**Annual Assessment Report for 2020-2021 AY**

Reports completed on assessment activities carried out during the 2020-2021 AY will be due September 30th 2021 and must be e-mailed to the Director of Assessment, Dr. Douglas Fraleigh (douglasf@csufresno.edu).

Provide detailed responses for each of the following questions within this word document. Please do NOT insert an index or add formatting. For purposes of this report, you should only report on two or three student learning outcomes (department’s choice) even if your external accreditor requires you to evaluate four or more outcomes each year. Also be sure to explain or omit specialized or discipline-specific terms.

Department/Program: \_Master of Business Administration Program\_ Degree \_MBA\_

Assessment Coordinator: \_Kevin Capehart\_

1. **Please list the learning outcomes you assessed this year.**

Relevant background for this report is as follows.

Our university did not require programs to report their 2019–2020 academic year assessment activities to the university because of the impacts of Covid in the middle of the Spring 2020 semester and continued impacts lasting into the start of the Fall 2020 semester and beyond.

Nevertheless, an annual assessment report for that academic year was prepared by the MBA program in early Fall 2020. That report was prepared by the Director of the MBA program at that time who is no longer in that role. The report was not submitted to the university, at least to the best of my knowledge; but again, the university did not require programs to submit those reports last year.

Now in Fall 2021, our university’s Director of Assessment has asked programs to (quoting his September 8, 2021, email to college assessment coordinators) “complete the assessment activities that had been scheduled for 2019–20,” “complete the assessment activities that had been scheduled for 2020–21,” or “conduct different assessment activities than the ones originally planned (for example, if the transition to virtual instruction made the original activities less viable).”

Here in this annual assessment report, I will report both the previously unreported 2019–2020 activities as well as the 2020–2021 activities that can be reported. Although both years were impacted by the ongoing pandemic, there are assessment activities, results, and plans to report.

For the 2019–2020 academic year, the learning outcomes assessed were as follows, according to the aforementioned previously unsubmitted assessment report for that year.

SLO 1: Make Sound Business Decisions (LO1 – Decision Making)

SLO 2: Apply Business Knowledge (LO2 – Business Knowledge)

SLO 3: Write Effectively (LO3 – Written Communication Skills)

SLO 4: Orally Communicate Effectively (LO4 – Oral Communication Skills)

SLO 5: Demonstrates Ethical Behavior (LO5 – Ethical Behavior)

SLO 6: Demonstrate Leadership (LO6 – Leadership Skills)

For the 2020–2021 academic year, many of the same assessment activities were conducted, so to the extent those activities have assessed the above-listed SLOs, they were assessed again.

The above-listed SLOs all reflect the MBA program’s [2013 SOAP](http://www.fresnostate.edu/academics/oie/documents/new-soap/csb/mba-2013.pdf).

Towards the end of Fall 2020, the MBA program in conjunction with the Craig School of Business (CSB) Graduate Committee developed a [new SOAP](https://docs.google.com/document/d/12G0TRl1vHwRtj8SnBr6UfuQQCshZ-QGm/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=101766035660775550923&rtpof=true&sd=true) based on [the university’s new (2019) template](http://www.fresnostate.edu/academics/oie/documents/mrjdocuments/SOAP%20Template%202019.docx) and [the MBA program’s new (2016) learning goals and associated measures](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jBU0cxSnXP0N5uD7UOOhPr94Ic_eTx2i/view?usp=sharing). An updated SOAP was required at that time as part of a regularly scheduled university program review.

According to the new SOAP, the following new SLOs were to be assessed in Spring 2021.

SLO 1.a. “Demonstrate competency of all functional areas of business (e.g., accounting, finance, marketing, organizational behavior, human resources, legal and social issues, Information systems, etc.).”

SLO 1.b. “Demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge from the different disciplines to solve problems which span disciplines.”

SLO 3.a. “Our students will prepare and deliver coherent, professional oral presentations on a business issue.”

SLO 4.a. “Our students will be able to articulate business strategies that address legal/regulatory issues and acknowledge the interests of public stakeholders.”

1. **What assignment or survey did you use to assess the outcomes and what method (criteria or rubric) did you use to evaluate the assignment? Please describe the assignment and the criteria or rubric used to evaluate the assignment in detail and, if possible, include copies of the assignment and criteria/rubric at the end of this report.**

For the 2019–2020 academic year, the following response to this question was provided in the previously unsubmitted assessment report, which I will directly quote.

“According to the current MBA’s SOAP [i.e., the 2013 SOAP that was current until the end of Fall 2020], we use three assignment and survey tools to assess the learning outcomes: 1) pre/post surveys from study abroad students; 2) graduate programs assessment center for leadership, oral communication, written communication, and decision making; and 3) project rubric for decision making and business knowledge[.]”

That same statement is made in annual assessment reports dating back to at least 2017–2018 academic year, but in addition to those three activities, the 2013 SOAP also called for: using a writing rubric and software product to assess writing assignments; running an alumni survey every two or three years; and implementing a unspecified direct measure of ethical behavior that was said to be under development. An alumni survey has apparently not been conducted and/or its results have not been reported as part of annual assessment reports since at least the 2017–2018 academic year. Earlier attempts to internally assess writing (except as one optional/non-required dimension of the project rubric referenced above and discussed in more detail below) and any earlier attempts to internally assess ethical behavior have also apparently been replaced by the external Assessment Center activity referenced above and discussed in more detail below.

The above-quoted annual assessment report continues by saying: “[D]ue to the Covid-19 pandemic, we suspended the study abroad program in Summer 2020. Therefore, we only have two assessment [activities and associated] results for the 2019–2020 AY [to report.]” The impact of the pandemic was and is real.

(a.) ASSESSMENT CENTER

The above-quoted report continued by saying: “Students in the MBA Program participated in a 3-hour assessment center activity referred to as ‘Sun Now Solar.’ In this assessment activity, MBA students play the role of director-level members of a small solar company located in Southern California. They are required to write memos, give a 3-minute impromptu presentation, and participate in three group meetings (to pick a job candidate, brainstorm customer service ideas, and evaluate a merger offer from a competing company). These activities are videotaped, and all videos are evaluated by paid external reviewers. This is done aiming to obtain objective, external ratings of the assessed skills (i.e., leadership, decision-making, planning and organizing, communication, teamwork, and writing skills).”

Details on the entity that conducts that Assessment Center activity were identified during the production of this report. Those details were included at this point in an earlier draft of this report, but I will omit a discussion of them because the University Compliance Officer has been alerted to those details and a confidential process will ensue. Regardless of the outcome of that investigation, the relevant point for continued assessment efforts is as follows: The relevant entities—the MBA Office including any Program Coordinator who is eventually installed to replace the former Director, the MBA Assessment Coordinator if they are not also the MBA Program Coordinator, the departments that serve the program including the Management department, the CSB Committee on Graduate Programs, and any other appropriate parties—should consider whether it is necessary or appropriate to rely on an external business for implementing the aspects of the Assessment Center activity that are relevant to evaluating the MBA program’s SLOs.

The above-quoted annual assessment report continued by saying: “For the 2019–2020 assessment, we were able to conduct the [Assessment Center activity] for two MBA groups totaling 50 students. [...]”

