

Minutes
MBA Committee
Warrington College of Business Administration
Tuesday, September 15, 2009
9:00 AM
Dean's Conference Room

Members attending: Joel Houston (chair), Robert Thomas, Steve Shugan, Sandy Berg, Victoria Dickinson, Selwyn Piramuthu

Also attending: Selcuk Erenguc, Alex Sevilla, & Christine Wilson

Agenda items:

I. Approval of February 29, 2009 Meeting Minutes: Approved

II. Curriculum Items

- a. MAN 6905 (Independent Study - Dr. Maurer)- proposal to allow Syed Asghar (JD/MBA) to complete a 4-credit independent study with Dr. Maurer approved through email.
- b. Waiver of QMB 5304- Jeff Cherry
 - i. Jeff submitted a petition to waive out of Dr. Thompson's Statistics course. It was approved by email due his sufficient background.
 - ii. Consideration for a more formal waiver policy for MBA core courses discussed. Suggested that it should remain at the discretion of faculty members, and policy should be widely explained to students in advance. Shugan recommended those students waiving out should enroll in more advanced classes instead, and mostly everyone agreed. Sevilla pointed out that this will not always be the case, in instances such as accounting where there are limited advanced courses, and Dickinson noted that advanced Finance courses may benefit ACG students. Dickinson wondered if a more formal policy was in place if more students would take advantage of opting out of core courses more frequently. Sevilla explained that this most likely would not be a trend, and the MBA Program would certainly not promote it. Selcuk pointed out that giving MBA students the chance to take advanced courses in other fields could position them for new career paths. Thomas agreed that by asking the student which courses or electives they would prefer instead, we would have a better idea on their career objectives. The committee agreed that adopting a formal policy would be beneficial, but proposals should ultimately be left up to the instructor's discretion. Time lapse between enrolling in the two comparable courses should also be considered, since information in various fields is developed over time. Houston suggested that the petition include background of the student, reasons for waiving, and an alternative course. Sevilla insists that three items be included with the petition: their academic backgrounds, professional certifications, and time lapsed since activity. Committee agreed that these cases should be reported, but will not need everyone's approval. In areas of uncertainty, decisions should be left to instructor or MBA Committee chair.
- c. MBA concentrations & certificates
 - i. Sevilla explained that the program currently offers 15 concentrations, yet not all are used heavily by students. This is disadvantageous to us for the following reasons: we can not be exceptional at everything, it translates to an increased workload for the CRC, and we are unable to promise a great MBA program and individual concentrations concurrently. Sevilla explained that the creation of the concentrations precludes his Directorship of the

program, and he is unsure whether or not the development involved various departments. Houston feels the discussion should begin at which concentrations students are not interested in. Berg suggested using smaller “tracks” that encompass those concentrations most in demand. Thomas proposed since Alexis knowledgeable in the information and ideas, he should draft a proposal and present to the committee for consideration. Sevilla agreed this was the most effective method, and will make initial recommendations for reorganization.

III. Edge

Sevilla provided committee with updates of the EDGE Program; course has been launched, Kara participates in weekly session and plans to gather feedback from students once finished, and Dr. Maurer is still involved with ethics portion. Sevilla also explained that all 2-year MBA students are required to take EDGE course, while the LDI (Leadership Development Institute) continues to be interested in moving and evolving over time to fit program needs. He then explained that LDI was formally Executive Education. Shugan recommended also getting feedback from recruiters, and Sevilla agreed it would be beneficial.

IV. Global Immersion Experience

Sevilla provided updates on upcoming trips; explained Hamilton and Ai are leading the China trip, and Crum the Russia trip. Said there was a high demand from the Working Professional MBA students, and there are great company visits lined up. Thomas wondered if there was a cap on amount of trips per student allowed. Sevilla answered that there has not been a need to limit students so far, but if high demand continues in the future, it may be a possibility. Berg suggested providing an international experience here in town if MBA students expressed enough interest; faculty members could arrange visits and emails, and Sevilla agreed this may benefit both students and faculty.

V. Grade Distribution and MBA Student Accountability/Behavior- one year review

Sevilla explained that in courses where policy was implemented, overall GPA has decreased, and individual course averages have decreased slightly. Selcuk asked if new grade policy was in place during Summer A, and Sevilla answered that they were not in effect during the summer 2009 term. Students have also provided positive feedback regarding grade policy, and are favorable to it. Sevilla said the two things noticed are more challenging final exams and a shifted grading scale towards end of the term. Shugan and Berg agreed that instructors should share grading scale and course expectations with students at beginning of the course, and it should not shift erratically. Houston explained that Dr. Maurer was interested in hearing feedback, but has not received any. Committee agreed feedback of some sort for instructors was necessary, and Dickinson suggested sharing grade sheet, Sevilla said he would rather provide an explanation. Thomas advised this practice should be done every Fall semester. Committee members also reinforced the idea that grading policy should be adhered to for all students, not just MBA's. Berg and Thomas said they would like to see the grade distribution data, and it would be a good way to maintain transparency. Thomas inquired whether or not this would cover elective courses, and Sevilla explained this was a discussion for Selcuk and other instructors to have. Selcuk noted that it should be in place across all Master's programs, and Sevilla agreed that unity across the group was important. Dickinson and Houston agreed that negative feelings towards new grading policy would dissipate once out of transitional period.

VI. MBA Program Update

Sevilla provided the committee with a brief update on the program: Work experience for incoming students has increased, with an average GMAT score of 685, and a GPA of 3.5. Job placement at graduation has decreased, as well as starting salary. Houston noted that the class statistics are looking up, and Selcuk pointed out our overall GMAT average has been within the top 20 programs the past few years.

Meeting Adjourned (minutes – Christine Wilson)