

**Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements Report
Metropolitan School of Professional Studies - Undergraduate Programs
AY 2010-2011**

Undergraduate Business Management Certificate Program

Key Assessment Findings

The Metropolitan School of Professional Studies (MSPS) assesses learning outcomes for the Business Management Certificate Program via a rubric for the Strategic Audit/Applications Project as prepared for synthesis course MBU 324 *Strategic Management Practices*.

In the fall 2010 semester, 16 students completed MBU 324 *Strategic Management Practices* and the embedded Strategic Audit/Applications Project in two sections. As indicated in Table 1, most students met or exceeded expectations with regard to all project traits. The traits in which most or all students exceeded expectations include a) development/presentation of organizational profile/overview (100%), b) written presentation (69%), c) critical thinking and reasoned analysis (69%), d) synthesis and integration of knowledge (63%), e) structure and organization (63%), f) oral presentation (57%), and g) assessment/analysis of organizational effectiveness (56%). Although these results are promising, they are tempered by the fact that all but two of the traits included at least one student falling below expectations. As a result, there is room for improvement on almost all of the traits.

Table 1: MBU 324 Strategic Audit/Applications Project Rubric Data (AY 2010-2011)

Trait	Level						Mean	SD
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1. Development/Presentation of Organizational Profile/Overview	9	100%	0	0%	0	0%	3.00	0.00
2. Assessment/Analysis of Organizational Effectiveness	5	56%	4	44%	0	0%	2.56	0.53
3. Presentation of Implications & Strategic Recs for Practice	3	33%	4	44%	2	22%	2.11	0.78
4. Synthesis & Integration of Knowledge	10	63%	4	25%	2	13%	2.50	0.73
5. Structure & Organization	10	63%	5	31%	1	6%	2.56	0.63
6. Grammar, Mechanics, & Documentation	7	44%	7	44%	2	13%	2.31	0.70
7. Written Presentation	11	69%	4	25%	1	6%	2.63	0.62
8. Critical Thinking & Reasoned Analysis	11	69%	4	25%	1	6%	2.63	0.62
9. Support & Use of Evidence	6	38%	8	50%	2	13%	2.25	0.68
10. Oral Presentation ¹	8	57%	5	36%	1	7%	2.50	0.65

Total Projects Completed (i.e., N): 16 (Traits 1 through 3 were not on the rubric for section 2)

¹ Oral Presentation N=14 given that two students in section 1 did not present.

Curricular Improvements

The assessment findings that emerged from an analysis of the MBU 324 *Strategic Management Practices* rubric are promising in that most students met or exceeded expectations. However, because there were students who fell below the expectations for all but two of the traits, there is room for overall improvement in the Business Management Certificate cohort. In particular, students have the most room for improvement in the areas of a) presentation of implications and strategic recommendations for practice, b) support and use of evidence, and c) grammar, mechanics and documentation. Therefore, curricular improvements should be made that enable students to understand better the industry's best practices and produce stronger writing. This can be addressed through intentional conversations between MSPS Associate/Assistant Deans and the MBU 324 faculty to determine the specific nature of student challenges with understanding the industry and writing. This will provide insight into potential student support areas for appropriate interventions. These interventions can include direct faculty assistance, tutoring services through the CUA Center for Academic Success, and writing support from the CUA Writing Center. Student support programming is also offered through the MSPS Student Development Series that focuses specifically on academic/scholarly development. These programs can be tailored to meet the specific student needs as identified by the faculty.

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## **Undergraduate Human Resource Management Certificate Program**

### **Key Assessment Findings**

MSPS assesses learning outcomes for the Human Resource Management Certificate program via a rubric for the Strategic Audit/Applications Project as prepared for synthesis course MBU 324 *Strategic Management Practices*. Given that MBU 324 is the synthesis course for both the Human Resource Management Certificate program and the Business Management Certificate program, please see Table 1 (above) for a summary of key assessment findings.

