

# Assessment of Student Learning Plan (ASLP): School of Business

2018-19 Academic Year

University of Southern Maine

## A. College, Department, Date

College CMHS \_\_\_\_\_  
Department School of Business  
Date 24 May 2019

## B. Contact Person for the Assessment Plan

Name and title Jane Kuenz, Assoc. Dean

## C. Degree Program

Name of Degree Program BS in Business Administration

## D. Assessment of Student Learning: Program Assessment

### Step 1: Identify the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's)

a. Are your student learning outcomes published on your department's website?

Yes/No

i. If yes, please provide the url: \_\_\_\_\_

ii. If no, please list 3-5 of the most important student learning outcomes for your program. **What will students know by the end of your program?**

### SB Undergraduate Learning Goals:

1. Our students will be effective team members who know how to exercise shared leadership.
2. Our students will be effective communicators in a professional setting.
3. Our students will exercise ethical understanding and reasoning in an organizational context.
4. Our students will be reflective, analytical thinkers.

5. Our students will demonstrate business disciplinary competence.

b. Please identify **which of your student learning outcome(s) were assessed this past academic year.**

The current AoL plan runs through 2020. The School will follow through with it, assessing the following learning goals in the following courses. Since these learning goals are consistent with the new mission statement, the School will continue assessing them on a bi-yearly basis.

- Ethical Implications: BUS 280, BUS 450
- Quantitative Analysis: BUS 301, BUS 375
- Discipline Specific Problem Solving: ACC 211
- Disciplinary Competence: BUS 450 (Capstone Exam)

c. Do you have a **matrix or curriculum map** showing when your student learning outcomes are assessed and in which courses? **Yes/No**

i. If yes, do you have this map published on your website? Please provide the url or attach a copy of the curriculum map.

See Appendix 2 of attached report.

### **Step 2: Assessment Methods Selected and Implemented**

a. **Identify which assessment measures (beyond individual student grading) were used to determine whether students achieved the stated learning outcomes for the degree.** (NOTE: Many undergraduate programs are using their recently approved Capstone courses to assess student learning. Assessment plans included in your Capstone Proposal in the CCC may be referred to as examples of assessment work in your program.)

The USM School of Business uses two direct measures to assess our program and student learning. We discuss these measures below.

The disciplinary competence goal is assessed in the Capstone Exam. Other learning goals are assessed using data collected in content-relevant courses.

1. *Student Data Collection*—Specific embedded course assignments are collected and scored using standardized rubrics. Allows for the longitudinal measurement of our goals/objectives and the evaluation/effectiveness of curricular and pedagogical changes.
2. *Capstone Exam*--An 80-item test covering all discipline areas, which is administered to all students nearing graduation each calendar year. The Exam allows for discipline-specific evaluation.

A schedule for assessment can be found in Appendix 1 on pp. 16-17 of the attached report.

- b. *Briefly describe when you implemented the assessment activity; if a rubric or other structured approach was used to assess student outcome achievement, please describe and/or attach the rubric.*

Example: Outcome 1 was measured during the fall semester -- all majors completed a problem-solving case study during the \_\_\_ course. Case studies were graded on a rubric by two faculty members.

Example: Outcome 2 was measured during the spring semester -- all majors in the capstone course completed a research project. Research projects will be reviewed and graded by a group of faculty.

### **Step 3: Using the Assessment results to Improve Student Learning**

- a. *Briefly describe your unit's process of reviewing the program assessment results (for example, annual discussion by faculty committee, etc.).*

Standing Assurance of Learning Committee gathered data in the fall and analyzed it in the spring, presenting findings and recommendations at the May retreat.

- b. Identify the specific changes that have been or will be made to improve student learning based on these program assessment results. (For example, what changes will the program make at the assignment, course, or program level to improve student learning, based on the assessment results?)*

AoL Committee recommended dropping the leadership learning goal. Approved by faculty vote, 17 May 2019.

AoL Committee recommended switching from Capstone exam to ETS Field Test in Business. Approved by faculty vote, 17 May 2019. Since the Field Test requires additional resources, this discussion will move into the Dean's office.

Full data and rationale for these recommendations are in the report. Summary below:

Because the School's new mission does not reference leadership, that learning goal was dropped.