One group was of traditional MBA students and the other group was students in its so-called MBA for Executives (EMBA) program. The latter program is for students with more business experience. Ten or more years of professional experience and 3 or more years of managerial experience are required for it, according to [the MBA program’s website](https://web.archive.org/web/20211001024719/https://craig.fresnostate.edu/grad-business/emba/admissions.html). That program runs on a cohort model.

The above-quoted report continued by saying: “These assessments are conducted in classes [i.e., with students enrolled in certain classes] at the beginning of the MBA program, and we consider the results of these assessments to be measures of where the groups stand before the skills development and content that follows throughout the MBA program. [...]”

According to the 2013 SOAP, this activity is completed with students in MBA 210 “Leadership and Organizational Behavior.” That is consistent with my understanding that the Assessment Center activity has historically been run in MBA 210 course, that the faculty member who typically teaches that course reports the results to the MBA Office for inclusion in assessment reports like this one, and that MBA 210 is typically taken towards the start of a student’s time in the MBA program.

Note that, in order to assess the effects of the MBA program, the same Assessment Center activity would need to be rerun again once the same students were further along in the program or, if it can be assumed that the initial quality of students and the effects of the program are roughly constant over time, the same activity would need to be run with students further along in the program.

Running the activity with a group of students at the start of the program and another group of students at the end of their program has apparently been done at least once based on the 2017–2018 academic year assessment report. For the 2018–2019 and 2019–2020 academic years, in contrast, the activity was only run with students at the start of the program. It is unclear at this time whether the activity was run during the 2020–2021 academic year, as discussed again below.

The 2013 SOAP states that “posttests are conducted in MBA 279,” where MBA 279 is the “Seminar in Business Policy and Strategy” and a course taken towards the end of a student’s time in the MBA program.

For more on the criteria that the Assessment Center uses to assess students, see Appendix A of this report.

(b.) CULMINATING PROJECTS

The second assessment activity involved evaluating the project reports that students prepare for the MBA 298 culminating project course. The projects were evaluated by means of a rubric. That assessment was implemented during the 2020–2021 academic year, too.

For more on the rubric, see Appendix B of this report.

(c.) COURSE-EMBEDDED ASSESSMENTS

Course-embedded assessments also seem to have been planned for the 2020–2021 academic year, according to the previously unsubmitted report for the year prior to that. That report said: “[Student] learning objectives [for the MBA program] will be embedded in each core course syllabus with specific measure(s) to evaluate the outcomes. [...] We plan to implement [those] assessment tools.”

I am unable at this time to provide an account of any broad progress with course-embedded assessments for 2020–2021 or earlier academic years due to a lack of available information about any such progress. This September 30, 2021, report should be updated if/when such information is obtained.

(d.) ALTERNATIVE TO STUDY ABROAD SURVEYS

As mentioned above, one of the main assessment tools that has historically been used is a pre/post survey of students who are able to participate in a study abroad experience. The study abroad experience has historically been a trip of roughly a week or two in which students visit another country and meet with local business leaders. That trip has historically been part of the EMBA program in conjunction with their MBA 281 “International Business” course.

As also mentioned above, those surveys have not been conducted ever since study abroad programs were suspended amid the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

The MBA program has nevertheless tried to provide an international experience to students even in these times when it’s still not possible to travel abroad. Specifically, the MBA program partnered with an organization called “Austral Education Group” headquartered in Santiago, Chile, that was able to “facilitate corporate speakers and an actual corporate case study from Latin America” (quoting a personal correspondence with the MBA office). That experience occurred for EMBA Cohort 20 students in conjunction with their MBA 281 course.

Students were given a short survey about their opinions on the experience.

See Appendix C for the survey questions, which would constitute an indirect measure of any MBA program SLOs that the survey may have been trying to assess.

Previous annual assessment reports dating back to at least the report for the 2017–2018 academic year have not included the questions asked before and after the international trips, so it is not possible at this time to try to compare surveys on these alternative international experiences, and such a comparison would be questionable because they are at least partly and perhaps largely different experiences.

1. **What did you learn from your analysis of the data? Please include sample size (how many students were evaluated) and indicate how many students (number or percentage instead of a median or mean) were designated as proficient. Also indicate your benchmark (e.g. 80% of students will be designated as proficient or higher) and indicate the number of students who met that benchmark.**

(a.) ASSESSMENT CENTER

For the Assessment Center activity discussed above, the results for the 2019–2020 academic year were summarized in the previously unsubmitted assessment report for that year as follows.

“As shown in the table below, results for the 2019–2020 AY group were slightly lower than the previous cohort on SLO 1 (Decision Making), SLO 4 (Oral Communication), and SLO 6 (Leadership). On the other hand, SLO 3 (Written Communication) and SLO 5 (Ethical Behavior) were slightly higher this year. SLO 2 (Apply Business Knowledge) was not directly assessed in this activity. [...]”

The table given below can be constructed from the statistics provided in that same report and in the earlier 2017–2018 and 2018–2018 annual assessment reports.

It should be noted that, apparently starting with the 2019–2020 academic year after the reaccreditation of the CSB in Summer 2019, the MBA program is now assessing its traditional MBA students and EMBA students separately. Although the MBA program has only one degree and therefore requires only one set of assessment from our university, the MBA program’s accreditors required that the program begin separately assessing its traditional MBA and EMBA students.

It should also be noted that the “pre” activity was conducted in the students’ first semester, at least for the results reported in the assessment reports for 2017–2018 and 2018–2019, according to those reports. It is unclear whether the same holds true for the results reported in the previously unsubmitted assessment report for 2019–2020. The “post” activity was conducted in students’ final semester at least for the results reported in the 2017–2018 academic year assessment report, according to that report. The 2018–2019 assessment report simply reused the same “post” statistics from the previous year’s assessment report. If the 2013 SOAP holds true, then the activities were conducted with students from MBA 210 and MBA 279.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Academic year: | 2017–2018 | | 2018–2019 | 2019–2020 | | |
| Traditional or Executive MBA students? | Executive Cohort 18 | *Executive Cohort 17* | Executive Cohort 19 | Both | Executive† | Traditional |
| Pre or post?: | Pre  (first semester) | *Post  (final semester)* | Pre  (first semester) | Pre | Pre | Pre |
| Skill / Sample size: | N=30 | *N=31* | N=34 | N=50 | N=29 | N=21 |
| Leadership | -.06 | *.78* | -.05 | -.01 | .05 | -.09 |
| Decision-Making | -.44 | *-.28* | -.41 | -.60 | -.66 | -.51 |
| Planning and Organizing | -.35 | *-.20* | -.02 | -.31 | -.31 | -.31 |
| Communication | -.24 | *.39* | .12 | -.44 | -.40 | -.50 |
| Teamwork | -.49 | *-.49* | -.37 | -.73 | -.59 | -.93 |
| Ethics | 68.0 | *73.1* | 56.50 | 68.37 | 67.23 | 70.02 |
| Writing | 54.9 | *76.3* | 55.50 | 57.61 | 59.29 | 55.29 |
| *Notes:*  † *In previous assessment reports, the EMBA cohort number was specified. The cohort number was not specified for the previously unsubmitted assessment report for the 2019–2020 academic year. The cohort was presumably the 20th. This September 30, 2021, report should be updated if/when greater clarity is obtained about which group of EMBA students completed the Assessment Center activity in that academic year.* | | | | | | |

According to previous assessment reports, “All values in [the] table are Z scores with the exception of the writing and ethics scores which are percentiles.” It is unclear from previous assessment reports exactly how the Z-scores or percentiles reported above should be interpreted. Previous assessment reports to our university interpret higher numbers as better. Each Z-score is therefore presumably the difference between how a group of students scored on average compared to some benchmark, on the one hand, all over a measure of dispersion in the students’ scores, on the other hand. The percentile may reflect an average score for students or the percentage of them scoring at least a given score. This September 30, 2021, report should be updated if/when greater clarity is obtained about how the Z-scores and percentiles should be interpreted.

