

Dean's Response to MBA Program Review

April 25, 2013

The John B. Goddard School of Business & Economics (GSBE) underwent an in-depth program review as part of its Maintenance of Accreditation review cycle during Fall 2012. GSBE provided a detailed report to AACSB, after which two deans and two accounting chairpersons from AACSB-accredited institutions visited the WSU campus for three days in October 2012. The review team recommended to AACSB that reaccreditation be delayed for a year (this is termed "6-year review), conditional on GSBE meeting four criteria. Two criteria are specific to the School of Accounting & Taxation and are therefore not directly relevant to the MBA program review.

The MBA program is arguably GSBE's highest-profile program in the community. It enjoys a superior reputation, in part due to the excellent strategic planning efforts led by the program administrators and supported by a committed group of faculty.

The AACSB condition require that (1) the four GSBE faculty who are not publishing at an appropriate rate increase their productivity to meet GSBE standards, and (2) all programs in GSBE improve their loop-closing activities based on the Assurance of Learning (AoL) assessment program.

Although the less-productive researchers identified in condition (1) may not teach in the MBA program, the small number of faculty in GSBE implies that department chairs are constrained in trying to staff MBA courses. The MBA program cannot deal with this problem directly, but the departments and the dean's office are working with these faculty members to ensure that their publication records meet expectations by Fall 2013.

With regard to AoL, the MBA program is among GSBE's best in terms of measuring student learning and making appropriate curriculum change based on such metrics. Moreover, the MBA continues to enhance its AoL program. It should be in good shape for the AACSB review.

The program faculty response to the program review identifies faculty sufficiency as a weakness. This observation is accurate, both for the MBA and for GSBE at large. GSBE has taken steps to address this problem by instituting differential undergraduate tuition for upper-division business courses beginning in Fall 2013. The resulting funds will allow GSBE to hire approximately six additional faculty members, moving the college much closer to having a sufficient number of faculty to teach its students.

Looking forward, the improving Utah economy is likely to decrease the number of applicants to MBA programs, including GSBE's. The program administrators and faculty advisory committee should be prepared to respond to any changes in demand.