

CSU Channel Islands
Program Assessment and Review Committee (PARC)
Report to the Provost and Dean of Faculty
PARC Comments and Recommendations for

Business
April 13, 2010

With the program's self-study and external review as its major data sources, the Program Assessment and Review Committee (PARC) reviewed the undergraduate major in Business and offers the following comments and recommendations. Organizationally, this review follows the four elements of review of these earlier assessments, and should be read in conjunction with them.

Members of PARC are: Simon Aloisio, Don Rodriguez, Harley Baker, Mike Riley, Scott Frisch, Liz King, Nelle Moffett, Steve Lefevre (co-chair), Alex McNeill, Amy Denton, Stephen Clark, Peter Smith, Tiina Itkonen, Jesse Elliot, Betsy Quintero, Dennis Downey, Jaye Smith, Marie Francois, Karen Jensen, Greg Wood, Ed Nuhfer (co-chair), and Luda Popenhagen.

Element One: Program Purpose and University Goals

Comments: The Business program has numerous strengths, some of them noted by the dean of faculty in his review letter:

- Interdisciplinary business courses have been developed in conjunction with disciplines outside the traditional business curriculum (Biology, Chemistry, Education, English, Fine Arts, History and Performing Arts). These courses are required for the B.S. in Business.
- Internships are offered to upper level students to give them opportunities to work in the community and provide real experiential training that they can relate back to their classes.
- Each year the Smith School provides the opportunity for international travel and study for the upper division students. The goal of these trips, in addition to exposing the students to a different culture, is to allow them to visit university and industrial sites to gain direct experience on the organization and operational techniques used in different countries.
- The students have heard about the program before applying and also often had positive word of mouth from other students.

Recommendations:

- *AACSB standards will look at the Smith School mission statement for the following, 1) the students that are served by their program in some way, 2) connections in learning goals, and 3) connection to the University mission.*
- *AACSB will look for the type of research valued (e.g., basic, applied and/or pedagogical)*
- *AACSB will look for a strategic planning process. For example, how often is the strategic plan reviewed? Who reviews the process (multiple stakeholders must be consulted). How is the plan approved and how is its success evaluated? This process should be written down and codified by a faculty committee or the faculty as a whole.*
- *The Smith School's structure may need to be expanded to encourage deep faculty involvement in all key activities. As it grows, concentration coordinators, department chairs, and course coordinators may be appropriate roles for faculty to get further involved.*
- *The Smith School should develop ways for the to communicate with local businesses, potential donors and select alumni.*

Element Two: Achieving Educational Outcomes

Comments: PARC finds that the business program has a number of strengths:

An Initial set of learning outcomes identified

- Present outcomes are assessable
- The School has begun collecting an impressive body of individual assessments from faculty
- Outside reviewers stated "it is quite amazing that a quite comprehensive business program has been delivered and developed by such a small faculty."
- Reviewers commended faculty advising in the program.
- Students appear to be active learners in the program.
- Many of the issues identified by the reviewers are a function of small faculty size and limited resources, and they anticipated that problems would be resolved as faculty grows.

Recommendations:

Many steps need to be taken to further develop the assessment program:

- *A curriculum map needs to be developed*
- *Outcomes need to be assessed using rubrics on a 3-5 year schedule*
- *Benchmarks need to be established*
- *Outcomes need to be aligned to mission*
- *An assessment schedule needs to be adopted and implemented*

Element Three: Developing Resources to Ensure Sustainability

Comments: The business degree has a number of strengths:

- A strong and diverse faculty is in place.
- Several full-time faculty members have been hired in recent years.
- A strong administrative staff is in place to support program operations.
- Full-time faculty workloads (WTU) are lower than those of the rest of the programs on campus.
- The academic program is diverse and interdisciplinary in nature.
- The program is adept at finding resources to help support its operations and students.
- Physical space and technological infrastructure are sufficient to meet program needs.
- The faculty shares in the governance of the program.

