
Coles College of Business
2014 AACSB Fifth Year Continuous Improvement Review (CIR) Report
Section VI – Learning and Teaching

Continuing its strong commitment to improvement in student learning in all programs, the CCB has implemented numerous innovative initiatives related to teaching and learning since 2009. From new programs to complete revisions of core curricula for some programs to a reorganization of the assessment of learning structure to small tweaks within courses; all changes were made in an effort to develop graduates who have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to meet the needs of the current workplace. These changes were spurred by feedback from employers, alumni, students, faculty, and advisory board members, in addition to assessment of learning results.

A. Curriculum Management and Development

Blue Sky Curriculum Task Force and the CCB Teaching and Learning Community (TLC)

It is appropriate to begin with two developments that spawned several of the innovative ideas presented below. In 2010, the Dean commissioned the Blue Sky Curriculum Task Force to investigate possibilities for reinventing the way we do things. Simultaneously, the CCB Teaching and Learning Community (TLC) was created to provide additional instructional support for faculty. Both entities consisted of faculty with an interest in improving teaching effectiveness and student learning experience. The resulting report from the Blue Sky Task Force included a list of 49 recommended initiatives of varying scope, impact on students, and required resources. The entire report is available upon request. The natural progression was for the TLC to take this list and oversee the implementation of selected recommendations. A designated CCB Advisory Board member and faculty interested in the currently selected projects voluntarily participate in the TLC. The more significant initiatives, highlighted below, are examples of efforts to create curricula and programs that are more relevant to the current business environment, to increase student interaction and engagement within local business and service organizations, and to increase students' likelihood of success upon graduation.

Innovative BBA-Management Core Curriculum includes courses that mirror current structure and needs of business environments, thus developing work-ready students

In the fall of 2009, faculty in the Dept. of Management and Entrepreneurship reviewed the core curriculum for the BBA-Management degree and recognized the need to revise it based on the needs of constituents. The department appointed a Curriculum Task Force to research current and future trends in the field and in academia. This committee reviewed the literature, did a comparative analysis of peer and aspirant institutions, and conducted focus groups with students, KSU/CCB Advisory Board members, and executives in the business community. From this research and analysis, the department came to the conclusion that students needed specific hard and soft skill sets (including a better understanding of systems, decision-making and critical thinking skills, teaming, and communication skills) that the current curriculum did not provide in a cohesive way.

In developing the major core requirements (15 credit hours), they considered what Management majors needed to know so they can be better aligned with business and more employable when they graduate. The four core courses include field applications and are

integrative, going from Macro to Micro and back to Macro conceptually. The courses are sequenced and were developed collaboratively to meet the requirements of face-to-face and on-line delivery. All four new courses plus the Managing Globally requirement meet the primary objectives of the program: content (knowledge: good critical thinkers), meaningful application (skill: good team players), presentation style (skill: good communicators), and understanding how managers think/ behave (attitude). (Course descriptions for the new courses are in Appendix 6.1 to be provided under a separate cover.)

Assessment of Learning Results drives changes in BBA-Economics and BBA-Finance Curricula.

Housed in the same department, the BBA-Finance and BBA-Economics programs were originally designed to provide flexibility for students to move from one to the other of these degree programs. There was not a common set of required courses for either major, which created challenges when assessing student learning at the program level. In addition, certain combinations of major-field electives satisfied both degree programs. In 2011, faculty from each discipline met to assess and revise major field requirements for both programs. There are now two required courses for each degree that must be completed before taking 4000-level major field electives and the major-field electives are more distinctly defined for each major. In addition, tracks were developed to guide students with career interests in capital markets, corporate finance, and econometrics.

Hughes Leadership and Career Development Program designed to prepare 100% of CCB undergraduates for immediate job placement upon graduation.

We found that too many undergraduates reach their final semester and have little idea what career paths are available in their chosen field and have taken no steps toward obtaining a job. Thus, the Dean created a task force to develop a professionalism program in which every Coles College undergraduate will participate. With support of the TLC, this task force developed a unique program that will encourage students to be more focused on career goals from the time they declare an intent to enter the College.

Researched and developed during 2012-2014 and set for launch in Fall 2014, the Hughes Leadership and Career Development Program is required of *all* CCB undergraduate students. During three 0-credit hour required courses in the program, students will learn about their unique strengths, research details of job opportunities within their chosen fields, improve written and oral communication skills, develop an effective resume and good interview skills, learn how to conduct a job search, and work individually with an assigned career coach, designated for each major area of study within CCB. Students are required to meet with their career coach a minimum amount of time during the sophomore, junior, and senior years but are encouraged to spend more time with the coach as needed.

