

# **Student Outcome Assessment Plan Graduate Programs for MBA Business Degree**

Craig School of Business  
California State University

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## **I. Mission Statement**

### **A. CSB Mission Statement**

The Craig School of Business at California State University, Fresno provides high quality business education to a diverse student body, offers well-rounded active learning experiences and contributes to economic development in central California

### **B. MBA Mission Statement**

The Master of Business Administration (MBA) programs prepare students for successful careers in managerial roles in private industry, public sector agencies, and not-for profit institutions.

## **II. CSB MBA Goals and Student Learning Outcomes**

### **A. Overview**

The Craig School of Business (CSB) has three MBA programs: traditional MBA, MBA for Executives (EMBA), and Online MBA. The avenues for attaining an MBA focus on the same goals and learning objectives, although they may differ in the exact manner of achievement. The CSU system dictates that program review and SOAPs are associated with degree granting programs; at CSB there is one MBA degree. Consequently, this SOAP applies to all the MBA programs.

The CSB undergoes accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), an international business school accrediting entity. In spring, 2011, the CSB received full reaccreditation. The CSB seeks to establish strong commonalities between the AACSB Assessment of Learning (AOL) and the CSB Student Outcome Assessment Plan (SOAP) requirements and activities.

The goals and learning objectives were first established through a process of discernment among MBA faculty, staff, administration, and the business community beginning with a retreat in 2006. The goals and learning objectives are revisited and amended regularly. The assessment coordinators for CSB work with MBA faculty, administrators, students, and the business

community in this regard. The identified goals are relevant to the MBA degree objectives since they are established with assistance from faculty, administrators, students, and business people who will be working with the graduates.

In academic year 2011-2012, the school's undergraduate learning outcomes were simplified to eight learning outcomes that match the stated learning objectives for the program. In a similar fashion in order to maintain this effort at simplicity, the goals for the MBA program were refined and restated this past academic year to be measurable learning outcomes.

These simplified learning outcomes are consistent with the goals and prior detailed learning objectives but are now stated in measurable outcomes. Further, the measurable learning outcomes were already being measured as part of the MBA SOAP (with the exception of Ethical Behavior). In many cases the subset of items in the previous learning objectives are still measured as part of the items measured for the learning outcomes. While the prior goal of lifelong learning is an admirable one, it is not considered measurable and was replaced by the demonstration of leadership skills which has been measured and has always been an assumed goal/outcome.

## **B. Goals and Learning Outcomes**

The MBA graduate

1. Uses critical thinking skills and an integrated knowledge of business theory and practice to make sound business decisions.
  - Learning Outcome: Make sound business decisions (LO1 – Decision Making)
  - Learning Outcome: Apply business knowledge (LO2 – Business Knowledge)
2. Exercises effective written and oral communication.
  - Learning Outcome: Write effectively (LO3 – Written Communication Skills)
  - Learning Outcome: Orally communicate effectively (LO4 – Oral Communication Skills)
3. Understands the ethical consequences of actions and acquits him/herself ethically as student, employee, business owner, and community leader.
  - Learning Outcome: Demonstrates Ethical Behavior (LO5 – Ethical Behavior)
4. Develops and demonstrates leadership skills appropriate for managerial roles in private industry, public sector agencies, and not-for profit institutions.
  - Learning Outcome: Demonstrate leadership (LO6 – Leadership Skills)

### III. Curriculum Map (Matrix of Courses X Learning Outcomes)

Course	Decision-Making	Business Knowledge	Writing	Oral Comm.	Ethical Behavior	Leadership
MBA 210	3	3	3	3	2	3
MBA 211	2	3	1	1	1	1
MBA 212	2	3	1	1	1	1
MBA 213	2	3	1	1	1	1
MBA 214	2	3	1	1	1	1
MBA 215	2	3	1	1	1	1
Elective 1	2	3	1	1	1	1
Elective 2	2	3	1	1	1	1
Elective 3	2	3	1	1	1	1
Elective 4	2	3	1	1	1	1
MBA 279	2	3	3	3	1	1
MBA 298 or 299	3	3	3	3	3	3

