

DRAFT

Minutes

MBA Committee

Warrington College of Business Administration

Wednesday, November 12, 2008

11:00 AM

Stuzin 200

Members attending: Joel Houston (chair), Robert Thomas, Steve Shugan, Anand Paul, Hadley Schaefer, Sandy Berg

Also attending: Selcuk Erenguc, Roy Crum, Alex Sevilla, Kara Cupoli

Agenda items:

I. Approval of April 2008 Meeting Minutes: Approved.

II. Curriculum Items:

- a. Sevilla formally confirmed the committee's email approvals for:
 - i. (3) FSOA graduate tax courses for MBA student (Cole Flanagan)
 - ii. GEB 6930 – Crisis and Risk Management addition to EMBA curriculum (2009)
- b. MBA Global Studies Program in Russia. Roy Crum provided a summary report on the trip. A course survey was distributed to supplement the discussion. Dr. Crum expressed a high level of satisfaction with the course outcome, both in terms of student deliverables and the overall execution of the trip. The student survey results were very positive overall. Crum, Sevilla, and Cupoli emphasized a number of positive highlights, including the lessons learned from visiting a true developing country, the productive interaction between the full-time and working professional MBA students, and the quality of the academic and corporate content. Sevilla outlined a long term vision of creating 3-5 global trips each year, where full-time MBA students would be required (or highly encouraged) to participate in one global trip as part of their MBA program experience. All trips would be open to all working professional students, where demand appears to be very high. Sevilla estimated that there were at least 50 WPMBA students who had interest in Russia or an alternate location. The positive feedback on the Russia trip would serve to increase that interest. WPMBA student involvement helps make the trips financially viable for the College. Sevilla asked that the MBA committee approve a Fall 2009 global study trip, led by Dr. Crum. This motion was brought forward by Berg/Thomas and approved unanimously by the committee. There was also a commitment to continue to discuss the feasibility of global trip programming for MBA students on a larger scale.

III. EDGE Program

Sevilla provided an overview of the EDGE program concept, why it was introduced, and how it will improve the full-time MBA student experience and make MBA graduates more employable and more successful in the corporate marketplace. He indicated that many b-schools were investing major time into these areas, at times at the expense of core MBA content. The plan put together for the UF MBA program would allow for a greater focus on skill development in these areas without losing major core MBA coursework. The proposed EDGE course would be a two credit hour course that spans across two full semesters. The amount of classroom time dedicated to this course would be nearly twice as much as a standard two credit hour course, to ensure that the necessary content was delivered, and there was sufficient rigor established to earn two credits. The EDGE course would replace the existing one credit

courses Ethics and Groups and Teams courses, and the key content from each of these courses would be rolled into the EDGE course, so that content would be retained.

Shugan asked what specific elements recruiters felt our MBA students were lacking. Sevilla/Cupoli elaborated on the need for greater self awareness/assessment, focus, polish, communication skills, leadership, influence, crisis management, etc. Houston confirmed that many of these characteristics are found in MSFin students because that program stresses these elements and has formally incorporated them into their curriculum and program experience. Berg expressed a concern that the any outsourced content needs to be well aligned with the teachings of MBA faculty. Sevilla confirmed that the original plan was to have WCBA faculty create and teach this course, but that was not feasible due to faculty workload and interest. In moving to the LDI model, Sevilla confirmed that proper coordination and communication between the LDI faculty and MBA faculty would be absolutely critical, as any major areas of overlap or conflicting teachings would be a fatal flaw for this course and the MBA program. Sevilla assured the committee that this coordination would take place and that instructor quality and overall student satisfaction would be monitored carefully to ensure course value, relevance, and rigor. Berg commented that he had seen some of the LDI consultants in action and was impressed with what he had seen.

Sevilla asked the MBA committee to provide any specific input on the draft version of the course, in an effort to improve the final proposal. It was confirmed that Sevilla and Cupoli will work with the LDI to create a final proposal, in the form of a detailed course syllabus for the MBA Committee to review. This review will likely take place in early January, which would allow the MBA program to make the necessary adjustments to the MBA schedule if the course is approved by the MBA committee.