### **Curricular Improvements**

Given that the assessment findings discussed with regard to the Business Management Certificate program are applicable to the Human Resources Certificate program, the curricular improvements are also transferrable. Please refer to the "Curricular Improvements" section developed for the Business Management Certificate program (p. 2) for proposed enhancements.

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Undergraduate Human Services Administration Certificate Program

MSPS assesses learning outcomes for the undergraduate Human Services Administration Certificate program through a rubric for the Scenario/Applications Project as prepared for synthesis course MSO 340 *Human Services Administration*.

In the fall 2010 semester, 13 students completed MSO 340 *Human Services Administration* and the embedded Scenario/Applications Project. As indicated in Table 2, most of the students enrolled in MSO 340 met or exceeded expectations for all traits. The highest mean score (2.46) was for grammar, mechanics, and documentation, which was one of the lowest scores for the 2009-2010 Academic Year (mean 1.82). The lowest mean score (2.23) was for support and use of evidence. Although most students did perform at or above the expectations set for them in the project, there is still evidence for a need to improve in all traits.

Key Assessment Findings

Table 2: MSO 340 Scenario/Applications Project Rubric Data (AY 2010-2011)

Trait	Level						Mean	SD
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1. Development/Presentation of Organizational Profile/Overview	6	46%	6	46%	1	8%	2.38	0.65
2. Assessment/Analysis of Organizational Effectiveness	6	46%	6	46%	1	8%	2.38	0.65
3. Presentation of Implications & Strategic Recs for Practice	5	38%	7	54%	1	8%	2.31	0.63
4. Synthesis & Integration of Knowledge	6	46%	5	38%	2	15%	2.31	0.75
5. Structure & Organization	6	46%	6	46%	1	8%	2.38	0.65
6. Grammar, Mechanics, & Documentation	8	62%	3	23%	2	15%	2.46	0.78
7. Written Presentation	7	54%	4	31%	2	15%	2.38	0.77
8. Critical Thinking & Reasoned Analysis	5	38%	8	62%	0	0%	2.38	0.51
9. Support & Use of Evidence	5	38%	6	46%	2	15%	2.23	0.73
10. Project Oral Presentation Reasoned Analysis	7	54%	5	38%	1	8%	2.46	0.66

Total Projects Completed (i.e., N): 13

Curricular Improvements

The assessment findings that emerged from an analysis of the MSO 340 Scenario/Applications Project data show that improvement was made from the previous year to the current year. In particular, one of the traits that received a top mean score in this assessment – grammar, mechanics, and documentation – yielded one of the lowest scores in the academic assessment of the previous year. Although this improvement over a span of two academic years is promising, it cannot be considered conclusive evidence that significant improvements have been made for this area. Instead, curricular improvements should still include grammar, mechanics, and documentation, in conjunction with a concentration on other traits related to writing. The traits that showed the most room for improvement were a) support and use of evidence, b) presentation of implications and strategic recommendations for practice, and c) synthesis and integration of knowledge.

MSPS will continue to offer a faculty writing tutor who will be available to all students. Additionally, the MSPS Assistant/Associate deans will continue discussing academic concerns with the faculty to ensure proper resources are being utilized for students in their courses (e.g., CUA Center for Academic Success, CUA Writing Center, etc.). Finally, MSPS will continue to offer student support programming through the Student Development Series that is tailored specifically to students' academic needs as identified by the faculty.

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## **Undergraduate Information Technology Certificate Program**

### **Key Assessment Findings**

MSPS assesses learning outcomes for the undergraduate Information Technology Certificate program by means of a rubric for the Personal Technology Assessments as prepared for synthesis course MIS 457 *Design and Implementation: Emerging Environments*.