The MBA program’s 2013 SOAP states that the “benchmark is [...] a Z-score of 0.0 or better [for the Z-scores] or a percentage of 50% or better [for the percentiles].”

The 2013 SOAP also states that an improvement between the pre and post is another benchmark (albeit without specifying how large that change would need to be in order to be considered meaningful or non-trivial). That benchmark would obviously require not just “pre” but also “post” scores that have not been obtained for EMBA students since Cohort 17 and that have not been obtained with traditional MBA students since at least the 2017–2018 academic year based on the information available as of writing.

Although it is unclear exactly how the Z-score and percentile statistics should be interpreted, the claims quoted above seem largely supported by the table given above if higher numbers are interpreted as being better (no matter how large or small the difference may be). The only possible exception is that the traditional MBA students were slightly worse than the previous EMBA students. The comparability of those two groups is questionable, especially at the start of their respective programs because the latter are supposed to come into the program with more business experience.

There is no clear evidence that the quality of first-semester EMBA students has declined over time. The group of EMBA students evaluated in 2019–2020, which would presumably be the latest cohort, is better than both of the previous two cohorts (Cohort 18 and 19) in terms of their “Leadership” and “Writing” scores, but worse than both of them in terms of their “Decision-Making,” “Communication,” and “Teamwork” scores.

Compared to the benchmarks stated in the 2013 SOAP, students have exceeded the 50% benchmark for the percentile statistics. If they are already exceeding that benchmark “before the skills development and content that follows throughout the MBA program” (to quote the same quote from above), then that benchmark is arguably too low or at least a different, higher benchmark should be set for students towards the end of their time in the program.

In terms of the benchmark for the Z-score statistics, for the “pre” scores, students fell below the 0.0 benchmark for all skills in all years, except for two exceptions that do indeed seem exceptional. (The EMBA students scored 0.05 for “Leadership” during the Assessment Center activities for the 2019–2020 academic year, and the Cohort 19 EMBA students scored 0.12 for “Communication” during the Assessment Center activities for the year before that.) For the one year of “post” scores available since at least the annual assessment report for the 2017–2018 academic year, the Cohort 17 EMBA students failed to achieve the benchmark scores for three out of the five skills (“Decision-Making,” “Planning and Organizing,” and “Teamwork”) and achieved the benchmark scores for only two of the five (“Leadership” and “Communication”).

For the 2020–2021 academic year, it is unclear as of writing whether traditional and/or EMBA students completed the Assessment Center activity. If it was run, then the MBA Office did not request and/or the faculty member(s) who ran this activity in conjunction with their courses did not provide the results of the assessment activity in a timely enough manner to include the results in this report. This September 30, 2021, report should be updated as appropriate if/when it becomes clearer whether the activity was run.

More generally, the relevant entities should determine whether the Assessment Center activity should remain one of the main pillars of its assessment activities going forward and, if so, they should: consider why an internal version of these activities is not used; consider how frequently the activity should be run with students at different stages in the program; consider refining benchmarks for pre scores, post scores, and the pre-post difference or change in scores; consider why at least one group of EMBA students did not meet the stated benchmark for their “Decision-Making,” “Planning and Organizing,” and “Teamwork” scores after almost all of “the skills development and content that follows throughout the MBA program” (to again quote the same quote from above); consider how to ensure the data is reported to the MBA Office on a timely and consistent basis; and consider how to transparently share the data and other information in order to inform changes to courses, the MBA program, and assessment.

(b.) CULMINATING PROJECTS

The results of the second assessment activity for the 2019–2020 academic year were reported as follows.

“Results from the culminating project rubric for MBA 298 project reports are shown in the table below. The rubric has three categories: 1 = not meeting expectations, 2 = meeting expectations, and 3 = exceeding expectations. All MBA projects were rated as meeting or exceeding expectations for all categories assessed. Compared to last [2018–2019] AY, students are making progress on most of their MBA project rubrics[,] except Oral Presentation. The results of the Quantitative Analysis and Written Report suggest a significant improvement relative to the previous AY.”

The following table can be constructed from the statistics reported in the same, previously unsubmitted report, the 2017–2018 and 2018–2019 annual assessment reports, and the underlying data for the 2018–2019 and 2019–2020 reports that I was able to obtain.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| MBA Project Rubric Results | | | | | |
| Academic year: | 2017–2018 | 2018–2019 | 2019–2020 | | |
| Traditional or Executive MBA students? | Unclear | Unclear | Both | Executive Cohort 19 | Traditional |
| Dimension / Sample size: | N=73 | N=47 | N=74 | N=22\* | N=52 |
| Integration of Business Knowledge | 2.81 | 2.70 | 2.81 | 2.86\* | 2.79 |
| Critical Thinking | 2.68 | 2.64 | 2.73 | 2.77\* | 2.71 |
| Use of Technology† | 2.67 | 2.78 | 2.96 | 2.89\* | 3.00 |
| Quantitative Analysis† | 2.66 | 2.59 | 2.88 | 2.95\* | 2.83 |
| Oral Presentation† | 2.85 | 2.69 | 2.61 | 2.80\* | 2.56 |
| Written Report† | 2.68 | 2.51 | 2.72 | 2.65\* | 2.75 |
| Average % score | 90.8% | 87.9% | 93.5%\* | 95.1%\* | 91.5% |
| % of students who received score of ≥ 75% on their projects | 84.9% | 83.0% | 93.2%\* | 95.5%\* | 76.9% |
| *Notes:*  † *These dimensions of the rubric are optional/non-required and the instructor only evaluates them if he/she deems them to be applicable, so the sample size can be and often is smaller than the sample sizes reported in previous assessment reports.*  \* *The previously unsubmitted report for the 2019–2020 academic year ignored eight EMBA students for whom rubric-based evaluations were not included in the MBA Office’s assessment documentation and for whom those evaluations are still not available. I’ve also ignored those students here. Two of those students had one faculty member as their supervisor and another faculty member was the supervisor for the other six students. For all but one of those students, their grades were assigned in early to mid June, 2020, and the students were all given A’s. The exception is one of the former faculty member’s students whose grade was assigned in Spring 2021 and was given an A.* | | | | | |

Previous assessment reports have reported the percentage of students who scored at least 75% of the points possible, so some percentage of students scoring at least that score is presumably a benchmark that was adopted at some point. The MBA program’s 2013 SOAP suggests a lower benchmark of only 2/3rds.

