

**Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements**

**METROPOLITAN COLLEGE**

**Graduate Programs**

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## **Master of Arts in Human Resource Management Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements**

### **Assessment Measures**

Metropolitan College uses the following measures to assess learning outcomes for the Master of Arts in Human Resource Management degree program:

- Grades and enrollment totals for MBU 673 Master’s Capstone: Research, Synthesis, and Application. This is the capstone course of the graduate degree program.
- Final major paper for MBU 673 Master’s Capstone: Research, Synthesis, and Application demonstrating research methodology, research synthesis and analysis, and the ability to apply research to a specific situation.

### **Assessment Findings**

#### **MBU 673 Master’s Capstone: Research, Synthesis, and Application Discussion**

(Attachment A):

Metropolitan College analyzed course grades and enrollment data for MBU 673 Master’s Capstone: Research, Synthesis, and Application for three semesters over a two year period (Summer 2007, Spring 2008 and Summer 2008<sup>1</sup>). The Master’s in Human Resource Management represents a more recent addition to the portfolio of offerings at Metropolitan College (i.e., launched in Fall 2005), and, therefore, findings are available for only a limited number of years.

Metropolitan College students pursuing a Master of Arts in Human Resource Management degree must complete the required, one semester MBU 673 Master’s Capstone: Research, Synthesis, and Application, generally as the final course in their program of graduate study. Satisfactory performance (i.e., a grade of “B” or better) in this final course serves to assess students’ ability to a) acquire an appreciation for and gain experience in applied research as a methodology, and b) apply research in the field of Human Resource Management to a specific business/organizational situation. Students demonstrate their knowledge by producing an extended and comprehensive paper focused on a single problem. During the period under analysis, enrollment in the three course offerings consisted of 14 students for Summer 2007, 2 students for Spring 2008, and 12 students for Summer 2008. The Spring 2008 enrollment reflects the necessity of offering this course to individuals who, for personal or professional reasons, were unable to remain with their cohort group throughout the graduate program.

The majority of students (i.e., 89%) who enrolled in MBU 673 Master’s Capstone: Research, Synthesis, and Application in the three semesters under analysis earned grades of B- or better with 46% earning in the “A” range. There was one failure and two students withdrew from the course. Performance in this course is assessed on the basis of student production of a final extended research effort grounded in solving a human resources-oriented problem. This capstone

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<sup>1</sup> Summer 2008 data not shown in Attachment A.

assessment is designed to provide students with the opportunity to synthesize the knowledge and skills they have acquired in their graduate studies and to demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which such knowledge should be applied to “real world” human resource issues and challenges.

Formal course and instructor evaluation data are limited for this course, but informal student feedback is quite favorable and consistently positive. Further, given that much of the instruction in the course is based upon one-on-one interaction (à la independent study) between the individual student and the instructor so that the instructor can guide the student’s specific project, formal university-wide evaluations may not appropriately capture this type of interaction. As such, Metropolitan College is working to design a more comprehensive and targeted evaluation process, please see additional discussion in the “Curricular Improvements” section.

### **Curricular Improvements**

Metropolitan College offers the Master of Arts in Human Resource Management degree as a part-time evening program that enables Human Resources professionals to pursue their goal of an advanced degree while balancing personal and professional demands. In order to keep the knowledge base and applications current, Metropolitan College a) seeks out faculty who bring strong academic backgrounds and practical expertise to the classroom and b) evaluates the courses in the curriculum on an on-going basis. In fact, Metropolitan College maintains contact with Human Resources-oriented community partners, including the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and the Human Resource Association of the National Capital Area (HRA-NCA) in an effort to ensure that the courses offered in the graduate program are providing students with the knowledge and skill sets critical to excellent professional practice. Additionally, during the 2008-2009 academic year, Metropolitan College will be conducting a detailed review of the graduate curricula in an effort to ensure that the College has incorporated into the program the most desirable means of assessing that learning objectives are being attained.

Additional curricular improvements are also in the pipeline. Specifically, while Metropolitan College is well attuned to the professional needs of students and strives to provide appropriate programs, the College realizes that assessment and evaluation of the MBU 673, in particular, and the Master of Arts in Human Resource Management program, in general, must be improved.