In the fall 2010 semester, 4 students completed MIS 457 *Design and Implementation: Emerging Environments* and the embedded Personal Technology Assessments. As indicated in Table 3, students performed very well overall. On all traits but structure and organization, all students either met or exceeded expectations. The traits with the lowest mean scores (2.0) were a) structure and organization, b) grammar, mechanics, and documentation, and c) written presentation. These results indicate that the students are grasping the content of the course and their critical thinking skills are good, but their writing could stand to improve. Although the number of students who took the course (4) was relatively small, the fact that the results follow a pattern similar to the other courses indicates that these results also highlight the need for an increased effort on improving student writing.

**Table 3: MIS 457 Personal Technology Assessments Rubric Data (AY 2010-2011)**

| Trait                                                                        | Level                         |     |                             |      |                          |     | Mean | SD   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|------|--------------------------|-----|------|------|
|                                                                              | Exceeding Expectations (3pts) |     | Meeting Expectations (2pts) |      | Below Expectations (1pt) |     |      |      |
|                                                                              | N                             | %   | N                           | %    | N                        | %   |      |      |
| 1. Appraisal of Emerging Technologies Role/Contribution to Industry/Company  | 3                             | 75% | 1                           | 25%  | 0                        | 0%  | 2.75 | 0.50 |
| 2. Evaluation of Rationale for Industry/Company's Use of Emerging Technology | 3                             | 75% | 1                           | 25%  | 0                        | 0%  | 2.75 | 0.50 |
| 3. Analysis of Industry/Company Tech Implementation Strategy                 | 3                             | 75% | 1                           | 25%  | 0                        | 0%  | 2.75 | 0.50 |
| 4. Synthesis & Integration of Knowledge                                      | 1                             | 25% | 3                           | 75%  | 0                        | 0%  | 2.25 | 0.50 |
| 5. Structure & Organization                                                  | 1                             | 25% | 2                           | 50%  | 1                        | 25% | 2.00 | 0.82 |
| 6. Grammar, Mechanics, & Documentation                                       | 0                             | 0%  | 4                           | 100% | 0                        | 0%  | 2.00 | 0.00 |
| 7. Written Presentation                                                      | 0                             | 0%  | 4                           | 100% | 0                        | 0%  | 2.00 | 0.00 |

Total Assessments Completed (i.e., N): 4

### **Curricular Improvements**

The assessment findings for MIS 457 *Design and Implementation: Emerging Environments* are similar to those of MBU 324 *Strategic Management Practices* and MSO 340 *Human Services Administration*. All assessments point to a need for improvement in traits associated with writing. Therefore, the curricular improvements recommended for the students in the Information Technology Certificate program parallel those proposed for the students in the other certificate programs (Business Management, Human Resource Management, and Human Services Administration). MSPS will continue to offer a faculty writing tutor who will be available to all students. Additionally, the MSPS Assistant/Associate deans will continue discussing academic concerns with the faculty to ensure proper resources are being utilized for students in their courses (e.g., CUA Center for Academic Success and CUA Writing Center). Finally, MSPS will continue to offer student support programming through the Student Development Series that is tailored specifically to students' academic needs as identified by the faculty.

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Associate's Degree Programs

The Associate of Science (A.S.) degree offers three tracks: Special Education Studies, International Health Studies, and Human Services. Assessment findings will be discussed by program in the following sections.

**Key Assessment Findings:
A.S. in Special Education Studies and A.S. in International Health Studies**

MSPS assesses learning outcomes for the A.S. degree programs in Special Education Studies and International Health Studies through a) a rubric for the cumulative electronic professional portfolios prepared by students, and b) a rubric for the culminating internship experience (as guided by MID 492 Internship). AY 2010-2011 findings from each rubric are discussed below.

Electronic Professional Portfolios

In AY 2010-2011, 12 students prepared and presented electronic professional portfolios as part of their A.S. (Special Education Studies or International Health Studies) programs. As indicated in Table 4, student performance was strongest in the professional presentation of the portfolios (mean of 2.50). Although all traits have room for improvement, the particularly weak areas of performance were in a) technology aspects and b) application of professional standards (means of 2.00 and 2.17, respectively). These results stand in stark contrast to those of the previous year in that student performance was particularly high in the technology aspects trait.

