of 2017 for the graduate students that will include information about the Center.

2. This survey provided feedback on a primary outcome for students seeking a graduate degree -- do new job offers come along with the degree? The results provide the answer "Yes". This information was shared with the admissions group for the graduate program.
3. This was the first administration of a post-graduation survey to graduate alumni. The instrument needs to be sent to alumni graduating this past May and that data assessed with the data from this survey to start making the results useful for assessment.

# Assessment Task Force Feedback Letter



Dear Dr. Kleintop:

Thank you, once again, for submitting your department's annual assessment report. Members of the MSCHE Assessment Task Force at Moravian College have reviewed your report and believe that you have sufficiently addressed the Student Learning Outcome of critical thinking, as it pertains to relevant courses offered during the Spring 2017 semester.

In particular, we commend you and your department members for presenting statistical evidence when appropriate and for the attention you have given to student perceptions (e.g. the view that MGMT 517 should not be offered as an eight-week course). It would be wonderful if, in the future, members of the department could reflect upon the general level of success that your department found in meeting this and other SLOs. Doing so involves considering overall student performance on the SLO measures in all courses evaluated, either collectively or as student progress through the course levels.

We look forward to receiving your 2017-2018 assessment report next May. Please note that, beginning in the Spring of 2018, department reports will need to include a summary of the efforts they made to implement or continue pedagogies identified in the previous year's report as promising. So, be sure to take note of the attempts made to employ such methods and their levels of success during the upcoming academic year.

As always, feel free to contact me at any time if you have any questions about or would like guidance with your assessment efforts.

Enjoy the remainder of the summer!

Best,

Debra Wetcher-Hendricks



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