Assessment Report

For

Master of Science in Business Administration in Finance
(Instructional Degree Program)

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014
(Assessment Period Covered)

Master’s
(Degree Level)

June 30, 2014
(Date Submitted)

Expected Outcome 1: Communication

1. MSBA students will demonstrate the communication skills necessary to perform effectively in their program area of concentration.

First Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

1a. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:
During the final year of enrollment, MSBA students will provide a written copy of a course project or paper completed in one of their MSBA courses for use as a sample of the student’s written communication skill. The sample will be rated on a 5-point scale measuring written communication skill by two FINC faculty members where 5 = excellent and 1 = unacceptable. MSBA students sampled will achieve an average rating of 4.0 or higher using the rating scale described above.

1a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected: Twelve MSBA students completed a class project which was evaluated by faculty. The average score on the writing is 4.38. All of the students had well organized, well written overall papers. Two of the twelve two scored below 4 due to not using correct references in the paper.

1a. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program: There has been significant improvement in the writing skills of our students, even the international students. Part of this may be due to required Skype interviews for all students; our current MSBA students’ English skills have improved due to careful screening. To ensure the good performance continues and to emphasize the importance of correct referencing, we will continue to require a series of written papers and refer students to the University Writing Center for help with written projects.

Second Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

1b. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success: During the final year of enrollment, MSBA students will orally present a course project or paper completed in one of their MSBA courses for use as a sample of the student’s oral communication skill. The sample will be rated on a 5-point scale measuring oral communication skill by two FINC faculty members where 5 = excellent and 1 = unacceptable. MSBA students sampled will achieve an average rating of 4.0 or higher using the rating scale described above.

1b. Summary of Assessment Data Collected: Twelve MSBA students were evaluated based on Oral Presentation skills in a final project in FINC 7650. The average score out of 5 is 4.17. Ten students scored 4 or above; two students scored 3.75 with one evaluator assigning a 4.0 and the other assigning a 3.5.
1b. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program: Since a 4.0 indicates agreement that the student demonstrates oral ability to successfully perform in business or academia, the two scores below 4.0 are a concern. However, the scores are showing considerable improvement even with eight out of twelve students being non-native English speakers. As documented in the 2011-2012 report, we have implemented a series of steps to improve oral communication. We interview all students before acceptance. In the capstone FINC 7650 course, we will continue to require a series of presentations with the students self-assessing their presentations (watching a video of their presentation), and getting feedback from the instructor.

Third Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

1c. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success: During the final semester of enrollment, MSBA students will be given a survey and asked to assess the students’ opinions as to whether the MSBA program prepared them to effectively communicate using writing and oral presentations. The question is on a 5-point scale where the student scores 5 = Strongly Agree and 1 = Strongly Disagree. MSBA students sampled will assign an average rating of 4.0 or higher using the rating scale described above.

1c. Summary of Assessment Data Collected: A total of eighteen MSBA students filled out the survey in Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 assessing whether the program helped students communicate in writing and in oral presentations. The average score on Oral communication is 4.22 out of 5 and on written communication is 4.06 out of 5.0.

1c. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program: The students agree that the program has helped to develop oral and written communication ability. We will continue to require FINC 7650/7656 for MSBA Finance students; this course will continue to require a series of presentations and papers. In addition, five MSBA Finance elective courses (FINC 6670/6676 FINC 6740 FINC 7640 FINC 6510 FINC 7625) require papers and one Finance elective (FINC 6670/6676) requires a presentation.
Expected Outcome 2:

2. MSBA students will demonstrate the information technology skills (i.e., internet usage, word processing, and business presentation software), necessary to perform effectively in their program area of concentration.

First Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

2a. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success: During the final year of enrollment, MSBA students will provide a written copy of a course project or paper completed in one of their MSBA courses for use as a sample demonstrating the student’s use of Excel or other financial modelling software. The sample will be rated using a 5-point scale measuring word processing and internet usage skills by two FINC faculty members where 5 = excellent and 1 = unacceptable. MSBA students sampled will achieve an average rating of 4.0 or higher using the rating scale described above.

2a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected: We have not collected data specifically on use of Excel. Students are expected to know how to use Excel in FINC 7650/7656 but we have not assessed the students on this knowledge.

2a. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program: Given the students’ comments and the discussion in the faculty meeting, the MSBA faculty committee will decide how to incorporate Excel skills and financial modelling into the program.

Second Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

2b. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success: During the final year of enrollment, MSBA students will orally present a course project or paper completed in one of their MSBA courses for use as a sample of the student’s word processing and business presentation software skills. The sample will be rated on a 5-point scale measuring the information technology skills described above by two FINC faculty members where 5 = excellent and 1 = unacceptable. MSBA students sampled will achieve an average rating of 4.0 or higher using the rating scale described above.

2b. Summary of Assessment Data Collected: Twelve students prepared a final oral presentation in FINC 7650. The average score was 4.25; students were able to prepare professional powerpoint presentations. One student scored below a 4.0 (a 3.75) on Powerpoint skills.

2b. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program: We will continue to require the students to prepare a series of presentations in FINC 7650/7656. The students also will be encouraged to attend the OPCD workshops on effective use of Powerpoint.
Expected Outcome 3:

MSBA students will demonstrate analytical reasoning skill necessary to perform effectively in business positions in their chosen career field.

First Means of Assessment for Learning Objective 3 Identified Above:

3a. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:
During the final year of enrollment, MSBA students will provide a written copy of a course project or paper completed in one of their MSBA courses for use as a sample demonstrating the student’s analytical reasoning skill. The sample will be rated on a 5-point scale measuring analytical reasoning skill by two FINC faculty members where 5 = excellent and 1 = unacceptable. MSBA students sampled will achieve an average rating of 4.0 or higher using the rating scale described above.