Table 4: Electronic Professional Portfolios Rubric Data (AY 2010-2011)

Trait	Level						Mean	SD
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1. Professional Presentation	7	58%	4	33%	1	8%	2.50	0.67
2. Use of Artifacts	5	42%	4	33%	3	25%	2.17	0.83
3. Application of Professional Standards	3	25%	7	58%	2	17%	2.08	0.67
4. Organizing & Writing Mechanics	4	33%	7	58%	1	8%	2.25	0.62
5. Technology Aspects	3	25%	6	50%	3	25%	2.00	0.74

Total Portfolios Completed (i.e., N): 12

Internship

In the fall 2010 semester, 11 students completed the internship requirement as part of the A.S. in Special Education Studies or A.S. in International Health Studies. As indicated in Table 5, there was a broad range of results across all traits. However, students did meet or exceed expectations on all traits. Their performance was strongest in a) demonstrating self-awareness in pursuing learning opportunities to enhance professional development and delivery of care and b) demonstrating care to facilitate spiritual, mental and physical health (means of 2.73 and 2.64, respectively). Student performance was weakest in a) utilizing the teaching/learning process in providing education, b) demonstrating awareness and sensitivity to diversity and the values and morals of clients in ethical decision making, and c) demonstrating leadership skills (all with means of 2.0). These results indicate that overall, the students are performing at or above where expected for their internships, but could use additional strengthening in three key areas.

Table 5: MID 492 Internship Rubric Data (AY 2010-2011)

Trait	Level						Mean	SD
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1. Demonstrates caring to facilitate spiritual, mental and physical health	7	64%	4	36%	0	0%	2.64	0.50
2. Demonstrates self -awareness in pursuing learning opportunities to enhance professional development & delivery of care	9	82%	1	9%	1	9%	2.73	0.65
3. Demonstrates effective communication	3	27%	7	64%	1	9%	2.18	0.60
4. Utilizes professional collaboration in management and delivery of care	3	27%	7	64%	1	9%	2.18	0.60
5. Exhibits/demonstrates integrity, honesty and accountability in practice	4	36%	7	64%	0	0%	2.36	0.50
6. Utilizes the teaching/learning process in providing education	1	10%	8	80%	1	10%	2.00	0.47
7. Acts as an advocate for the client	3	27%	8	73%	0	0%	2.27	0.47
8. Demonstrates awareness and sensitivity to diversity and the values and morals of clients in ethical decision making	0	0%	11	100%	0	0%	2.00	0.00
9. Demonstrates leadership skills in performance	1	20%	3	60%	1	20%	2.00	0.71
10. Demonstrates effective assessment and evaluation skills in gathering data on clients, families and communities	1	33%	2	67%	0	0%	2.33	0.58
11. Performs skills in a competent and efficient manner	3	27%	8	73%	0	0%	2.27	0.47
12. Coordinates and prioritizes activities using effective management skills	1	33%	2	67%	0	0%	2.33	0.58

Total Evaluations (i.e., N): 11²

Curricular Improvements

An analysis of the data from the electronic portfolios and internships for the A.S. degree programs in Special Education Studies and International Health Studies indicates that students are generally performing at or above the expected levels for each trait. However, some key areas of improvement have been highlighted that warrant further attention. With regard to the electronic portfolios, the students would benefit most from shoring up their applications of

²Total N=11, but N per trait varies due to unreported competency levels for some traits.

technology and professional standards to the project. This can be addressed through increased attention to these traits by the faculty who lead the students in completing the portfolios. With regard to the internship, it would be helpful for the students to improve their a) application of the teaching and learning process to education, b) sensitivity to the diversity of their clients, and c) leadership skills. For each of these traits, this could be accomplished through partnership with faculty to apply focused attention on these skills. However, it should be noted that some of these traits will be difficult to improve because the students are serving in internships abroad where culture and language barriers can exist between the students and their clients as well as the students and their supervisors.

