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## Graduate Curricula and Assessment Committee Meeting : 2008 : 03 : 28

University of South Florida St. Petersburg. College of Business. Graduate Curricula and Assessment  
Committee.

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**USFSP COLLEGE OF BUSINESS**  
**GRADUATE CURRICULA AND ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE**  
**GCAC**  
**Minutes of Friday, March 28, 2008**

Present: James Fellows, Chair  
Alison Watkins  
Mike Lockett  
Bill Jackson  
Cindy Bean  
Toni Criss  
Wei Guan  
Scott Geiger, ex officio  
Ryan Lander, ex officio

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 11:45am. The Chair acknowledged that the course Managerial Analysis, previously approved by the GCAC as a new core requirement for the MBA program, had passed a full vote of the faculty that morning. This course will be offered for the first time in Fall 2009, at which time it will replace The Dynamics of Individuals and Technology in Organizations, as a core requirement for all MBA students. The Dynamic course would be offered for the last time in Fall 2008.

The committee next discussed a draft report of the MBA program review, undertaken by the GCAC during Spring 2008. After some discussion of the wording, the report was approved. [See the report at the end of these minutes.] The report will be forwarded to Associate Dean Geiger and Dean Franklin for inclusion in their annual report to AACSB.

The next order of business was a discussion of enrollment caps for MBA courses. Director Langan noted that MBA enrollments for Summer 2008 have increased significantly over last summer, causing one class to reach 40 and another 36. The original caps were supposed to be 35 in all classes but an oversight had caused the caps to be set at 40. Currently the caps are set at 30 for each class in Fall 2008. The GCAC voted to recommend that all MBA caps be put at 35 for the Fall 2008 semester. Director Langan will then bring this to the Dean for her final approval.

The final point of discussion was the possibility of offering a new MBA core course, Financial Analysis. This would be a combination of Financial Accounting and Finance, with emphasis on financial statement analysis and capital budgeting. Bill Jackson stated that some of his students in Strategic Management had expressed concern over their lack of preparation in these areas, especially accounting. Dr. Jackson had in earlier meetings stated that the students did not seem adequately prepared in these areas, and the GCAC agreed that more quantitative material should be required of the students. Professor Fellows said that he would work with the accounting faculty to develop the course. Professor Fellows said that it likely would replace Global Economic Issues as a required core course, with that course becoming an elective within the International concentration. This would be determined later.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15pm. The next meeting is Friday, April 25.

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**USF St. Petersburg College of Business**  
**Graduate Curricula and Assessment Committee [GCAC]**  
**MBA PROGRAM REVIEW**  
**Approved by the GCAC on Friday, March 28, 2008**

During the Spring 2008 semester the Graduate Curricula and Assessment Committee [GCAC] undertook a review of the USFSP MBA program. The MBA program is a relatively new program, having only started in the Fall 2005 semester. Despite this the MBA program has made great strides, and will continue to improve. This report is a summary of what has been achieved over the last past years and how the program can be made even better.

**QUALITY SUCCESS: Beyond Grey Pinstripes Ranking**

One of the measures of a program's quality is how an outside objective body regards the program. Since its inception the USFSP MBA program has been recognized by Beyond Grey Pinstripes, a ranking of MBA programs sponsored by the Aspen Institute. The Aspen Institute is an organization that spotlights and ranks innovative MBA programs that integrate corporate governance, social issues and environmental stewardship into the curriculum.

In its 2007 rankings Beyond Grey Pinstripes ranked the USFSP MBA program 34<sup>th</sup> in the world in its Global 100. This put our program in select company. For example, the MBA program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison was ranked 33<sup>rd</sup>, while INSEAD of France was 43<sup>rd</sup>. This ranking shows that the USFSP MBA program has established high performance standards when it comes to exposing students to a discussion of social issues and environmental stewardship. The GCAC recognizes this quality performance, so the following points should be interpreted as a means of improving the program even further, while maintaining an emphasis on the study of corporate social responsibility.

**SURVEY OF MBA STUDENTS**

During the Spring 2008 semester the GCAC undertook a survey of recent graduates of our new MBA program. The purpose of the survey was to solicit opinions about the quality of the program and its effectiveness in meeting the students' own goals. Because USFSP only just began the new program at the commencement of the Fall 2005 semester there have not been a great deal of graduates from the program, about 35 in total. We received only 11 responses so the results could not be deemed "statistically significant."

Those that did respond indicated that the MBA program had generally met their expectations and had made them more prepared for their work environment. Some useful criticisms were also given, such as the desire to incorporate more "real world" experience and projects in the classes. But overall the students that responded seemed generally pleased with their MBA experience. The GCAC will continue to survey graduates on a yearly basis as part of a procedure of continuous improvement in the program.

## **REVIEW OF PEER, COMPETITOR, AND ASPIRANT INSTITUTIONS FOR QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS**

The GCAC also undertook a review of the MBA programs from our peer, competitor, and aspirant institutions. This study was done in order to determine how our offerings and requirements compare to these institutions. For the most part, we found that these other programs, with only a few exceptions, are more “quantitative” than the USFSP MBA program, viz., they require students to have more exposure to coursework in finance, accounting, economics, and statistics than does our program. At present our program does not require any specific courses in these fields for all MBA students graduating from the program, other than completion of the courses in the Essentials track. There have been some comments from instructors who have taught the course in Strategic Management that many of the students did not seem adequately prepared in some of these quantitative areas.

To be sure, these quantitative disciplines are covered in our core courses, but their implementation is *ad hoc* and will depend on the strengths of each instructor in that particular discipline, e.g., in the course Business Enterprise a faculty member with an academic background in economics and accounting will give more exposure to those areas than will a faculty member with a background in marketing or management, and vice versa. In order to bring more quantitative material in the program, the GCAC has proposed that a new course be required of all MBA graduates: Managerial Analysis.

### **NEW COURSE REQUIREMENT: MANAGERIAL ANALYSIS**

Managerial Analysis will be an application of microeconomic theory, decision theory, and statistical analysis to management problems and strategy. The course will replace, effective for the Fall 2009 semester, Dynamics of Individuals in Technology. A review of this latter course by the GCAC found that this was primarily an organizational management course, which is adequately covered in other core courses, and is not primarily an I.T. course. The GCAC feels that the substitution of a rigorous quantitative course is a necessary step in making a good program even better.

**This course was approved by the full faculty of the college on March 28, 2008**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

In summary the USFSP MBA program has made great strides in only a few years. Its ranking by Beyond Grey Pinstripes shows that the program has distinguished itself already in the “niche” market of programs that emphasize a study of corporate social responsibility as an integral part of the program. USFSP hopes to build on this success in future years. In order to build upon this success the GCAC is seeking to increase the quantitative aspects of the program. In future discussions the GCAC will consider a required course in Financial Analysis, which, when coupled with the new required course in Managerial Analysis, will provide an increased background in finance, accounting, economics and statistical methods for all of our graduates.