For 2020–2021, a similar table to the one above can be constructed as follows.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| MBA Project Rubric Results | | | | | | |
| Academic year: | 2019–2020 | | | 2020–2021 | | |
| Traditional or Executive MBA students? | Both | Executive Cohort 19 | Traditional | Both | Executive Cohort 20 | Traditional |
| Dimension / Sample size: | N=74 | N=22\* | N=52 | N=69 | N=25\*\* | N=44 |
| Integration of Business Knowledge | 2.81 | 2.86\* | 2.79 | 2.96 | 2.92\*\* | 2.98 |
| Critical Thinking | 2.73 | 2.77\* | 2.71 | 2.95 | 2.87\*\* | 3.00 |
| Use of Technology† | 2.96 | 2.89\* | 3.00 | 2.84 | 2.66\*\* | 3.00 |
| Quantitative Analysis† | 2.88 | 2.95\* | 2.83 | 2.73 | 2.81\*\* | 2.69 |
| Oral Presentation† | 2.61 | 2.80\* | 2.56 | 2.64 | 2.97\*\* | 2.59 |
| Written Report† | 2.72 | 2.65\* | 2.75 | 2.68 | 2.68\*\* | 2.68 |
| Average % score | 93.5%\* | 95.1%\* | 91.5% | 93.7%\*\* | 93.3%\*\* | 93.9% |
| % of students who received score of ≥ 75% on their projects | 93.2%\* | 95.5%\* | 76.9% | 98.6%\*\* | 96%\*\* | 100% |
| *Notes:*  *† As before, these dimensions of the rubric are optional/non-required and the instructor only evaluates them if he/she deems them to be applicable, so the sample size can be and often is smaller than the sample sizes reported in previous assessment reports.*  *\* As before, ignoring eight EMBA students for whom rubric-based evaluation of their projects by two faculty members were not included in the Office’s assessment documentation.*  *\*\* Ignoring four students. For one of those students, they received a grade of A for MBA 298 in Fall 2021 from a faculty member, but that faculty member “did not respond for grades [i.e., the rubric-based evaluation] after multiple requests” per the MBA Office’s assessment documentation. For the other three students, they took MBA 298 in Spring 2021, but they currently have a Report in Progress (RP) grade as of writing in early Fall 2021. Two of those students are not enrolled in MBA 298 C this Fall 2021 semester.* | | | | | | |

With 100% of traditional MBA students achieving the benchmark of 75% and a similarly high percentage of EMBA students achieving that benchmark, the relevant entities should consider whether that is still an appropriate benchmark.

More generally, the rubric used to evaluate these projects should itself be reevaluated as part of an ongoing process. Dimensions of evaluation should include at least the following three.

First, its rigor. Whenever the vast majority of students exceed expectations (such as when 100% of traditional MBA students are rated as “exceeding expectations” in terms of their “Critical Thinking”), it raises the question of whether expectations should be raised.

Second, the extent to which the rubric requires the required elements of a project should be evaluated. [Title V](https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/administration/academic-and-student-affairs/academic-programs-innovations-and-faculty-development/Documents/Title5_MastersDegree_requirements.pdf) of the regulations for the California State University System defines the sorts of projects to be completed for the MBA 298 course as follows. “A project is a significant undertaking appropriate to the fine and applied arts or to professional fields. It evidences originality and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale. It is described and summarized in a written abstract that includes the project’s significance, objectives, methodology and a conclusion or recommendation. An oral defense of the project may be required.” It is unclear why or how the current rubric could leave evaluating the “written report” component as optional if all projects must (per Title V) have a “written abstract” that describes and summarizes the project while including the significance, objectives, methods, and a conclusion or recommendation of the project. The extent to which the rubric intends to measure or does measure the other required elements—such as significance of the undertaking, evidence of originality, evidence of independent thinking, and appropriateness of form and organization—is also unclear. A large number of students working on the same project, as is the current practice for some projects, would also seem to raise questions about how the required elements of significance, originality, and independent thinking are evidenced by each student working on the project.

A third dimension along which the rubric may be evaluated is whether it could align more closely with the SLOs for the MBA program (either the ones adopted towards the end of Fall 2021 or any further updates thereto). Any intended mapping (either one-to-one or one-to-many) of the dimensions of the rubric, on the one hand, to the MBA program’s SLOs, on the other hand, should be made explicit. Any intent to not directly map them should also be made explicit.

(c.) COURSE-EMBEDDED ASSESSMENTS

As stated above, I am unable at this time to provide an account of any broad progress with course-embedded assessments for 2020–2021 or earlier academic years due to a lack of available information about any such progress. This September 30, 2021, report should be updated if/when such information is obtained.

(d.) ALTERNATIVE TO STUDY ABROAD SURVEYS

For the survey on the alternative international experience, eight students responded to the first question in the survey. Seven completed it. That reflects a high completion rate (almost 90%). Given that EMBA cohorts are supposed to be about 30 to 35 students, seven or eight students responding to a survey is a low response rate (as low as about 25% if all students in the cohort participated in the experience). The students who completed the survey seemed to approve of the experience. For example, all seven of the students who responded to the question “In sum, what was your overall evaluation of the sessions?” said the experience was “Good” or “Excellent” (rather than “Average,” “Below average,” or “Poor”). The experience allowed students to interact with speakers from other countries and the speakers provided information that would be useful for visiting or doing business in other countries, the students said in response to open-ended survey questions.

Such a survey about students’ opinions on an experience can only be an indirect measure of student learning outcomes and the questions from the survey would need to be aligned more closely with one or more of the MBA program’s SLOs in order to be a more useful measure for program-level assessment, but I highlight it here because it was a noteworthy effort by the MBA program to adapt to current circumstances and adopt some assessment-related activities. It is unclear at this time whether that survey has informed any planned changes to the experience that was necessitated by the pandemic but may eventually prove to be a more accessible substitute for or a complement to study abroad trips if/when the global pandemic ends and international trips can restart.

IN SUMMARY:

In 2017–2018 annual assessment report, the following was said in response to this same question #3 from the university assessment form:

“Overall, we learned that our improvements are fundamentally ‘on track.’ While there is still room for improvement, the numbers have been moving in a positive direction, and the quality of the measures has been increasing. Our other main takeaway is a sense of confidence that the program is in a position to implement the proposed curriculum modifications that will better serve our students and enhance our students’ learning outcomes.”

In 2018–2019 annual assessment report, the following was said in response to the same question:

“Overall, the main takeaway is a sense of confidence that the program is in a position to implement the proposed curriculum modifications that will better serve our students and enhance our students’ learning outcomes. Another thing we learned that [*sic*] our improvements are fundamentally ‘on track.’ While there is still room for improvement, the numbers have been moving in a positive direction, and the quality of the measures has been improving.”

In previously unsubmitted 2019–2020 annual assessment report, the following was said:

“Overall, we learned that our improvements are fundamentally ‘on track.’ While there is still room for improvement, the numbers have been moving toward a positive direction, and the quality of the measures has been improving. Another takeaway is a sense of confidence that the program is in a position to implement the proposed curriculum modifications that will better serve our students and enhance our students’ learning outcomes.”