Key Assessment Findings: Associate of Science in Human Services

MSPS assesses the learning outcomes for the A.S. degree program in Human Services through a rubric for the Scenario/Applications Project as prepared for synthesis course MSO 340 *Human Services Administration*. Given that MSO 340 is the synthesis course for both the Human Services Administration Certificate program and the A.S. degree in Human Services, please see Table 2 (above) for a summary of key assessment findings.

Curricular Improvements

Given that the assessment findings discussed for the Human Service Administration Certificate program are applicable to the Associate of Science in Human Services program, the curricular improvements are also transferrable. Please refer to the “Curricular Improvements” section developed for the Human Services Administration Certificate (p. 3) for proposed enhancements.

Bachelor’s Degree Programs

Key Assessment Findings

MID 495 Senior Seminar Pass Rates

MSPS students pursuing any of the three³ undergraduate degree programs — Bachelor of Arts in Information Technology, Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies (majors in Social Work⁴, Social Science, and Interdisciplinary Studies), and Bachelor of Arts in Management — must complete the required, one-semester capstone course, MID 495 *Senior Seminar*. Satisfactory performance (i.e., a grade of “C-” or better) in this course serves in place of a comprehensive examination in satisfying the university graduation requirement. In AY 2010-2011, 64.71% of students passed the capstone requirement (see Table 6).

³ MID 495 also serves as the capstone course for the Bachelor of Arts in General Studies. However, this degree has been discontinued and is available only to students admitted prior to 8/1/06.

⁴ The Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies with a major in Social Work is offered in conjunction with CUA’s National Catholic School of Social Service (NCSSS); please see the assessment statement submitted by NCSSS.

Table 6: MID 495 Senior Seminar Pass Rates (AY 2010-2011)

	Fail		Pass		TOTAL
	N	%	N	%	
Undergraduate Program MID 495 Senior Seminar	16	35.29%	33	64.71%	49

Bachelor’s Program Rubrics

The primary method through which MSPS assesses learning outcomes for the three bachelor’s programs is through a rubric for the Capstone Research and Application Project as prepared in MID 495 *Senior Seminar*. However, MSPS also assesses learning in the bachelor’s programs through individual rubrics for three courses — MBU 324 *Strategic Management Practices*, MIS 457 *Design and Implementation: Emerging Environments*, and MSO 340 *Human Services Administration* — that best capture the essence of each major.⁵ Findings associated with rubric analyses for these three courses were reported on pages 1, 3, and 4 of this report. Findings associated with the Capstone Research and Application Project are reported below.

MID 495 Capstone Research and Application Project

In AY 2010-2011, 38 students completed MID 495 *Senior Seminar* and the required Capstone Research and Application Project. As indicated in Table 7 below, students showed the greatest proficiency in a) written presentation, b) thesis/focus, and c) oral presentation (means of 2.34, 2.08, and 2.08, respectively). Conversely, the traits that warrant the greatest improvement are a) support and use of evidence, b) grammar, mechanics, and documentation, and c) synthesis and integration of knowledge (means of 1.95, 1.92, and 1.89, respectively). These results indicate that although a good number of students either met or exceeded expectations, between 8 and 37% fell below expectations for each trait. These results can likely be attributed to the departure from the way in which the course was previously taught during the 2010-2011 academic year. That is, most MSPS courses are process-focused and the course was being offered in a more research-intensive way, for a trial period spanning the academic year. Additionally, before the writing program was strengthened, there were a group of students who were admitted to the school much earlier than their peers, and who were struggling with the research project more than most students. It is not likely that we will see this again in the future, given a) the individualized attention that was paid to these students to assist them in successfully completing the requirement, and b) their subsequent completion of the program.

⁵No individual course is identified for the Social Work major given NCSST’s comprehensive assessments (See Footnote #4). No individual course is identified for the Interdisciplinary Studies major.

