**August 2009 Gerstacker Feedback**

**Assessment Committee Contact Person: Dean McCurdy**

**Plan also reviewed by: Drew Dunham and Cheryl Blackwell**

General Suggestions (sent to all Departments/Programs)

In general, there were a few themes that the Assessment Committee noticed. First, it is most helpful when the progression from Step 2 to Step 3 and Step 3 to Step 4 are clear. That is, after you have articulated your learning goals, the clearest proposals are explicit in how the courses/experiences in Step 3 directly support the learning goals. And Step 4 should take full advantage of all of the places in Step 3 where data might be collected. Second, make strategic use of both direct and indirect measures, and think about whether data can be collected at the beginning, during the program of study, and at the end. This gives a richer sense of where and when your work contributes strongly to learning goals and where improvements might be made. Third, make your plan manageable! All data need not be collected annually; some can be done every other year. And you may choose not to measure for all of your learning goals right now. Make claims that you can (a) intellectually, ethically stand behind and (b) find resources to measure.

Specific comments about your plan

Step 1: Institute mission statement: The statement provided here might benefit from some expansion. For example, who are the ‘students’ in the program? How will you help them achieve the confidence needed to succeed in business careers and gain confidence, experience, and character? Many excellent examples are found in Steps 2 and 3, but this might be a good time to revisit and develop the Mission Statement so that it has the same level of clarity that is found in Step 2 of your plan.

Step 2: The outcomes listed are clear, student-centered, and most lend themselves to ‘doable’ assessment. We commend you on your efforts here. Well done!

Step 3: The elements of your program described here are clear and well written. As you move forward, it will be important to link various elements listed in this step to specific learning outcomes in Step 2.

Step 4: While we are impressed with the variety of assessment efforts being used by your institute, these effort are mostly indirect (they assess perceptions of the program and include self-study measures of whether learning outcomes have been met). We think it would be helpful to also consider additional, more direct measures of learning outcomes as well, which could be done by assessment of courses (and other activities) that relate to specific learning outcomes outlined in Step 3. We do not expect that ALL learning outcomes will be assessed immediately (you could choose one outcome from each series of courses/activities, or track one outcome through several sequential courses/activities). Such assessment is likely part of what you are already doing to evaluate students in the various courses and other activities they are involved in.

**Next Steps:**

In coordination with your Assessment Committee reviewers and their written and verbal feedback, please observe the following deadlines for your assessment cycle:

* September 15: Revisions to Steps 1-4 due (if necessary)
October 1: Completion of Steps 5 & 6 using preliminary data November 2: Final Fall 2009 plans due