IV. Assurance of Learning

Cupoli summarized the current status of the Assurance of Learning (AoL) project for the MBA program. A draft copy of the AoL was distributed for discussion. Erenug explained that he had recently participated in an AACSB meeting where AoL was discussed. He stated that the target number of learning goals was in the 4-7 range, with each category containing 1-2 learning objectives. Based on this information, and the outcomes that both the College and the MBA program want to achieve via the AoL project, it was agreed that the current AoL document for the MBA program needed to be streamlined. All committee members were in favor of this action. The committee reviewed each of the current learning goals. Cupoli confirmed that learning goals #2, #3, #4, #6 and #7 could be streamlined in collaboration with Donna Johnson and Tawnya Means, and did not require feedback from the committee, outside of commentary on the appropriateness of the goals themselves and the measurement tools used to evaluate said goals. The committee also agreed that learning goal #1 could be streamlined in collaboration with our writing faculty. This left learning goal #5 (Program graduates will have competency in and across business disciplines) as the primary area of focus for the committee, and for MBA faculty members. The committee provided valuable suggestions to Cupoli on ways to streamline the learning objectives for learning goal #5. Cupoli will adjust these learning objectives accordingly, and resubmit to the MBA committee for their review and commentary.

The College has imposed a final deadline of December 28th, 2008 to complete all work associated with the AACSB AoL project and Spring 2009 visit. Cupoli will work with both Johnson and the MBA Committee to finalize all AoL learning goals and objectives by the December 28th deadline. This work will involve core faculty, and the MBA program will look to members of the MBA Committee to assist in the review and acquisition of key content/deliverables from faculty in order to meet the College's deadline for this project. Houston confirmed that the committee would provide this support over the next several weeks, and beyond as needed.

V. Grade Distribution and MBA Student Accountability – update

Sevilla provided a brief summary of the feedback received to date regarding the implementation of the new grading policy and student accountability guidelines. Sevilla advised the committee that he now gives a one hour presentation at every MBA program orientation to walk new students through the guidelines and to make a clear connection to the UFMBA brand and the unifying goal of improving the quality and reputation of our program. Overall, the response from new students has been very positive. They understand the rationale and like the fact that the program is increasing its focus on quality.

Sevilla also commented that students have expressed concerns about some courses where instructors “change the grading policy” at some point during the semester in order to comply with the new grade distribution rules. Students have also expressed concern over final exams that are designed to drop mean grades at the end of the course, again in an effort to meet the grade distribution guidelines. Students expect grading standards to be clarified at the outset of the course.

Berg provided feedback from his Mod 1 core course, where he was successfully able to apply the new guidelines to the 1st year MBA students. He is seeking to work with the UF faculty to increase grading standards across the University, citing a recent report where other UF College’s were suffering from far more severe cases of grade inflation.

Shugan recommended that faculty be given some mechanism to recognize the top students in each course. Houston surmised that instructors would soon be able to better distinguish top students with the adoption of minus grades in the near future. The committee agreed that minus grades would allow for better distinction for top students.

Sevilla committed to keeping the committee informed of student perception and possible issues with the grade distribution over the next year.

VI. MBA Admissions – standards issue

Sevilla asked for feedback from the MBA committee on whether or not the completion of an MBA at another institution should prevent a candidate from being admitted to the UFMBA program. Sevilla approximated that the MBA program receives 8-10 inquiries per year from individuals who have already earned an MBA from another institution. In some cases, the individual has a non-US MBA and is seeking an MBA from an accredited b-school. In other cases, the individual has an MBA from a low quality MBA provider and is seeking a higher quality MBA degree/experience. Shugan provided a summary of how other prominent b-schools address this issue. Of the 15 top schools, four considered these applications, four considered only in the case of a non-US MBA degree, and seven would not consider these applications.

After a brief discussion, the MBA committee voted to permit the MBA program to consider candidates with prior MBA degrees for admission, using their discretion to ensure that candidates in this situation were fully capable of high performance and would reflect favorably on the UFMBA program.

VII. MBA Program Update

Sevilla passed out a summary of MBA program activity and recent advancements and innovations.

Meeting Adjourned (minutes – Alex Sevilla)