Table 7 Capstone Research and Application Project Rubric Data (AY 2010-2011)

Trait	Level						Mean	SD
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1. Thesis/Focus	12	32%	17	45%	9	24%	2.08	0.75
2. Support & Use of Evidence	12	32%	12	32%	14	37%	1.95	0.84
3. Structure & Organization	11	29%	18	47%	9	24%	2.05	0.73
4. Grammar, Mechanics, & Documentation	12	32%	11	29%	15	39%	1.92	0.85
5. Written Presentation	16	42%	19	50%	3	8%	2.34	0.63
6. Critical Thinking & Reasoned Analysis	9	24%	20	53%	9	24%	2.00	0.70
7. Synthesis & Integration of Knowledge	9	24%	16	42%	13	34%	1.89	0.76
8. Oral Presentation ⁶	10	26%	22	56%	7	18%	2.08	0.66

Total Projects Completed (i.e., N): 38⁷

Curricular Improvements

A review of the mean scores for the Capstone Research and Application Project points to a need to increase students' aptitude with regard to a) synthesis and integration of knowledge, b) grammar, mechanics, and documentation, and c) support and use of evidence. Each of these areas points to a need to increase students' writing abilities, which is supported further by the evidence found in the data for the learning assessments of major courses. As such, MSPS will provide support to students via curricular improvements in the Writing Across the Curriculum Program, continue and improve offerings of academic support programming, and improve the protocol for encouraging students to take a writing skills course.

Writing Across the Curriculum

One substantial curricular improvement aimed at enhancing students' writing and research skills involves the MSPS Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program. Beginning in spring 2009, MSPS launched the WAC program for core and major undergraduate courses. As part of the WAC initiative, faculty have been asked to identify the assignments that would promote and foster excellent writing and research practice. Doing so enabled the MSPS Assistant/Associate deans to ensure that writing maintained a central focus in the curriculum. Moving forward, efforts to improve the WAC initiative will include a) an increased emphasis on faculty grading not solely for content, but also for form, b) a list of top writing issues identified by these assessments provided to faculty in order to promote more targeted writing intervention and assistance.

⁶ For trait 8, N=39 given that one student gave an oral presentation but did not meet any other requirements and was therefore not assessed on any other traits.

⁷ For traits 1-7, N=38 instead of 33 given that five students were assessed who failed the performance requirement.

Academic Support Programming

MSPS will continue to offer special customized workshops that have long been part of MSPS's student development programming model. A central part of this workshop series involves working with campus partners who are the content experts in academic support – including the CUA libraries, Writing Center, and Center for Academic Success. Such partnerships allow MSPS to connect undergraduate students with the campus resources that can be crucial in promoting individual student success.

MHU 140: Writing Skills

MSPS offers a 3-credit course described as an intensive composition course treating basic grammar, sentence structure, organization, and elements of writing style. This course does not fulfill students' English Composition requirement, but gives them either a review of writing skills prior to enrolling in the required English Composition courses or a refresher course in writing skills (if the English Composition requirement has been met). Currently, students generally self-select to enroll in this course, or advisors recommend the course on an as-needed basis. In the future, the MSPS Assistant/Associate deans will work with the MSPS admissions staff to identify students who would benefit from the Writing Skills course by evaluating admissions essays and reviewing students' backgrounds in writing. When it is clear that students would benefit from the course, they will be encouraged to take it by their academic advisors. This improved protocol for encouraging students to take the Writing Skills course will help ensure that more students who need the course are identified and that their writing needs will be met.

The assessments of the MSPS undergraduate programs point to a strong curriculum that is addressing students' learning needs and helping them to meet course learning objectives. In many of the assessments, students met or exceeded expectations for most traits. However, students consistently showed room for improvement related to their writing skills. The curricular enhancements described above – developments in the Writing Across the Curriculum Program, academic support programming, and improving the protocol for encouraging students to take MHU 140 – will address the needs identified in the assessments of the MSPS undergraduate programs.