In terms of whether “the quality of the measures has been improving,” it seems difficult to claim that, especially in more recent years, given that the “pre” Assessment Center activity has apparently remained the same, given that the rubric used to evaluate culminating projects has apparently remained the same, and given that the same study abroad assessment from years past could not be conducted amid the pandemic. The fact that the “post” Assessment Center activity has apparently not been run in a number of years (as discussed above) and that some rubric-based evaluations of students’ projects are missing (as noted above and detailed below in Appendix D) suggests a degradation in the quality of the measures.

In terms of whether “the numbers have been moving toward a positive direction,” the only claim that can be made based on the Assessment Center activity is that the quality of first-semester EMBA students does not seem to have unequivocally risen or fallen over time, as discussed above. Any changes in the quality of the EMBA program cannot be assessed because the “post” activity has apparently not been conducted with final-semester EMBA students in a number of years. Any changes in the quality of first-semester traditional MBA students or any effects of the traditional MBA program cannot be assessed because of the lack of a “pre” activity for first-semester traditional MBA students over recent years and the lack of a “post” activity for final-semester traditional MBA students.

For the rubric-based evaluation of the culminating projects, the missing data that some faculty failed to report and/or the MBA program failed to collect makes it tenuous to draw any conclusions from the numbers presented above.

If we accept the numbers as is, then perhaps the most notable change is that the percentage of traditional MBA students who received a score of at least 75% on their projects went from less than three-fourths of them (specifically, 76.9%) to 100% of them between the 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 academic years.

Yet given that a majority of students’ projects are supervised by a few faculty (with one faculty member supervising more than a dozen projects by either traditional or EMBA students in the Spring 2021 semester, for example) and given that the faculty supervising projects can change (another faculty member went from supervising one EMBA student’s project in Spring 2019 to four traditional MBA students’ projects in Spring 2020 to 9 EMBA students’ projects in Spring 2021, which was second only to the number of students supervised by the aforementioned faculty member supervising more than a dozen projects that semester), any changes may reflect the idiosyncrasies of the ways in which different faculty members would apply a common rubric rather than changes in the program or its students.

Overall, the main conclusion to draw from this data is that there seem to have been and seem to continue to be failures in producing or transparently sharing data and other relevant information that could inform changes to courses, the program, and assessment.

1. **What changes, if any, do you recommend based on the assessment data?**

The following response to this question was provided in the previously unsubmitted assessment report prepared for the 2019–2020 academic year.

“Based on the assessment data for both the 2019–2020 AY and previous years, we have proposed a curriculum revision and are in the process of developing the new Student Outcomes Assessment Plan (SOAP). Both were discussed, reviewed and revised by the Craig School of Business faculty and its Committee on Graduate Business Programs. The curriculum revision was submitted to the Division of Research and Graduate Studies in Spring 2019 and is currently under review of the University Graduate Curriculum Subcommittee.”

In terms of the curricular revision, it should be clarified that the University Graduate Curriculum Subcommittee has been waiting on the MBA program to provide syllabi revision since Fall 2019. It is now Fall 2021. If the MBA program is still interested in enacting that curriculum revision, then it needs to complete the process for doing so by obtaining revised syllabi from the faculty or departments that serve the program.

In terms of the updated SOAP, the former Director of the MBA program in conjunction with CSB Graduate Committee did update the SOAP in Fall 2020 of last academic year as part of a university program review, as already discussed. That SOAP should not necessarily be a static plan, however.

For the 2020–2021 academic year, suggested changes to assessment-related activities have been suggested above in the context in which they were suggested, but the following is a list of those and other suggested changes.

● The relevant entities (again, the MBA Office including any Program Coordinator who is eventually installed to replace the former Director, the MBA Assessment Coordinator if they are not also the MBA Program Coordinator, the departments that serve the program including the Management department, the CSB Committee on Graduate Programs, and any other appropriate parties) should consider whether it is necessary or appropriate to rely on an external business for implementing the aspects of the Assessment Center activity that are relevant to evaluating the MBA program’s SLOs.

● Obtain information about whether the Assessment Center activity was run during the 2020–2021 academic year. Obtain the rubric-based evaluations of culminating projects that are missing. Obtain information on what if any progress was made with course-embedded assessments during the 2020–2021 or earlier academic years. Update this report accordingly.

● More generally, establish better policies and procedures for producing and transparently sharing data and other relevant information that could inform changes to the MBA program, its courses, and its assessment efforts.

● If the pre/post study abroad surveys are to once again become a pillar of the MBA program’s assessment activities in any post-pandemic world, then the survey questions need to be reported as part of annual assessment reports like this one.

● Continue to assess the traditional and EMBA students separately, per new re-accreditation requirements.

● If the Assessment Center activity is to remain as one of the pillars of MBA program’s assessment activities, then obtain information about how the Z-scores and percentiles reported in previous annual assessment reports submitted to the university should be interpreted.

● If the Assessment Center activity is to remain as one of the pillars of MBA program’s assessment activities, then consider whether the activity should be run as frequently with first-semester students and as infrequently with final-semester students as it has in recent years. The updated SOAP suggests a cycle that is more in line with taking time to collect data, evaluate it, implement changes informed by evaluation of the collected data, and then collecting data again after implementing those changes.

● If the performance of the same students at different stages of the program are to be compared, or if the performance of different students at different stages in the program are to be compared, then establish benchmarks for what changes within the same students or differences between different students would be considered meaningful or non-trivial.

● If students are going to be assed towards the start of their time in the MBA program, then continue to monitor the quality of those incoming students. If any trends in the quality of incoming students are not desirable, then reevaluate admission standards accordingly.

● If there is a pandemic-related need to continue the alternative international experience, or if there is a desire to develop that experience as a substitute or complement for a physical trip abroad, then consider implementing an assessment activity around it that is aligned with one or more SLOs in the updated SOAP. The SLOS related to global and cultural experiences would be the obvious SLOs to align that experience with.

● Obtain information on the small response rate to the survey about the alternative international experience; e.g., is it a reflection of only a few students selecting into paying a high fee for that experience?

● Consider whether it is appropriate, to the extent it has occurred or may occur, for faculty teaching a course to rely on an external business to bring guest speakers and case studies to their students. If it is inappropriate, then consider how to discourage it.

● Consider whether it is appropriate, to the extent it has occurred or may occur, for faculty supervisors to not report rubric-based evaluations of their students’ culminating projects to the MBA Office in a timely manner. If it is inappropriate, then consider how to discourage it.

● Consider whether a majority of students’ culminating projects being supervised by a few faculty is problematic and, if so, how to mitigate the potential problems. Greater transparency around students’ projects may be needed to make a data-informed decision.

● Reevaluate the rubric used to assess the culminating projects of traditional and EMBA students. In particular, consider its alignment with the requirements for a project as mandated by Title V and its alignment with the SLOs of the MBA program’s SOAP.

● Consider updating the SOAP on a more frequent basis than the university program review cycle.