The expected impact of this program is that the time to graduation will decline, students will withdraw from fewer courses, more students will participate in internship and co-op programs, students will be more successful obtaining jobs in their fields of study and employers will be more satisfied with our graduates. The “research” phase of the development process included numerous student focus groups, information gathering lunches with every recruiter who visited campus to interview CCB students in the Spring of 2013, examinations of programs at other institutions, input from the CCB Advisory Board and faculty. CCB began a significant PR campaign in the spring of 2014, to increase students’

awareness of the new requirements and generate excitement among students. We received tremendous endorsement for this program in the form of a substantial financial donation from an Advisory Board Member. (See Appendix 6.2 for more details of the program; provided under a separate cover)

Coles College Scholars Minor Program provides a cohort-based experience to challenge and showcase our most talented undergraduate students.

There is a growing concern among the faculty that we are not properly challenging our most talented students. In addition, a new component of the KSU Strategic Plan is to increase the number of honors programs within its colleges. Thus, an initiative recommended by the Blue Sky Curriculum Task Force and developed by the TLC is the CCB Scholars Program. We spent two years (2011-2013) gathering information from peer and aspirant institutions as well as within the KSU. During AY 2013-2014, a group of CCB faculty and Advisory Board members developed a unique cohort-based program that will start in the Fall 2014. The goal was to create a program in which students would be highly engaged with one another, faculty, and business leaders.

The program is designed to showcase these students by providing industry mentors and many opportunities for networking. This is especially important for our students because many of them are first-generation college students or international students and do not have family “connections” in the world of business. Admission to the Scholars Program requires a formal application with an assigned essay topic, minimum GPA of 3.5, letters of recommendation, and an interview with faculty and Advisory Board members. Students accepted into this program complete 15 hours of coursework, as a cohort during their junior and senior years, ultimately earning a minor degree. The Scholars courses include Applied Leadership in Business, Decisions and Critical Thinking, International Immersion, Consulting and Change Management, and Business Intelligence. To date, we have received funding from external sources for the Scholars Program to cover the 2014 Fall Kickoff Retreat (a 3-day offsite program), a substantial amount of the cost of the International Immersion study abroad trip, and iPads loaded with required textbooks and other course materials. More details are provided in Appendix 6.3 (provided under a separate cover).

We view the CCB Scholars Program as a “test bed” for programs and courses that could be made available to more students. At this point, the program is limited to 20-25 students who begin their cohort-based program in the fall of each year. Plans are to possibly expand the program to launch two cohorts each year and determine how to infuse some of the more effective aspects of the program into the overall BBA Program.

Master of Accounting (MAcc) Program was completely redesigned in 2010.

In 2010, the Director of the SOA began to formally solicit feedback from stakeholders about making significant changes to the content and delivery of our MAcc Program to address some of the weaknesses of the program at the time (i.e., 38 percent dropout rate, not a “target” recruiting school for many employers) and focus on some distinguishing factors that provided opportunities for excellence (i.e., reputation and expertise of faculty, location, and growth of KSU). The SOA Director gathered data from conversations with directors at competitor, peer, and aspirant accelerated MAcc Programs regarding student success rates, recruiting and relationships with accounting firms, standings of accounting programs, and

transition issues. The most common features of these programs were that they had structured and current course offerings and additional educational and career resources for students.

The director, in conjunction with a MAcc task force, examined program data analysis, benchmark data, and options for alternative program delivery formats. Data from surveys of CCB's recent accounting graduates, students at career fairs, and broader surveys of recent accounting graduates in academic articles were analyzed. Given the data, the accounting faculty felt that there was an opportunity to change the existing program and create a distinct, quality MAcc program that would improve graduation rates and develop skills that both students and employers commonly listed as important, but underdeveloped skills of accounting graduate programs (i.e., leadership and professional skills). Student surveys consistently showed students were interested in both day and evening cohort programs with the following features: one-year program, CPA exam preparation assistance, quality recruiters and job networking opportunities, renowned faculty, leadership skills, travel experience, and an all-inclusive program. The top areas of career interest listed by students were auditing & assurance, taxation, and internal auditing. The vision for the new program was a full-time, one-year cohort program that enhanced technical expertise in the accounting specialized area of Financial Reporting and Auditing or Taxation, attracted and retained high-quality students, was innovative (i.e., provided a travel experience and other opportunities to interact with the profession), focused on skills deemed important by stakeholders (i.e., advanced communication and critical thinking abilities, leadership skills) was revenue-generating, and garnered increased attention from recruiting firms.

