

**Weber State University**  
**Regents Five Year Program Review Site Visit Report**  
**Business Administration and IST Faculty Response**

**Introduction**

This report constitutes faculty responses to recommendations made by the Review Visit Team Report. In the academic year 2013-14 the Business Administration program undertook a full five-year Regents review process. Due to changes in departmental and program structures during this period, the review did not include the Finance program or courses, as these were previously moved to the School of Accounting and Taxation. However, the review did include IST courses and programs as the proposal of improved course and program integration between Business Administration and IS&T was central to the review.

**Commendations**

The review committee **commends:**

- The department for the achievement of its mission thus far.
- The faculty within the Supply Chain Management program for the strategic design of the curriculum and supporting Center for Supply Chain Excellence.
- The IST faculty for reviewing and streamlining their curriculum offerings. The current strategy to offer a focused IST degree is wise, considering current faculty/staffing levels.
- The department for its work in developing learning outcomes, measuring student performance, and reviewing results. The presence of open dialogue, faculty commitment to developing students' critical thinking, analytic and communication skills, and the push to create a culture shift were identified as particular areas for commendation.
- The utilization of a central academic advising office. Students stated that the advising, either by using a hands-on approach or through CatTracks, is very beneficial in helping them to make timely progress toward degree completion.
- The strong, informal career advising that is present among faculty and is greatly appreciated by students. The Nye Lecture Series is an important element in the career advising process.
- The department for its use of the annual faculty review process.

- The effort made by senior faculty to mentor junior faculty and the orientation of new faculty.
- The department chair for setting a culture of collaboration such that faculty feel they have a voice in strategic decisions.
- The recent increase in professional development and travel funds.
- The resources available in the department in terms of administrative support, facilities and equipment.
- The Supply Chain Management faculty for envisioning a plan that will 1) form an SCM advisory board whose members will be integrated into the classroom, and 2) will create a Center for Supply Chain Excellence. These two initiatives were highlighted as prime examples of how to develop relationships with external communities.
- The department for its reduction in overload teaching and the development of useful assessment processes.

### **Recommendations with Faculty Responses**

Business Administration and IST faculty agree with the visit team's recommendations and make the following responses.

**Review committee recommendation:** That the department ensures that the mission statement is aligned with the university's mission and the Goddard School's mission.

**Faculty response:** A group of faculty met in April (2014) and discussed the need to update the department's mission statement. Given the importance and long-term nature of devising a new mission statement, we have together developed a plan for democratically developing a new mission statement. Whereas the Goddard School is currently revising its mission statement (to be completed sometime this Fall or early next Spring (2015), this is an especially good time for us to think carefully about our mission statement. In addition, whereas nearly half of our department is new (hired within the last 2 years), we have all the more reason to reconsider our mission statement and to create one that takes our unique strengths and opportunities into account. Below, in the form of "3-step process" is what we plan:

- I. While simultaneously assisting with the development of the School-level mission statement, we will carefully consider our unique strengths and opportunities as a department faculty—what do we do well, what are our research interests, and so on (the goal will be to meet as a department and/or to devise an online survey that will allow all department members to think

- carefully about their goals and interests, and have a voice in incorporating them into the new mission statement).
- II. With the School-level and University-level mission statements in mind, we will consider how we can differentiate our department in our regional and national market in a way that leverages our united strengths as a faculty.
  - III. Devise the new mission statement for our department, recognizing that several drafts with continuous faculty input will be required.

**Review committee recommendation:** The SCM faculty utilize their Advisory Board to gather feedback on the newly designed curriculum.

**Faculty Response:** The supply chain faculty is in the midst of establishing an advisory board consisting of senior managers from regional and national companies. The first advisory board meeting is scheduled for May 31, 2014. One role for the advisory board is to provide feedback regarding curriculum design—both at the program level as well as for individual class content. The department also expects the advisory board will be involved in enabling experiential learning opportunities.

**Review committee recommendation:** Students need greater depth in spreadsheet applications. Consider establishing an Excel Certification Program.

**Faculty Response:** The Strategic Planning Committee, dean, and Goddard School department chairs will meet at the completion of the spring semester to consider various approaches to enhancing student spreadsheet application skills. In particular, MyEducator course content platform will be evaluated. This is a versatile platform that supports online, hybrid, and face-to-face Excel and Access instruction. The course incorporating this platform could count for up to 3 credit hours and replace the current one credit hour Information Systems & Technology (IST) 2010 course offering. In addition, faculty are deliberating a proposal that would allow the Microsoft Excel Certification as a substitute for the Excel course. Finally, the Supply Chain Management (SCM) program is exploring the option of a pathway for students to pursue Six Sigma Certification.

**Review committee recommendation:** Students need expanded knowledge of data analytics. Add data analytics course to bridge other areas.

**Faculty Response:** The SCM 3500 course has already been redesigned and renamed and will focus on spreadsheet modeling for decision making. The department also plans on integrating data analytics into the IST and SCM curricula. An experimental class is also in development that will concentrate on data analytics, SAP, WMS, TMS, and provide students with the opportunity to achieve SAP certification.