1. **If you recommended any changes in your response to Question 4 in your 2018-19 assessment report, what progress have you made in implementing these changes? If you did not recommend making any changes in last year’s report please write N/A as your answer to this question.**

The following were the recommended changes in response to question #4 of the university assessment form in the 2018–19 assessment report:

“Based on the assessment data of academic year 2018–2019 and previous years report, we proposed a curriculum revision and an update [of the] Student Outcomes Assessment Plan (SOAP). Both were thoroughly discussed, reviewed and revised by the Craig School of Business faculty and its Committee on Graduate Business Programs. The curriculum revision was submitted to the Division of Research and Graduate Studies in Fall 2019 and is currently under review of the University Graduate Curriculum Subcommittee.”

As incorrectly stated in the quote immediately above and correctly stated in quote further above from the previously unsubmitted report for the 2019–2020 academic year, curriculum revisions were submitted in Spring 2019. The University Graduate Curriculum Subcommittee has been waiting on syllabi revisions from the MBA program since Fall 2019. Again, if the MBA program is still interested in enacting that curriculum revision, then it needs to complete the process for doing so by obtaining revised syllabi from the faculty or departments that serve the program.

The quote immediately above is also incorrect in stating that an updated SOAP was “thoroughly discussed, reviewed, and revised.” The SOAP was not updated until Fall 2020.

The following response to this question #5 from the university assessment form was provided in the previously unsubmitted assessment report prepared for the 2019–2020 academic year.

“The major change we recommend is to finalize the new Student Outcomes Assessment Plan (SOAP) with more timely and accurate measures of the updated SLOs. We had a thorough communication with all academic departments and related graduate faculty to review and revise the MBA course syllabi based on the changes made in the updated learning objectives in the 2018-2019 AY. The learning objectives will be embedded in each core course syllabus with specific measure(s) to evaluate the outcomes. We plan to finalize the new SOAP by the end of Fall 2020.”

In terms of the SOAP, as already discussed, it was indeed updated in Fall 2020 as part of a university program review.

In terms of the course-embedded assessment, as already stated, any broad progress with course-embedded assessments for 2020–2021 or earlier academic years is unclear due to a lack of available information about any such progress. This September 30, 2021, report should be updated if/when such information is obtained.

1. **What assessment activities will you be conducting during AY 2021-22?**

The following response to a similar question about the 2020–2021 academic year was given in the previously unsubmitted assessment report prepared for the 2019–2020 academic year.

“We plan to implement the assessment tools defined in the new Student Outcomes Assessment Plan (SOAP), which will be finalized by the end of Fall 2020. Some of the current assessment activities, such as pre/post surveys from study abroad students and graduate programs assessment center activities, will continue during the [2020–2021] academic year.”

As stated above, the new SOAP calls for this current Fall 2021 semester to to involve the Assessment Center activity for MBA 210 in order to assess the new SOAPs SLOs of 1.b., 3.a., and 3.c. The relevant entities should decide whether that, and the rest of the SOAP more broadly, should indeed continue to be the plan.

For the Spring 2022 semester, the same SOAP calls for exams to be administered in MBA 205, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 279, and 281. Administering them in both the traditional and EMBA versions of those courses (either that semester or over semesters) would obviously be necessary in order to analyze the results for the traditional and EMBA students separately. Those exams assess the new SOAP SLO of 1.a. For those exams, the new SOAP says that: “Exam questions [will be] selected from a pool of questions prepared by faculty coordinating and teaching the related course. The set of questions cover each functional area in the program. For a given semester, the AoL coordinator [i.e., the Assessment Coordinator, presumably for the MBA program rather than the school in which the program is housed] selects questions from each area. Each student taking the exam answers those questions varying the areas that respective students receive, so all areas are covered with a set of sample responses. A content exam is administered in MBA 279. This exam is based upon items provided by the faculty from each functional area.” Again, the relevant entities should decide whether that, and the rest of the SOAP more broadly, should indeed continue to be the plan. At this time, I am not aware of any progress that has been made in that regard by any previous MBA Assessment coordinators. This September 30, 2021, report should be updated if/when greater clarity is obtained about past, present, or future progress in that regard.

1. **Identify and discuss any major issues identified during your last Program Review and in what ways these issues have or have not been addressed.**

The following response to a similar question about the then-upcoming 2020–2021 academic year was given in the previously unsubmitted assessment report prepared for the 2019–2020 academic year.

“The school and its programs, including the MBA program, successfully completed the AACSB re-accreditation process in Spring 2019. The MBA program will submit the university program review report by December 1, 2020. We are in the process of establishing the CSB Graduate Faculty Group to get more support from our faculty and the business community to develop the new SOAP mentioned in Question 4 & 5 and implement the Assurance of Learning initiatives for our MBA and EMBA programs requested by the AACSB Accreditation Peer Review Team in Spring 2019.”

The MBA program was indeed re-accredited by the AACSB in Spring 2019. All programs at our universities are also reviewed by our university on a regular cycle. Because of the recent re-accreditation by AACSB, the MBA program only had to go through a newly created “Abbreviated Program Review for Nationally Accredited Programs” for its university review. That abbreviated university review [largely defers](https://web.archive.org/web/20211001041137/https://www.fresnostate.edu/academics/curriculum/prog-review/) to the fact that a program was recently accredited by an official accrediting organization such as the AACSB. The relevant materials for that university review, including a letter certifying national accreditation and an updated SOAP following the university template, were submitted by the deadline to do so in Fall 2020.

To the best of my knowledge at this time, that abbreviated review has been completed and no substantive feedback was provided by the Graduate Program Review Officer (who is also the Dean of the Division of Research and Graduate Studies) as part of the abbreviated university review. This stands in contrast to feedback that likely would have been provided to the program if the university did not have its newly created abbreviated review process and if the faculty on the University Graduate Committee had fully reviewed the program in depth rather than having only the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies review the abbreviated review. This September 30, 2021, report should be updated if/when greater clarity is obtained about any substantive feedback provided by the Graduate Program Review Officer to the MBA program.

In terms of the “Assurance of Learning initiatives for our MBA and EMBA programs requested by the AACSB Accreditation Peer Review Team in Spring 2019,” they have been partially implemented as they relate to assessing the traditional and EMBA programs separately. The assessment data reported above is broken down by those groups. Continuing to assess them separately will be necessary as the updated SOAP is implemented.

In terms of establishing a Graduate Faculty Group, the establishment of that group was not technically required by the AACSB, but establishing such a group in line with university policies is required by our university’s [relevant APM](http://www.fresnostate.edu/academics/facultyaffairs/documents/apm/226.pdf), and a group in line with that APM may help strengthen assessment-related activities such as data collection, analysis, and loop closing. Continuing to strengthen those areas was required by the AACSB.

**APPENDIX A. CRITERIA/RUBRIC FOR ASSESSMENT CENTER ACTIVITY**

Beyond the already-mentioned names of the skills assessed by the Assessment Center (namely, “Leadership,” “Decision-Making,” “Planning and Organizing,” “Communication,” “Teamwork,” “Ethics,” and “Writing”), further details on the criteria evaluated by or rubric used for the assessment center activity have not been included in assessment reports dating back to at least the assessment report for the 2017–2018 academic year.

