

**Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements Report
Metropolitan School of Professional Studies - Undergraduate Programs
AY 2011-2012**

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 2011 semester, 11 students completed MBU 324 *Strategic Management Practices* and the embedded Strategic Audit/Applications Project. As indicated in Table 1, most students met or exceeded expectations with regard to all project traits. The traits in which all students exceeded expectations include a) development/presentation of organizational profile/overview, and b) support and use of evidence. The lowest mean scores of 2.45 were found in a) presentation of implication and strategic recommendations for practice and b) oral presentation. Although the mean scores indicate that most students either met or exceeded expectations for most traits, there is room for improvement in almost all of the traits.

Table 1: MBU 324 Strategic Audit/Applications Project Rubric Data (AY 2011-2012)

Trait	Level						Mean	SD
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1. Development/Presentation of Organizational Profile/Overview	11	100%	0	0%	0	0%	3.00	0.00
2. Assessment/Analysis of Organizational Effectiveness	9	82%	1	9%	1	9%	2.73	0.65
3. Presentation of Implications & Strategic Recs for Practice	7	64%	2	18%	2	18%	2.45	0.82
4. Synthesis & Integration of Knowledge	9	82%	2	18%	0	0%	2.82	0.40
5. Structure & Organization	9	82%	1	9%	1	9%	2.73	0.65
6. Grammar, Mechanics, & Documentation	7	64%	4	36%	0	0%	2.64	0.50
7. Written Presentation	8	73%	2	18%	1	9%	2.64	0.67
8. Critical Thinking & Reasoned Analysis	7	64%	3	27%	1	9%	2.55	0.69
9. Support & Use of Evidence	11	100%	0	0%	0	0%	3.00	0.00
10. Oral Presentation	6	55%	4	36%	1	9%	2.45	0.69

Total Projects Completed (i.e., N): 11

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 only two traits where students exceeded expectations, the results indicate that there is room for improvement in multiple areas. The areas of greatest concern are those that received the lowest mean scores: a) presentation of implications and strategic recommendations for practice (2.45), b) critical thinking and reasoned analysis (2.55), and c) oral presentation (2.45). Curricular enhancements should be considered that would enable students to synthesize course content, and demonstrate and present its applications, more effectively. Additional assessments should be introduced earlier in the semester that allow students to gain additional experience in exercising critical thinking skills related to course content.

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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*. There is no data on the Scenario/Applications Project to present in this report, as all students who finished their Human Services Administration Certificates in the 2011-2012 academic year completed MSO 340 in previous semesters.

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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 2011 semester, 5 students completed MIS 457 *Design and Implementation: Emerging Environments* and the embedded Personal Technology Assessments. As indicated in Table 2, Students demonstrated average performance overall. The traits with the highest mean scores of 2.60 each were a) appraisal of emerging technologies role/contribution to industry/company, b) evaluation of rationale for industry/company's use of emerging technology, c) analysis of industry/company technology implementation strategy, and d) synthesis and integration of knowledge. The traits with the lowest mean scores of 2.40 each were a) structure and organization, b) grammar, mechanics, and documentation, and c) written presentation. These results indicate that students are grasping the course content, but that their written presentations could be improved.

**Table 2: MIS 457 Personal Technology Assessments Rubric Data (AY 2011-2012)**

| 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                             | 60% | 2                           | 40% | 0                        | 0% | 2.60 | 0.55 |
| 2. Evaluation of Rationale for Industry/Company's Use of Emerging Technology | 3                             | 60% | 2                           | 40% | 0                        | 0% | 2.60 | 0.55 |
| 3. Analysis of Industry/Company Tech Implementation Strategy                 | 3                             | 60% | 2                           | 40% | 0                        | 0% | 2.60 | 0.55 |
| 4. Synthesis & Integration of Knowledge                                      | 3                             | 60% | 2                           | 40% | 0                        | 0% | 2.60 | 0.55 |
| 5. Structure & Organization                                                  | 2                             | 40% | 3                           | 60% | 0                        | 0% | 2.40 | 0.55 |
| 6. Grammar, Mechanics, & Documentation                                       | 2                             | 40% | 3                           | 60% | 0                        | 0% | 2.40 | 0.55 |
| 7. Written Presentation                                                      | 2                             | 40% | 3                           | 60% | 0                        | 0% | 2.40 | 0.55 |

Total Assessments Completed (i.e., N): 5

### **Curricular Improvements**

The assessment findings for MIS 457 *Design and Implementation: Emerging Environments* indicate that students are learning the course content. However, students show the greatest need for improvement in traits related to writing. Therefore, curricular improvements for the students in the Information Technology Certificate program should be focused on writing. Because the certificate program does not have room for additional courses, MSPS will explore ways to incorporate more writing into the existing Information Technology courses. In addition, MSPS will continue to offer the services of a faculty writing tutor 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, through its Student Development Series, student support programming that is tailored specifically to students' academic needs as identified by the faculty – to include workshops on writing improvement.