3 = Strong, 2 = Moderate, 1 = Possible

### III. Assessment Methods

#### A. Direct Methods:

##### *AC: Assessment Center*

Students in the MBA Program (both the traditional MBA program and the MBA program for Executives) participate in a 2.5 hour assessment center referred to as “Sun Now Solar”. In this assessment center, they are director-level members of a small solar company located in southern California. In this assessment, 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 to evaluate a merger offer from a competing company). These activities are videotaped and all videos are evaluated by paid, external raters who are not associated with the university in any way. All video and data are handled by Pelican Leadership Consulting of Geneva, IL. This is done to provide objective, external ratings of the assessed skills (i.e., leadership, decision-making, planning and organizing, communication, teamwork, and writing skills). Pretests are conducted in MBA 210 (one of the first classes most students take) and the posttests are conducted in MBA 279 (the capstone course which is generally taken at the end of the program). Benchmark is improvement from pretest to posttest, a Z-score of 0.0 or better or a percentage of 50% or better.

*WR: Writing Rubric*

A writing rubric directly assess writing assignments. There are currently two versions (an older one with a 4 point scale and a newer one with a 3-point scale). For rubrics with a 4-point scale, the benchmark is 3.0 or higher. For those with a 3-point scale, the benchmark is 2 (acceptable) or higher.

*CR: ETS Criterion*

Criterion is a software product by ETS for evaluation writing assignments. Benchmark is successful Criterion score.

*PR: Project Rubric*

A project rubric is used to evaluate team projects. Benchmark is 2 (acceptable) or higher.

**B. Indirect Methods:**

*AS: Alumni Surveys*

*IBS: International Business Programs Survey*

Note: There are no items in an appendix. See the business undergraduate SOAP for examples of the rubrics. The Assessment Center is a performance activity.

**IV. Student Learning Objectives X Assessment Methods Matrix**

Method	Decision-Making	Business Knowledge	Writing	Oral Comm.	Ethical Behavior	Leadership
Direct:						
AC	X	X	X	X		X
WR			X			
CR			X			
PR	X	X	X	X		
Indirect:						
AS	X	X	X	X	X	X
IBS	X	X	X	X	X	X

**V. Timeline**

All measures, except the alumni survey, are conducted annually. The alumni survey is conducted every second or third year. A direct measure for Ethical Behavior is being developed for initial implementation in 2012-2013 with annual measures thereafter.

## VI. Closing the Loop

The assessment process requires collecting data on learning, compiling that data, reporting that data, contemplation of the data, then decisions how to react to the data. The last step is “closing the loop.” But after the decision how to respond to the data is made, there must be implementation of the changes decided on. After implementation, there must be new assessment of the changes. So the process is one of continuous improvement. The CSB administration and assessment team has embraced the continuous improvement model for student objective assessment.

1. Compiling data – Direct measures are conducted in the assigned classes, and indirect measures are collected at appropriate times. Blackboard is used to enable faculty to input their direct assessment results into an Excel file and to submit it to the School. The assessments for each learning objective are compiled by the Assessment coordinators and the Associate Dean.
2. Reporting data – The results are communicated to the Dean for the Dean’s Annual Report to the Provost. The results are put into graphs and communicated to the faculty during the faculty meetings at the beginning of the fall semester. Often the results are communicated at the beginning of the spring semester or at the end of a semester. Deans report the results to other stakeholders such as business community members and students.
3. Contemplation of the data – At the faculty meetings, faculty discuss the results and suggest ways to improve student learning and the process for obtaining assurance of learning. The assessment coordinators take faculty and administrative advice for how to use the results for program improvement.
4. Decisions how to react to the data – The assessment coordinators and deans begin the semester long work of assisting faculty in course, curricula, instruction, and program adjustment, and in devising measurements that will capture evidence of student learning. The advice is reported in faculty meetings and faculty individually become involved in working with the assessment coordinators and the deans.
5. The changes in courses, curricula, instruction, programs, and methods of measuring learning are implemented the following semester or year. Changes are then assessed the following semester or year. The process has now begun another cycle.