Recommendations:

- *The ratio between full- and part-time faculty is much too low.*
- *External reviewers recommend (External review, p 6) that at least five more tenure-track or tenured faculty need to be hired, but this number may be “closer to 8 or more.”*
- *Clearer standards need to be developed for rating faculty as “academically qualified” and “professionally qualified.”*
- *Even with release time, the workload is still too high to ensure sufficient research productivity among program faculty.*

Element Four: Creating a Learning Centered Organization

Comments: PARC identifies a number of program strengths:

- The Smith School has developed a Strategic Plan.
- The Smith School has begun the process of assessing student learning outcomes.
- The Smith School has identified AACSB accreditation as a goal.

Recommendations:

- *The Smith School needs to develop an on-going system of planning, including 1) a regular calendar of updates to the plan, 2) identifying new priorities, measuring achievements of prior goals, and 3) linking student learning outcomes assessment into new goal development.*
- *The Smith School needs to develop a systematic process for assessing student learning outcomes including 1) developing a curriculum map to learning outcomes, 2) developing a calendar of assessment of learning outcomes by course, 3) identifying actions to take to improve student learning, and 4) following up to see if those actions have in fact increased student learning.*

- *The Smith School needs to incorporate into its Strategic Plan specific steps to prepare for AACSB accreditation which incorporate all the required elements and consider participating in the AACSB pre-accreditation process.*

Summary Recommendations

- *Develop a five-year improvement plan as a basis for the MOU conversation and describe how this plan will be incorporated into their Strategic Plan. The MOU conversation needs to include a frank assessment of the costs/benefits of AACSB accreditation in order to arrive at a clear agreement about whether seeking this accreditation is a goal of the Smith School in the next five years and what resources will be provided to accomplish this goal.*
- *Develop a process and timeline for assessing student learning outcomes. Determine what resources are needed to accomplish this assessment plan and, as mentioned by the dean, include the plan and resource request in the five-year improvement plan as a part of the MOU discussion.*
- *Develop a clear and compelling case for expanding the number of faculty in the Smith School over the next five years including the AACSB goals and requirements as well as the impact on the quality of the program for students at each level. Write out this case analysis to include in the documentation for the MOU conversation.*

Assessment of the Process.

PARC adds the follow comments and recommendations with respect to the business faculty's involvement in the self study process.

1. Has the program engaged in the Program Review process and provided an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the program?
 - *Many strengths were identified but the self-study was only able to identify one weakness: the low number of tenured or tenure-track professors. The program did not appear to engage in self-reflection about opportunities for improvement. The action plan proposed a single strategy for improving the program: hiring more faculty. The report did not indicate what needs improvement, how it would be measured, or how hiring more faculty would contribute to accomplishing those improvements. AACSB accreditation requirements were cited as the primary reason for the need to hire more faculty with no acknowledgement of the other requirements for accreditation that the program also needs to meet.*
2. Is there agreement/disagreement between the internal and external analysis?
 - *The external reviewers agreed with the program on many excellent features of the program. However, the external reviewers identified several areas for improvement that the internal review did not mention. In addition, the external reviewers were unable to assess Element Two-G on Articulation, Transfer, and*

- *There is agreement on the main issue (the need to hire more tenure/tenure-track faculty), but the external analysis highlights several issues that the program does not. Among the most glaring are the following: the heavy workload of tenure-line faculty; the lack of clear standards for faculty qualifications; and the need for more support staff.*
3. Has the program included a plan for improvement over the next five years as a basis for the MOU conversation?
- *The program review did not include a plan for improvement over the next five years other than “the effort to increase full time faculty will continue until the goal is reached.” There is no basis in the report recommendations for a meaningful MOU conversation.*
4. Are there any gaps between the internal/external reviews and the plan presented in the summary document for the MOU conversation?
- *The main gap is the fact that the internal analysis is very (perhaps overly) positive while the external review identifies a number of important areas that need attention. No plan for improvement was presented in the report. The external review comments provide many helpful suggestions that can be incorporated into an improvement plan that can be prepared for the MOU conversation. PARC recommends to the program that it prepare a summary document which includes an improvement plan for the MOU conversation.*