To try to understand the criteria, I requested and the MBA Office provided sample reports from the Assessment Center. Reports were graciously provided for two actual Fresno State undergraduate students who completed the Assessment Center activities in their Spring 2021 MGT 110 “Administration and Organizational Behavior” course.

The activities described in those sample Assessment Center reports seem similar to the ones described in the MBA program’s 2013 SOAP and previous annual assessment reports submitted by the MBA program to the university. Recall from above the description that “[students] are required to write memos, give a 3-minute impromptu presentation, and participate in three group meetings (to pick a job candidate, brainstorm customer service ideas, and evaluate a merger offer from a competing company).” The Assessment Center reports mention a videotaped “CEO selection meeting” (which sounds similar to picking a job candidate), “customer service meeting” (which sounds similar to brainstorming customer service ideas), and a “3-minute presentation” (which might be impromptu). The Assessment Center reports also mentions an “email simulator” that sounds similar to writing memos.

Feedback on five main “skill areas” are provided by the Assessment Center reports. Those skill areas are entitled “Initiative,” “Decision-Making,” “Organizing,” “Communication,” and “Teamwork.” Some other feedback, including on “Writing Quality” for the email simulator (which also partly measures the quantity of writing by measuring the number of emails responded to), a measure of ethical behavior based on that same email simulator activity, and a measure of leadership based on the above-mentioned videotaped meetings.

The following table summarizes my best attempt to match the SLOs from the MBA program’s 2013 SOAP to the skills mentioned in previous assessment reports and, in turn, to the skills measured in the assessment center sample reports. This September 30, 2021, report should be updated if/when there is greater clarity about the intended match of assessed items to SLOs. The relevant entities should also consider the extent to which the items are assessing the SLOs if the Assessment Center activity remains one of the main pillars of the programs’ assessment activities.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SLO from 2013 SOAP | Corresponding skill(s) as described by previous annual assessment reports | Closest match(es) to skills measured in the sample Assessment Center reports | Description according to sample Assessment Center reports | Examples of behaviors measured |
| SLO 1: Make Sound Business Decisions (LO1 – Decision Making) | “Decision-Making” | “Decision-Making” | “Relating data from different sources, identifying possible causes of problems, and engaging in a systematic decision-making process” | In CEO selection and customer service meetings, “Identifies next appropriate step” and “Defines decision criteria.” In 3-minute speech, “Provides multiple info sources” |
| SLO 2: Apply Business Knowledge (LO2 – Business Knowledge) | N/A; “not directly assessed by this [assessment center] activity,” according to previous assessment reports | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| SLO 3: Write Effectively (LO3 – Written Communication Skills) | “Writing” | “Writing Quality” for “Email Simulator Performance” (in which students “organize, prioritize, and respond to a set of emails”) | “[R]anks [a student’s] writing quality against the comparison group [of others who have done the activity].” | Points are earned “for writing that (a) contained correct grammar and spelling, and (b) was written in paragraph form with complete sentences.” “Writing more messages” also gives “the opportunity to earn more points.” |
| SLO 4: Orally Communicate Effectively (LO4 – Oral Communication Skills) | “Communication” | “Communication” | “Effective expression in individual and group situations. Includes both verbal and nonverbal forms of communication as well as written communication from the email simulator.” | In CEO selection and customer service meetings, as well as 3-minute speech, “Speaks clearly” and “Speaks confidently.” |
| SLO 5: Demonstrates Ethical Behavior (LO5 – Ethical Behavior) | “Ethics” | “Absolute Ethical Focus” | “There were six [email] messages that have a significant ethical component.” Students are scored on the number of those six messages that they attempted to respond to. | No examples of ethnically significant components provided. |
| “Relative Ethical Focus” | The “Absolute Ethical Score” expressed relative to the Absolute Ethical Scores for the comparison group. | “ “ |
| “Ethical Sensitivity” | Students earn points for “making decisions in an ethically aware manner.” Responding to messages in a way that reflects “ethnically unaware decisions” hurts score. | No examples of ethically aware or unaware decisions provided. |
| SLO 6: Demonstrate Leadership (LO6 – Leadership Skills) | “Leadership” | “Initiative” | “Actively attempting to influence events to achieve goals: showing self-starting actions rather than passive acceptance.” | In CEO selection and customer service meetings, “Refocuses team members” and “Documents group discussion.” Not measured by 3-minute speech activity. |
| “Leadership Emergence” | “The raters provided a global rating of the number of meetings [out of two meetings] in which [a student was] viewed as taking a leadership role.” | Unclear how “taking a leadership role” is defined/measured |
| “Planning and Organizing” | “Organizing” | “Establishing a course of action for self and/or others to accomplish a specific goal” | In CEO selection and customer service meetings, “Attends correct meeting on time” and “States name and [ID] number.” In 3-minute speech, “Gives speech, in group, in order” |
| “Teamwork” | “Teamwork” | “Fosters collaboration among team members by showing respect for others, encouraging open expression of ideas, and contributing to the overall effectiveness of the team” | In CEO selection and customer service meetings, “Solicits input from team members” and “States name and [ID] number.” In 3-minute speech, “Gives speech, in group, in order” |

**APPENDIX B. RUBRIC FOR CULMINATING PROJECTS**

For assessment reports dating back to at least the assessment report for the 2018–2019 academic year, the rubric used to evaluate MBA 298 projects has not been included in the reports.

For this assessment report, I have obtained a copy of a rubric that (to the best of my knowledge) has been used and is still being used to assess projects. The rubric can be described as follows.

The rubric is entitled “CSB PROJECT RUBRIC -- SCORING GUIDE (Revised January, 2012).”

The two dimensions of evaluation that are required/non-optional are entitled “Integration of Business Knowledge” and “Critical Thinking.”

The rubric explains the former dimension as follows: “Business as an overriding discipline has coherence beyond that of single disciplinary perspectives. Cultivating integration of business knowledge is essential to prepare informed and engaged business leaders capable of analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information from multiple sources in order to render reasoned decisions. The integration of business knowledge promotes organizational communication at all levels in order to avoid disciplinary silo effects. It is essential that students make connections across the various disciplines in the curriculum. Integration of business knowledge transcends silos and views business as a system where it is essential for the parts to work together towards an overall goal rather than individualistic or departmental goals.”

The rubric explains the latter dimension as follows: “Critical thinking implies the development of ‘discerning judgment based on standards.’ In Webster’s New World Dictionary, the relevant entry reads ‘characterized by careful analysis and judgment’ and is followed by ‘critical — in its strictest sense —implies an attempt at objective judgment so as to determine both merits and faults.’ Applied to thinking, then, consider critical thinking as thinking that explicitly aims at well-founded judgment and hence utilizes appropriate evaluative standards in the attempt to determine the true worth, merit, or value of something. To assess critical thinking, check it for clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, depth, breadth, significance, logic, and fairness. (adapted from www.criticalthinking.org on 1/5/12)”

The rubric also has four dimensions that are “optional” and that evaluators are asked to “use if applicable.” Those dimensions are “Use of Technology [other than presentation or word processing software],” “Quantitative Analysis,” “Oral Presentation,” and “Written Report.”