3a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected: We used the assignment in FINC 7650 (a required course) to assess analytical skills. Of the twelve students in the class, all scored 4 or above on analytical skills with an average score of 4.31.

3a. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program: Our students appear to demonstrate analytical skills in a comprehensive project in FINC 7650.

Second Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

3b. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success: During the final semester of enrollment, MSBA students will be given a survey and asked to assess the students’ opinions as to whether the MSBA program developed adequate quantitative skills. The question is on a 5-point scale where the student scores 5 = Strongly Agree and 1 = Strongly Disagree. MSBA students sampled will assign an average rating of 4.0 or higher using the rating scale described above.

3b. Summary of Assessment Data Collected: A total of eighteen MSBA students filled out the survey in Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 assessing whether the program prepared students with the analytical skills needed. The average score was 4.33 out of 5. One student disagreed (a score of 2) and two said that they neither agreed or disagreed with this statement. There were also several comments by students that there should be more analytical courses and courses in financial mathematics and modelling.

3b. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program: The faculty referred the survey results back to the MSBA committee. The committee will consider whether to add additional requirements or recommend external elective courses to those students wanting further quantitative skills.
Expected Outcome 4:
MSBA students will demonstrate knowledge of the functional areas of finance.

First Means of Assessment for Learning Objective 4 Identified Above:

4a. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:
At least 75 percent of MSBA students will achieve a rating of 4.0 or higher on a 5-point scale measuring knowledge of three functional areas of finance (i.e., corporate, investments, and global finance), where 5 = excellent and 1 = unacceptable. During the final year of enrollment, each MSBA-Finance student will submit one or more written projects/papers demonstrating their functional knowledge in each of the three functional areas of finance described above. Two FINC faculty members will evaluate the student’s work sample rating the student’s knowledge in each of the three functional areas of finance using the rating scale described above.

4a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected: Twelve students completed a course project in the required FINC 7650 class. Two faculty rated the students on knowledge of Corporate Finance with the average score of 4.29 demonstrating knowledge of Corporate Finance. Only one student scored lower than 4.0 with a score of 3.75.

4a. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program: Our students appear to have good understanding of the field of Corporate Finance.

Second Means of Assessment for Learning Objective 4 Identified Above:

4b. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:
MSBA students will be given a final written exam comprised of questions written by faculty who teach graduate courses from each of the three functional areas of finance (i.e., corporate, investments, and global finance). MSBA-Finance students will achieve an average rating of 7.0 or higher on a 10-point scale measuring knowledge of the three functional areas of finance using the rating scale described above.

4b. Summary of Assessment Data Collected: Nine students took the comprehensive exams in the 2013-2014 academic year. Seven scored a 7 or above in Corporate Finance, seven scored 7 or above on global finance, and all nine scored a 7 or above in Investments. The average Corporate score was 7.66, Investments score was 8.88 and Global score was 7.6.

4b. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program: In general our students did well in demonstrating knowledge of all three areas. There was one student who failed the exam who scored poorly in both Corporate and Global Finance. This student took an additional course and studied and scored well when repeating the exam.
Third Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

4c. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success: During the final semester of enrollment, MSBA students will be given a survey and asked to assess the students’ opinions as to whether they agree that the MSBA program prepared them well in the functional area of Finance. The question is on a 5-point scale where the student scores 5 = Strongly Agree and 1 = Strongly Disagree. MSBA students sampled will assign an average rating of 4.0 or higher using the rating scale described above.

4c. Summary of Assessment Data Collected: A total of eighteen MSBA students filled out the survey in Fall 2013 and Spring 2014. All students either agreed or strongly agreed that the program gave adequate knowledge in the field of finance with the average score of 4.55.

4c. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program: The students agree that the program provides the education to understand the theories and subject matter in Finance. No adjustment is needed.

Expected Outcome 5:
MSBA students will be prepared to obtain professional or managerial positions in private or public organizations.

First Means of Assessment for Learning Objective 5 Identified Above:

5a. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:
At the time of graduation, 25% of MSBA graduates will have obtained employment in their career field. Measurement of this criterion will be by direct communication with graduates using personal contact or written responses to the annual Graduate Student Survey.

5a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected: We collected eighteen surveys for students who finished in the 2013-2014 year. Of those, nine (50%) had obtained employment in his/her career field, one plans to start his own business, two students are enrolling in further graduate work within a year and one is planning to study for further graduate work while five (28%) students are still looking for employment.

5a. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program: The goal was realized with 50% of the students with employment at graduation. Unfortunately, we have several students still looking for a job at graduation. The economy is improving and the enhanced Office of Professional and Career Development (OPCD) helped our students tremendously in job placement. We are now requiring our students to take classes in professional development and encourage the use the OPCD. With our many international students, it is also difficult for them to search for a job in their home country while in the United States and it is also difficult for them to find employment in the United States so we expect some students will not have a job when they graduate.
Second Means of Assessment for Learning Objective 5 Identified Above:

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<tr>
<th><strong>5b. Means of Program Assessment &amp; Criteria for Success:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>One year after graduation, 75% of MSBA graduates will have obtained employment in their career field.</td>
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<td>Measurement of this criterion will be by a follow up <strong>Graduate Student Survey</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>5b. Summary of Assessment Data:</strong></th>
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<td>We do not have this information.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>5b. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>We will follow up and create a new survey to be sent to our graduates now that the Auburn University emails do not expire.</td>
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