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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 2011-2012 findings are discussed below.

Electronic Professional Portfolios

There were no students who completed and presented electronic professional portfolios as part of their A.S. (Special Education Studies or International Health Studies) programs for the 2011-2012 academic year. All students who completed their programs within this timeframe completed their portfolios in the previous academic year.

Internship

In the fall 2011 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 3, there was a broad range of results across all traits. The strongest performance was found in a) demonstrating caring to facilitate spiritual, mental, and physical health, and b) demonstrating self-awareness in pursuing learning opportunities to enhance professional development and delivery of care – each with a mean score of 2.55. Student performance was weakest in demonstrating leadership skills in performance.

Table 3: MID 498 Internship Rubric Data (AY 2011-2012)

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%	3	27%	1	9%	2.55	0.69
2. Demonstrates self-awareness in pursuing learning opportunities to enhance professional development & delivery of care	7	64%	3	27%	1	9%	2.55	0.69
3. Demonstrates effective communication	3	27%	6	55%	2	18%	2.09	0.70

4. Utilizes professional collaboration in management and delivery of care	3	27%	6	55%	2	18%	2.09	0.70
5. Exhibits/demonstrates integrity, honesty and accountability in practice	6	55%	4	36%	1	9%	2.45	0.69
6. Utilizes the teaching/learning process in providing education	3	38%	3	38%	2	25%	2.13	0.83
7. Acts as an advocate for the client	5	56%	3	33%	1	11%	2.44	0.73
8. Demonstrates awareness and sensitivity to diversity and the values and morals of clients in ethical decision making	3	27%	7	64%	1	9%	2.18	0.60
9. Demonstrates leadership skills in performance	1	11%	6	67%	2	22%	1.89	0.60
10. Demonstrates effective assessment and evaluation skills in gathering data on clients, families and communities	3	27%	6	55%	2	18%	2.09	0.70
11. Performs skills in a competent and efficient manner	2	18%	7	64%	2	18%	2.00	0.63
12. Coordinates and prioritizes activities using effective management skills	1	13%	6	75%	1	13%	2.00	0.53

Total Evaluations (i.e., N): 11¹

Curricular Improvements

An analysis of the data from the internships for the A.S. degree programs in Special Education Studies and International Health Studies indicates that students are generally meeting expectations for their internships. However, they could stand to show improvement in their leadership skills. As noted in previous years, the students serving in the internships are not speaking in their native languages and sometimes struggle with communicating well at their internship placements. It is understandable, therefore, that traits that require empathy and compassion and a desire to improve are higher than those that require leadership. The students are able to demonstrate care very well but struggle in demonstrating leadership when language barriers exist. This can continue to be addressed in the students' language and cultural training, provided by the faculty. The MSPS Assistant Dean will continue ongoing conversations with our liaison for the partnership with the Brothers of Charity, the principle investigator for the program. During these conversations, they will continue to discuss curricular improvements.

¹Total N=11, but N per trait varies due to unreported competency levels for some traits.

**Key Assessment Findings:
Associate of Science in Human Services**

MSPS assesses 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*. MSO 340 *Human Services Administration* was not delivered in AY 2011-2012.

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## Bachelor's Degree Programs

### Key Assessment Findings

#### MID 495 Senior Seminar Pass Rates

Students pursuing any of MSPS's three<sup>2</sup> undergraduate degree programs — Bachelor of Arts in Information Technology, Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies (majors in Social Work<sup>3</sup>, 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 2011-2012, 94.64% of students passed the capstone requirement (see Table 4).

**Table 4: MID 495 Senior Seminar Pass Rates (AY 2011-2012)**

|                                                 | Fail |       | Pass |        | TOTAL |
|-------------------------------------------------|------|-------|------|--------|-------|
|                                                 | N    | %     | N    | %      |       |
| Undergraduate Program<br>MID 495 Senior Seminar | 3    | 5.36% | 53   | 94.64% | 56    |

#### 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 that best capture the essence of each major — MBU 324 *Strategic Management Practices*, MIS 457 *Design and Implementation: Emerging Environments*, and MSO 340 *Human Services Administration*.<sup>4</sup> 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 2011-2012, 56 students completed MID 495 *Senior Seminar* and the required Capstone Research and Application Project. As indicated in Table 5 below, students showed the greatest proficiency in a) synthesis and integration of knowledge, b) written presentation, and c) critical thinking and reasoned analysis (means of 2.74, 2.68, and 2.86, respectively). It should also be noted that the means for the other traits were not close behind the highest means. In fact, the