The rubric only explains the “Use of Technology” dimension. The rubric explains it as as follows: “If appropriate, evaluate how well/appropriately students use technology within the context of the project, rather than within the context of the presentation of the project through presentation software or a written report using word processing software. Evaluate how well/appropriately students have used technology to help them gather information and/or analyze a business problem or opportunity. Examples include use of technology to (1) access information from databases, (2) analyze data using statistical software or spreadsheets, (3) use graphics software to present/compare information, (4) display the spatial distribution of information using GIS/mapping software, (5) study the results of variable inputs and outputs with simulation, what-if, or goal seeking analysis, (6) promote marketing goals via social networking, or (7) develop systems.”

As noted above, [Title V](https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/administration/academic-and-student-affairs/academic-programs-innovations-and-faculty-development/Documents/Title5_MastersDegree_requirements.pdf) of the regulations for the California State University System defines projects as follows: “A project is a significant undertaking appropriate to the fine and applied arts or to professional fields. It evidences originality and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale. It is described and summarized in a written abstract that includes the project’s significance, objectives, methodology and a conclusion or recommendation. An oral defense of the project may be required.” It is therefore unclear why or how the current rubric could leave evaluating the “written report” component as optional if all projects must (per Title V) have a “written abstract” that describes and summarizes the project while including the significance, objectives, methods, and a conclusion or recommendation of the project. The extent to which the rubric intends to measure or does measure the other required elements—such as significance of the undertaking, evidence of originality, evidence of independent thinking, and appropriateness of form and organization—is also unclear.

**APPENDIX C. SURVEY QUESTIONS ON ALTERNATIVE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE**

The following are the questions that were asked of EMBA Cohort 20 students in their MBA 281 “International Business” course after the above-discussed alternative international experience. The questions are presented in the order in which they were asked.

The available responses for the following eight questions were “Excellent,” “Good,” “Average,” “Below average,” and “Poor.”

“To what extent did the session [i.e., the alternative international experience] meet its stated objectives?”, where the bracketed remarks are my own and the stated objectives are unclear as of writing this report. This September 30, 2021, report should be updated if/when greater clarity is obtained about the stated objectives of the alternative international experience.

“How would you rate the effectiveness of the instructor?”, where this may refer to the instructor of record for the course or ideally would refer to the guest speaker(s).

“How would you rate the facility?”, where it is unclear at this time whether this was a question about a physical meeting space that allowed for social distancing, a virtual meeting space, etc.

“How well did the exercises/activities support the course purpose?”, where the purpose of the course is specified in the course catalog and the relevant syllabus.

“How would you rate the instructor’s knowledge?”

“To what extent did the instructor keep your attention throughout the session?”

“How would you rate the instructor’s ability to provide you with the tools to use immediately on the [...?]”, where the question was presumably about the case study or studies.

“In sum, what was your overall evaluation of the session?”

The following two questions required open-ended responses.

“What did you like the best and find the most useful in the session?”

“How could we improve the session in the future?”

The available responses for the following question were “Extremely relevant,” “Very relevant,” “Moderately relevant,” “Slightly relevant,” or “Not relevant at all.”

“How relevant is this class to the ‘real work place’?”

A final open-ended question was as follows.

“Why is it relevant or why not?”

As noted above, such a survey about students’ opinions on an experience can only be an indirect measure of student learning outcomes and the questions from the survey would need to be aligned more closely with one or more of the MBA program’s SLOs in order to be a more useful measure for program-level assessment.

**APPENDIX D. MISSING EVALUATIONS OF CULMINATING PROJECTS**

While reviewing data related to assessment reporting for the 2018–2019, 2019–2020, and 2020–2021 academic years, a number of cases were identified in which rubric-based evaluation of at least some students projects were missing in the MBA Office’s assessment documentation. In one case, it was explicitly stated in the MBA Office’s assessment documentation that the faculty member did not provided the data after repeated requests for it. In the other cases, the MBA Office’s assessment documentation (at least as of writing this report) does not specify why the data is missing, it is therefore unclear whether the MBA Office did not request that data and/or the faculty responsible did not provide that data either automatically or after requests for it. The 11 cases are listed below. Of the 11 cases identified, at least 7 involve one faculty member whose name I have redacted from above and below. At least 2 cases involve another faculty member whose name I have again redacted from above and below. Student names have been redacted below. The MBA Office, the CSB Dean’s Office, and College Assessment Coordinator have all been informed of the names of the faculty involved and the names of the students they were supervising. One of the faculty members was supervising projects for at least a half dozen students in Spring 2020.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Semester** | **Traditional or Executive MBA student?** | **Student name** | **Faculty member responsible according to MBA Office’s assessment documentation** | **Issue in need of resolution** |
| Spring 2019 | Executive | Student #1 | Unknown; not specified in assessment materials provided by MBA Office. | Still Report in Progress (RP) grade as of Fall 2021. |
| Spring 2020 & 2021 for MBA 298 & 298C | Executive | Student #2 | Unknown; not specified in assessment materials provided by MBA Office. | RP grade from S20 resolved on 6/8/2021 with student receiving an A letter grade, but rubric-based evaluation of project missing from MBA Office’s assessment documentation. |
| Spring 2020 | Executive | Student #3 | Faculty Member #1 | Grade of A given on 6/11/2020, but rubric-based evaluation of project missing from MBA Office’s assessment documentation. |
| Spring 2020 | Executive | Student #4 | Faculty Member #1 | Grade of A given on 6/12/2020, but rubric-based evaluation of project missing from MBA Office’s assessment documentation. |
| Spring 2020 | Executive | Student #5 | Faculty Member #2 | Grade of A given on 6/16/2020, but rubric-based evaluation of project missing from MBA Office’s assessment documentation. |
| Spring 2020 | Executive | Student #6 | Faculty Member #2 | Grade of A given on 6/16/2020, but rubric-based evaluation of project missing from MBA Office’s assessment documentation. |
| Spring 2020 | Executive | Student #7 | Faculty Member #2 | Grade of A given on 6/16/2020, but rubric-based evaluation of project missing from MBA Office’s assessment documentation. |
| Spring 2020 | Executive | Student #8 | Faculty Member #2 | Grade of A given on 6/16/2020, but rubric-based evaluation of project missing from MBA Office’s assessment documentation. |
| Spring 2020 | Executive | Student #9 | Faculty Member #2 | Grade of A given on 6/16/2020, but rubric-based evaluation of project missing from MBA Office’s assessment documentation. |
| Spring 2020 | Executive | Student #10 | Faculty Member #2 | Grade of A given on 6/16/2020, but rubric-based evaluation of project missing from MBA Office’s assessment documentation. |
| Fall 2020 | Executive | Student #11 | Faculty Member #2 | Grade of A given on 1/22/2021, but rubric-based evaluation of project missing from MBA Office’s assessment documentation. |

There are also two cases of students who still have Report in Progress (RP) grades for a Spring 2021 offering of MBA 298 but are not currently enrolled in MBA 298 C (for continuing) this Fall 2021 semester. If those students are treated as having failed their projects, then that would obviously affect the statistics reported for the MBA 298 project assessment activity.