The first cohort began classes in Fall 2011 and the fourth will begin in Fall 2014. Student retention is almost 100% for each cohort. Student coursework has increasingly focused on building leadership and communication skills (written and oral presentations), and involvement with the profession (i.e., via the Internal Audit conference, a capstone course presentation to leaders in the community, and the travel experience to Washington DC to meet with FAR and Tax leaders). Graduates have received job opportunities with national and international firms, with several students accepting positions at Big 4 accounting firms. All students who have attended the Internal Audit conference have received job interviews from the conference, with many resulting in job interviews. Feedback from professionals who have seen student presentations in the capstone course has been positive.

B. Assessment of Learning Process / Structure

Four significant changes were made within the organizational structure and process of the CCB Assessment of Learning (AoL) Council since 2009. Details of the current AoL process are provided in Appendix 6.4 (provided under a separate cover)

1. In 2010, the learning goals and objectives were reviewed and revised to better reflect curriculum content in the BBA, Undergraduate Accounting, MBA, EMBA, and MAcc programs. In addition, new goals and objectives were developed for the relatively new Executive MBA for Families in Business (FEMBA) and Doctorate in Business (DBA) programs. In keeping with Bloom's Taxonomy, the learning objectives developed are appropriate for the corresponding level of each course, allowing for a progression of student learning from knowledge and comprehension in lower-level courses to analysis and synthesis in upper-level and graduate

courses. A variety of assessment tools is used to assess each learning outcome, including multiple-choice questions, small problems, case study analyses, oral and written presentations, research papers, etc. Learning goals and objectives for each CCB program, along with associated assessment tools are provided in Appendix 6.5 (provided under a separate cover). It should be noted that the BBA learning goals and objectives apply to BBA degree programs offered online as well as those offered in a traditional format. Likewise, the learning goals and objectives listed for the MBA program are applicable to the KSU campus as well as the Dalton campus. *It should be noted that we did not conduct course-embedded assessment of learning in some programs while the goals and objectives were being revised in the fall of 2010 and 2011. Such assessment resumed in the spring of 2012. Program-level assessment continued during this period.*

2. Membership on the CCB AoL Council shifted to include program AoL directors rather than designated representatives from each department; although the mix of program directors still includes faculty from each department. As the number of academic programs at the graduate level has increased, the old structure of basing membership solely on department (or discipline) representation became ineffective.
3. The AoL Council Director worked with Digital Measures to create a new Assessment Module. The module was designed to better fit our specific needs. The impact is significant in that we are now able to capture assessment results by variables such as course delivery format, course location, and length of term, allowing for richer and more relevant data analyses. Also, the custom reports available in the new module are more relevant for individual programs.
4. In July 2012, the Department of Information Systems was transferred into the College of Business, thus adding three new degree programs: BBA-Information Systems (BBA-IS), BBA-Information Security Assurance (BBA-ISA) and Master of Science in Information Systems (MSIS). The IS faculty worked very quickly to adapt the learning goals and objectives for these programs and to align their assessment of learning processes to those in the Coles College.

Assessment of learning reports for each program, including program learning goals and objectives, assessment results for selected goals, and course/program improvements are provided in Appendix 6.5 (provided under a separate cover). All assessment results are available upon request. **Please see Appendix B of this document for some of the more significant curriculum enhancements made as a result of “closing the loop” of the AoL process in the last five years.**

Joint Partnership Degree Programs

CCB is involved in two joint partnership degree programs: the WebMBA and the joint MBA/Master in Public Administration (MPA) Programs. The WebMBA is a program collaboratively offered by six AACSB-accredited institutions within the USG. Although students must meet admission requirements for the specific school from which they wish to graduate, they take courses taught by instructors from the other four universities. Faculty and administrators from the participating institutions meet twice a year to review the curriculum, discuss assessment of learning results, and make necessary changes to the program. There is a dedicated assessment director for the program (this rotates among the institutions); and, we have a representative for the WebMBA on the CCB Assurance of Learning Council.

CCB also offers a joint MBA/MPA degree for which students must complete the same set of required core courses as all MBA students plus two MBA elective courses (27 hours). This includes MGT 8999 in which program-level assessment is conducted. The remaining 24 hours required consists of core MPA. As all core MBA courses are included in the assessment of learning process, the quality and content of these courses can be verified.

Transfer Credit Policies

Within the MBA Program, we allow for the transfer in of up to three courses (9 credit hours) taken at another AACSB-accredited institution. That same principle applies to the joint MBA/MPA program for the set of MBA courses that are substituted. As for the WebMBA, we sometimes allow the transfer in of up to two courses (6 credit hours) from another AACSB-accredited program, though this is a rare exception, since the WebMBA is a lock-step, cohort-based, sequenced set of courses.