Because their findings showed that students were not meeting targets for disciplinary competence in multiple areas, the AoL committee expressed concerns about the current process for assessing these goals in the Capstone Exam. Approximately half of the students in upper-level business courses have transferred in at the junior level, and most have not taken the relevant subject matter at the School, including required courses in Accounting, Marketing, Legal Environment of Business (which includes Ethics), and two foundation courses in algebra and statistics. This means that half of the questions on the Capstone Exam cover material that about half of the students sitting for the exam did not take at the School. In other words, the Capstone Exam is not assessing what USM School of Business graduates have learned in USM School of Business courses.

Furthermore, while the regular learning objectives are introduced, reinforced and then assessed in the relevant subject matters, the disciplinary areas get uneven treatment. For example, non-Accounting majors who start at USM take the two required accounting courses near the beginning of their careers but are assessed on that learning only at the end. Non-accounting majors who transferred in—about half of the students taking the exam—did not take those courses at USM at all. Other disciplines are represented in the Capstone Exam scores in numbers relative to how recently students either first encountered the subject matter or had it reinforced in a subsequent course. Although the only required Marketing course is taken early on at the 200-level, the large number of Marketing majors who take several marketing courses probably explains the high scores in those areas. The same is true of Ethics (reinforced) and Management (taken more recently), but not of other areas either distant in time or not reinforced or both: MIS, Accounting, Finance, International, and Operations Management.

In addition, the AoL committee makes the following recommendations:

In all, the Committee made five key recommendations:

1. Drop the Leadership learning goal and outcome altogether since it is no longer reflected in the mission.
2. Change how the School administers the Capstone Exam or consider replacing it altogether with the ETS Field Test in Business.
3. Continue with the current AoL plan until the implementation of the new undergraduate curriculum in 2020.
4. In AY 2019-2020, write and approve new learning objectives and metrics for assessing competence in entrepreneurial thinking and fluency with business technologies as described in the new mission.
5. Review the AoL system after the implementation of the new curriculum.

In addition, the committee suggests the following adjustments:

1. Make a slight change in pedagogy or curriculum for the Oral Communication learning goal, namely, to make eye contact with the audience, speak at a steady rate, try to show enthusiasm, and so forth.
2. Work with the Department of English or the Learning Commons at both the Portland and Gorham USM Libraries on a “refresher” course on grammar, language and spelling to improve the weak area of the Written Communication learning goals. In addition, SB faculty should remember to give students feedback on grammar, language and spelling when evaluating their written work.
3. Faculty assessing Ethics should emphasize the nature of the three ethical frameworks and the implementation of courses of action.
4. Make a slight change in pedagogy for the Quantitative Analysis learning goal, by putting greater emphasis on sensitivity analysis. Make changes in pedagogy by emphasizing basic analytical and reporting skills.

c. *Date of most recent program review/self-study?*

May 17, 2019

**E. Other Assessment Activities:** *Briefly describe any additional assessment-related activities your program is using at the course level (for example, creating common assignments and/or assignment rubrics for use across different sections of required courses, examining student progress in entry-level courses, other assessment projects implemented by individual faculty, etc.).*

In February, 2019, the faculty approved Course Designation Rubrics for courses designated as ones contributing in significant ways to the development of either Entrepreneurial Thinking or facility with Business Technologies. These will be used in the drafting of new learning goals and outcomes.

**F. Community Engagement Activities in your departmental curriculum:**

a. Does your department have a student learning outcome that is related to any community engagement activities? If so, please state the outcome.

n/a

b. Please indicate if any of the community engagement activities listed below are included in your program's curriculum, by noting which activities are required or optional for students in your major.

<u>Community Engagement Activity</u>	<u>Required/Optional</u>	
Student Research (related to a community-based problem)	R	O
Student-Faculty Community Research Project	R	O
Internship, or a Field Experience mgmt. major	R	O Required for Sport
Independent Study (community-related project)	R	O
Capstone Course (community-related project)	R	O
Service-Learning (course-based)	R	O
Study Abroad, or an International Program	R	O
Interdisciplinary Collaborative Project (community related)	R	O
Student Leadership Activities (related to a team project)	R	O ENACTUS
Students/Faculty Community Leadership (e.g., advisory boards, committees, conference presentations)	R	O
Other activities (please list):	R	O

c. Please list any courses (i.e. EDU 400) that have a community engagement activity in your program.

Entry-level courses: \_\_\_\_\_ Mid-level courses: \_\_\_\_\_ Upper-level courses: \_\_\_\_\_