**Review committee recommendation:** Ensure that faculty is hired strategically for data analytics.

**Faculty Response:** The department is currently placing an emphasis on filling the open tenure-track IST position with a new faculty member who has expertise in data analytics (rather than the computer science expertise of the retiring incumbent).

**Review committee recommendation:** Marketing students need expanded social media.

**Faculty Response:** Marketing students are currently exposed to social media in multiple course offerings. In the Principles of Marketing (MKTG 3010) and Promotion Management (MKTG 3450) courses, social media is incorporated as an integral part of an Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy. Social media's influence on consumer perception and behavior is addressed in the Consumer Behavior (MKTG 3100) course. Finally, social media topics comprise approximately 60% of course content in the Internet Marketing (MKTG 4200) course; social media's role in effective promotional strategy and how to adequately measure social media's impact will thus be explored in-depth in this course.

**Review committee recommendation:** Discussion should continue among faculty to the point of achieving meaningful improvement in student learning outcomes. It further recommends that learning outcomes be updated/modified to reflect any needed changes related to the addition of IST faculty to the department and the move of the Finance faculty to the School of Accounting & Taxation.

**Faculty response:** Work on this recommendation was already underway. The School's Curriculum Committee and Assurance of Learning Committee (AoL) came together earlier in the 2013-14 academic year for a series of meetings to explore and review current learning outcomes. A revised set of AoL outcomes has been agreed upon by the committees and will be put to faculty for consultation before finalization. In line with these changes, the AoL committee is also designing more appropriate and effective learning outcome assessment procedures. In addition, all documentation (including policy documents, web pages and catalog items) will be updated to reflect recent changes.

**Review committee recommendation:** Given that some assessment data gathering takes place outside the department, the committee recommends that coordination occur among BA faculty and those faculty who teach NTM 3250 to ensure the appropriateness of rubrics and data gathering processes.

**Faculty response:** Starting with the fall 2013 semester, a dialogue was begun between Business Administration and NTM faculty to review and tailor key learning and assessments within this course. The current high demand for this required course (NTM 3250), together with the retirement of the key faculty member who used to teach Business Communications course, has resulted in the current need to rely on outside delivery for this course. Going forward, a working group of

department faculty will work to explore a range of options to meet the communications needs of our students. The current options under consideration include the following:

- I. Possibly revive the MGMT 3200 Business Communications class, but in a different format to balance high demand with constrained resources (i.e. consider using large lecture supported by small recitation groups).
- II. Explore existing courses in other academic units on campus (e.g., English department, Humanities classes in communication, text production and analyses, etc.) that may be more suited to the needed instruction of business students.

**Review committee recommendation:** Provide student advising earlier in degree programs. The review committee did notice that disconnects can occur between student-specific advising plans and the courses that are actually offered and when they are offered. With formal advising available, the review committee recommends that plans be enacted to encourage all students to take advantage of advising services and to engage in advising earlier in their degree program.

**Faculty Response:** The department agrees with the recommendation to encourage students to engage in advising earlier in their degree program, and the department chair will begin working more closely with the advising office to better integrate curriculum mapping and communication to students earlier in their course of study. The department also acknowledges that this will become critical as the anticipated curriculum revisions in SCM and IST are implemented.

**Review committee recommendation:** The review committee recommends that faculty within the department show greater support for Career Center activities such as Business & Industry Night. It is important for the dean and chair to make faculty support expectations explicit.

**Business Administration Faculty Response:** We agree that department faculty should show greater support for Career Center activities, such as the Business & Industry Night (BIN). The BIN provides an opportunity to maintain high employment placement rates for our students. The date of BIN is published every year prior to the start of fall semester. This advanced planning allows faculty to adjust their class schedules so as to encourage students to attend this event. In addition, the dean will be enlisted to notify faculty about the Career Center BIN at the initial annual faculty meeting in August of every year. Faculty will be reminded and encouraged to utilize class time to promote Career Center events.

**Review committee recommendation:** In preparation for career placement, the review committee recommends that the Senior Seminar also be made available to juniors and at times other than summer and early fall semester.

**Business Administration Faculty Response:** We agree that the Senior Seminar would serve students better if they are able to participate in it earlier in their academic progress. However, this is not something the department controls but would have to be explored in concert with the Career Center. Every possible effort will be made to make the seminar available to juniors so long as all the relevant pre-requisites are fulfilled.

**Review committee recommendation:** The committee strongly encourages IST to build an Advisory Board, which could advise the faculty regarding technology offerings in the IST curriculum.

**Faculty Response:** The IST faculty fully agrees with this recommendation. As information technology and its industry applications constantly advance, it is important that the IST program reflects those changes in its curriculum design so as to best prepare students to meet the industry needs. The IST faculty recognizes the benefits and importance of having a program advisory board and plans to reorganize its IST Advisory Board during summer 2014. Because an IST Advisory Board existed previously, former member organizations will be considered and individual members of the previous board will be invited. In addition, potential new representative organizations will be considered and invitations will be extended to their relevant leaders. The IST faculty expects to hold its first board meeting early during the fall 2014 semester.