For undergraduate programs, transfer credit policies are mainly established at the University, although, as shown below, the CCB imposes stricter standards in some cases. Transfer students must meet the same requirements for admission to the CCB Undergraduate Professional Program as native students. (However, they can use appropriate transfer credit for some of the lower division core courses). CCB requires some specific courses to be taken at KSU, such as MGT 4199, the capstone course for the BBA degree. Also, CCB has a graduation requirement that students must earn at least 45 hours of upper-division business credit. The courses used to meet this requirement may be transfer courses or courses taken at KSU. (The KSU requirement is at least 39 hours.) (See Appendix 6.6, provided under a separate cover, for more details.)

C. Continuous Improvement and Instructional Development

Support for Continuous Improvement in Teaching

- The CCB TLC Workshop Series was created to allow CCB faculty to share their innovative teaching methodologies and to bring in presenters from outside CCB/KSU. The TLC Workshop Series was “kicked off” in the fall of 2011 by Dr. Michael Wesch, renowned teacher and anthropologist from Kansas State University, who provided a one and one-half day workshop. In the second year of the series, Dr. Harvey Brightman brought his popular one-day Master Teacher Workshop to CCB. Other workshops held in a lunch-and-learn format were presented by CCB faculty and Instructional Designers from CETL, the Distance Learning Center, and Information Technology Services. A list of recent TLC workshops and presentations is provided in Appendix 6.7 (provided under a separate cover).
- CCB regularly provides funds for faculty to attend AACSB curriculum and teaching-related workshops and seminars. For example, three faculty recently attended workshops in the Curriculum Development Series related to Leadership, Critical Thinking, and Experiential Learning to help them prepare courses for the new Scholars Program.
- CETL provides a wealth of faculty development programs for KSU faculty, ranging from an orientation for new adjunct faculty to more focused programs geared towards improving student learning. CCB faculty are encouraged to attend these programs.
- An Instructional Designer hired in the summer of 2013, primarily to work with those teaching online and hybrid courses, is available to help all faculty with their courses.

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- CCB recognizes an Outstanding Teacher each year. Recipients of this award are eligible for the University Outstanding Teaching Award. Two faculty members in the Management Department were finalists in the 2012 Instructional Innovation Award Competition sponsored by the Decision Sciences Institute (DSI).
 - An online student evaluation of teaching (SET) assessment is made available, but not required of students, every academic term. A committee of CCB faculty developed the SET questions used for our courses; certain questions were modified for online courses. Department chairs review SET results as part of the faculty annual review process. Faculty members that fall short of expectations in teaching are often steered toward developmental workshops. For example, it was recommended that such faculty participate in the Master Teacher Program led by Harvey Brightman and sponsored by the Coles TLC in 2012.
 - Adjunct professors: CETL offers an orientation for new adjunct professors during on effective teaching techniques. Course coordinators or other designated full-time faculty work with adjunct faculty in the development of syllabi and course materials. CCB also maintains a handbook with useful information for adjunct professors.

Support for Instructional Development across Diverse Delivery Methods

- The CCB employs a BBA Online Director, a faculty member who also teaches in the program, and a part-time Instructional Designer, as described in the previous section. Both of these persons work closely with the KSU Distance Learning Center (DLC).
- The Online BBA Committee is a standing CCB committee with representation from all departments that meets monthly to evaluate and craft policies related to online programs and to discuss activities, software, methods, etc. to support faculty who teach online courses. The committee also oversees policy related to hybrid courses.
- Per a KSU requirement, all online courses must be certified by Quality Matters (recertification occurs every 5 years).
- KSU and CCB continue to offer excellent workshops to help with the development and enhancement of online and hybrid courses. CCB faculty are encouraged to take advantage of these workshops.
- For courses offered in varied formats (face-to-face, online, or hybrid), the student experience is very similar. Curriculum content is identical for courses, regardless of delivery format; the same assessment vehicles are used, and the majority of courses offered in an online or hybrid format are taught by faculty who also teach face-to-face courses.
- In 2011, we began collecting data that allows us to parse out assessment results on the basis of course delivery format and location. Across the board, the percentage of students who meet or exceed expectations is lower for the online sections, but it is consistently above the benchmark set for these courses. It is interesting to note that the percentages to meet or exceed within the online sections follow the same trend as for the corresponding face-to-face sections. Faculty who teach these online sections are constantly trying new approaches to improve student learning.
- A comparative analysis of assessment results for online versus in-class courses is provided under the BBA Report section of Appendix 6.5 (provided under a separate cover).