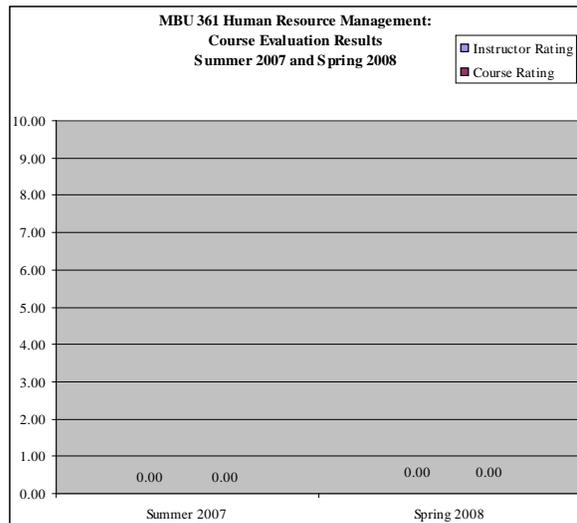
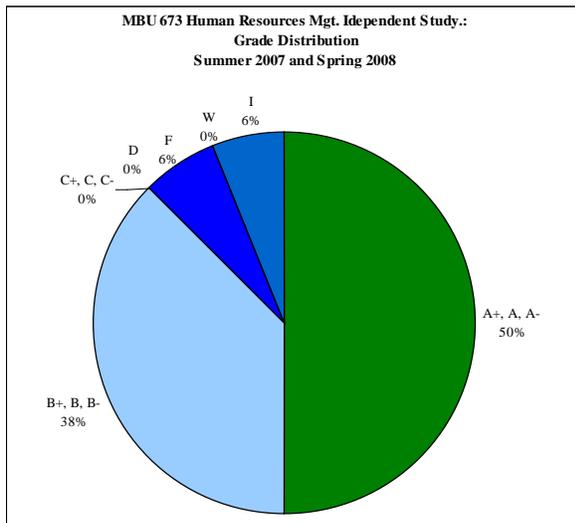
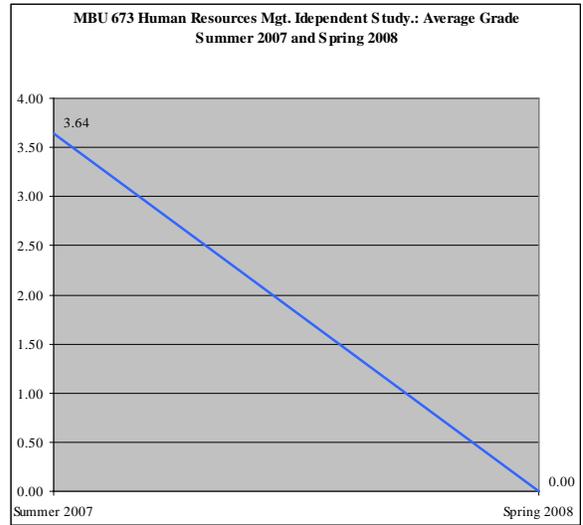
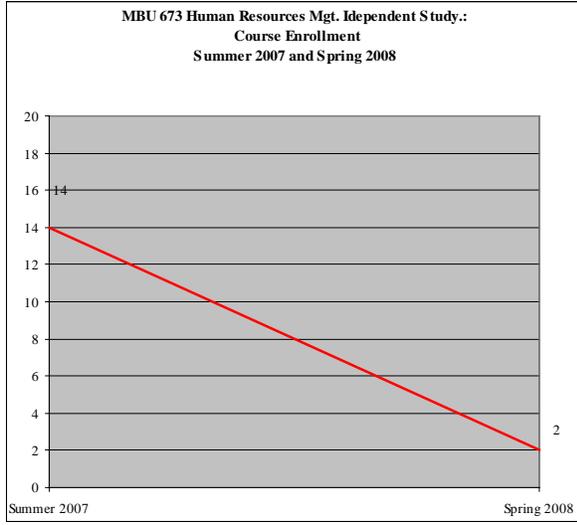
While the course evaluations currently represent the central formalized program for soliciting comprehensive, broad-perspective feedback from Metropolitan College students regarding their academic/program experiences, this method does not present a robust representation of findings for the MBU 673 course. Therefore, the College is currently developing quantitative and qualitative assessment procedures that can provide formative and summative feedback opportunities for all programs including the Master of Arts in Human Resource Management. The quantitative aspect of this assessment program was “piloted” in early 2008. A beta assessment was developed and administered online to over 100 graduates who had participated in particular Metropolitan College programs. The instrument asked alumni to provide feedback on issues such as: (1) the degree program’s contribution to career advancement, (2) satisfaction

with instructors and curriculum, (3) satisfaction with academic advising, and (4) satisfaction with student support services. While this assessment focused more on satisfaction than learning, the results and effectiveness of this survey are being reviewed to determine subsequent steps for implementing an ongoing assessment of current students and graduates.

In addition to quantitative assessment, Metropolitan College is planning for the implementation of qualitative measures of student learning. Specifically, this effort is being patterned on the successful design and facilitation of alumni focus groups spearheaded by Metropolitan College's Paraeducator Certificate program. Metropolitan College envisions planning and implementing a formative and summative focus group program so that students can provide feedback on their experiences and perspectives on learning at Catholic University.

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: METROPOLITAN COLLEGE  
MBU 673 Human Resources Mgt. Independent Study.

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades							Course Evaluation Results					
		Avg.	StDev.	Grade Distribution							Course Eval.		Instructor Rating		Course Rating	
				A+, A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	D	F	W	I	#	%	Avg.	StDev.	Avg.	StDev.
Summer 2007	14	3.64	0.37	8	6							0.00%				
Spring 2008	2	0.00						1		1		0.00%				



## **Master of Science in Management Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements**

The Master of Science in Management [M.S.M.] degree program is offered by The Catholic University of America's Metropolitan College to provide working adults with the skills, knowledge, and credentials necessary to progress in their management careers. The program represents a unique opportunity for current and aspiring managers who are seeking an applications-oriented program that will enable them to pursue their academic goals while balancing personal and professional demands. The program offers an extensive array of evening courses each semester making it easy to complete on either a part-time or full-time basis.

The M.S.M. program was launched in the Fall of 2008 for the first time, and, as such, course evaluation data does not yet exist. While assessment findings and curricular improvements are not available for this program at this time, Metropolitan College looks forward to analyzing the data that will be available beginning at the end of the Fall 2008 term.