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> No individual course is identified for the Social Work major given NCSSS's comprehensive assessments (See Footnote #4). No individual course is identified for the Interdisciplinary Studies major.



lowest mean was 2.60 for structure and organization of the capstone project. These results point to the students' excellent performance in the capstone course, with the vast majority of students meeting or exceeding expectations on all traits. The trait with the highest number of students falling below expectations was oral presentation, with four students in that category. Despite that small percentage (10% of the total), these results show a marked improvement in the MSPS undergraduate seniors' academic performance. This success can likely be attributed to the movement toward undergraduate courses being more process-focused and the course being offered in a more research-intensive way, which is reflective of the way in which the majority of the undergraduate courses are presented. Additionally, these strong results highlight the positive evolution of the program under the more intensive and more supportive writing program that is in place.

**Table 5 Capstone Research and Application Project Rubric Data (AY 2011-2012)**

| Trait                                    | Level                         |     |                             |     |                          |     | Mean | SD   |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|------|------|
|                                          | Exceeding Expectations (3pts) |     | Meeting Expectations (2pts) |     | Below Expectations (1pt) |     |      |      |
|                                          | N                             | %   | N                           | %   | N                        | %   |      |      |
| 1. Thesis/Focus                          | 31                            | 66% | 14                          | 30% | 2                        | 4%  | 2.62 | 0.57 |
| 2. Support & Use of Evidence             | 32                            | 68% | 14                          | 30% | 1                        | 2%  | 2.66 | 0.52 |
| 3. Structure & Organization              | 29                            | 62% | 17                          | 36% | 1                        | 2%  | 2.60 | 0.54 |
| 4. Grammar, Mechanics, & Documentation   | 31                            | 66% | 14                          | 30% | 2                        | 4%  | 2.62 | 0.57 |
| 5. Written Presentation                  | 33                            | 70% | 13                          | 28% | 1                        | 2%  | 2.68 | 0.52 |
| 6. Critical Thinking & Reasoned Analysis | 33                            | 70% | 13                          | 28% | 1                        | 2%  | 2.68 | 0.52 |
| 7. Synthesis & Integration of Knowledge  | 36                            | 77% | 10                          | 21% | 1                        | 2%  | 2.74 | 0.49 |
| 8. Oral Presentation <sup>5</sup>        | 29                            | 73% | 7                           | 18% | 4                        | 10% | 2.63 | 0.67 |

Total Projects Completed (i.e., N): 47

### Curricular Improvements

A review of the mean scores for the Capstone Research and Application Project highlights the marked improvement in MSPS undergraduate students' performance in all traits. Most promising is the jump in the mean scores from last year's assessment to this year's assessment of a) support and use of evidence, b) grammar, mechanics, and documentation, and c) synthesis and integration of knowledge (1.95 to 2.66, 1.92 to 2.63, and 1.89 to 2.74, respectively). In fact, synthesis and integration of knowledge yielded the lowest mean score on last year's assessment and the highest mean score on this year's assessment. Despite these results, some students still have room for improving their writing skills (see Table 2). The resulting conclusion is that MSPS will continue to provide support to students via the Writing Across the Curriculum

<sup>5</sup> For trait 8, N=40 given that seven students did not give oral presentations.

program<sup>6</sup>, academic support programming, and through encouraging students to take a writing skills course when necessary. Furthermore, an analysis of the undergraduate data shows that students could also improve in their critical thinking and oral presentation skills. More specifically, this will be addressed through academic support programming aimed at addressing these particular skills. This model has long been a part of MSPS's student development program and involves working with campus partners who are content experts in academic support to provide students with targeted assistance.

Overall, the assessments of the MSPS undergraduate programs indicate that students are meeting the learning outcomes of the courses related to understanding the content. In the past, student writing has been a major deficiency across the program, but curricular and programmatic enhancements have resulted in an improvement in student performance. The focus for the upcoming academic year will be to continue the strong focus on writing while introducing an increased emphasis on critical thinking and oral presentation skills.

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<sup>6</sup> The Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program, which began in spring 2009, was created to coordinate efforts for a focus on writing across the MSPS courses. Faculty identify assignments that promote and foster excellent writing and research practice. Doing so enables the MSPS Assistant/Associate Deans to ensure that writing maintains a central focus in the curriculum. Additionally, faculty are asked to encourage students to seek support from the MSPS writing tutor, one of the MSPS English faculty members.