# Meta-assessment Analysis Report for the College of Business Administration

Please return the completed report back to the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment by **March 31, 2017**.

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Assessment is an important best-practice in higher education that helps programs determine whether key objectives are being met, identify areas for improvement, and develop actions to improve program effectiveness.  Additionally, meaningful and effective assessment is the corner stone of many discipline-specific accreditations, as well as our University's regional accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.  Meta-assessment is an important tool for helping ensure that all programs at Sam Houston State University are engaging in a meaningful and effective continuous improvement assessment process.

Meta-assessment serves two important roles for the College and the University.  First, it provides valuable feedback to units regarding ways in which they may continue to improve their annual assessment processes.  Second, it provides College and University leaders with a way to observe the overall quality of assessment processes for their units.  The purpose of this report is to detail the Meta-assessment process utilized by the College of Business Administration, the College's plan for distributing the completed Meta-assessment rubrics to their departments and programs, the assessment strengths observed within the reviewed assessment plans, the areas for improvement of assessment practices, the strategies for implementing those improvements, and the training or resources needed to implement those strategies.


**Section 1: Description of Meta-assessment Methodology Employed by the College**
*Detail the College's Meta-assessment methodology and process. Include a description of who was involved (e.g., a committee of senior faculty or college administrators), your methodology for evaluating unit-level assessment plans, steps for ensuring reliability, and your timeline.*

The College of Business Administration began this year's meta-assessment by first dividing its 24 academic, administrative, and operating units into three groups and preparing a schedule in which each group is schedule to be assessed once over a three-year time period. A table summarizing this plan follows:

| Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 |
|---|---|---|
| BBA degree in General Business | BBA degree in Banking & Fin Inst | BBA degree in Accounting |
| BBA degree in Economics | BBA degree in HR Mgmt | BBA degree in Entrepreneurship |
| BBA degree in Finance | BBA degree in Marketing | BBA degree in Intl Business |
| BBA degree in Mgmt Info Systems | MBA degree | BBA degree in Management |
| MS degree in Accounting | MS degree in Project Mgmt | EMBA degree |
| Professional Golf Mgmt Program | Small Business Dev Center | Gib Lewis Center |
| Business Foundation | College of Bus Admin | Department of Gen Bus & Finance |
| Department of Mgmt and Mktg | Department of Accounting | Department of Economics |


The college conducted this year's plan by asking six faculty members, two from each of the two larger departments (General Business & Finance, Management & Marketing) and one from each of the smaller departments (Accounting, Economics and International Business) to evaluate two

unit-level CampusLabs Compliance Assist entries for 2015-2016. One associate dean also participated with four of the plans. Thus, at least two evaluators assessed each unit Compliance Assist entries using the following directions:

Each reviewer was asked to complete the assessment rubric provided by the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment. The reviewers were provided the information in January of 2017 and completed their evaluations by February 15, 2017. Information from the rubrics was compiled and a consensus summary for each unit was completed and used to develop the final rubrics submitted as part of the meta-assessment process.

In addition, each reviewer was asked to review the individual assessments as though he/she was reviewing a colleague's research paper and asked to consider the five questions below:

1. Do you understand what is being assessed, why it is being assessed, and how it is being assessed?

2. Do the findings, actions, and plan for continuous improvement make sense?

3. Are there clear action plans that indicate how the findings are used to improve teaching to enhance student learning?

4. Is the assessment written such that it is understandable and looks professional?

5. If an outside reviewer (SACS, AACSB, etc.) saw this assessment report, would it be something COBA is proud of showing?

This information was used as secondary data for completing the college's meta-assessment analysis report.

**Section 2: Plan for Distributing Completed Rubrics to Units**
*Detail the College's plan for sharing the completed meta-assessment rubrics with its departments and programs.*

Completed rubrics were distributed to each unit in March of 2017. Meetings were scheduled for early April to discuss the feedback from the meta-assessment and design plans to implement improvements in the process for each unit assessed this year. The remaining programs to be assessed over the subsequent two years of the three-year schedule were also discussed to help the responsible parties prepare for future evaluations. In addition to each evaluated unit receiving its own feedback, all units within the College of Business Administration were provided access to the entire college's meta-assessment to see how their evaluations compared to others.

Department meetings (Accounting, Economics, General Business, and Management/Marketing) were scheduled for April 2017 to discuss relevant assessments of academic majors within each department as well as the business foundation. These meetings are designed to inform all faculty within each department of any modifications needed in the assessment process moving forward. In addition, non-academic units were provided feedback by email.

**Section 3: Observed Strengths within College Assessment Plans**
*Detail the general strengths identified by the College after reviewing its units' assessment plans. What general aspects of the annual assessment processes are units mastering?  Are there any units that you would recommend serve as exemplary models?*

There are no specific units that would be considered exemplary, but some of the strengths across the college are listed below.

- Most assessments are clear and understandable. There are some very good examples of goals and learning objectives among the eight units evaluated.
- Some units use a wide variety of measures to assess various goals and objectives.

**Section 4: Observed Weaknesses within College Assessment Plans**
*Detail the general weaknesses identified by the College after reviewing its units' assessment plans.  What general aspects of the annual assessment process are units struggling with?*

A few units are very weak, but most units are making valid efforts to improve their assessment processes. Some of the weaknesses throughout the college that can be corrected with more attention to detail or a greater degree of oversight are listed below.

- Goals, objectives, indicators, criterion, and findings are poorly defined or worded in some units. Some goals and objectives seem overly broad, making them difficult to understand and assess.
- There is some confusion regarding the use of embedded questions when some units do not describe the types of embedded questions used in the assessment.
- Many of the same deficiencies from the previous last year's meta-assessment report were not corrected for this year.
- Some assessments appear to complete the task without giving any real thought to improving student learning. For example, some learning goals were not met, but no actions were in the plan to improve.
- In some cases, there is lack of congruence between goals, objectives, indicators, criterion, and findings.

The primary weaknesses with COBA assessment result from a lack of coordination at the college level for standardization of the assessment process. Although academic assessment should be faculty-driven in terms of identifying key elements such as goals and learning objectives, basic quality checks are missing from the process. As a result, findings are sometimes meaningless because the data collected may be inappropriate in relation to the learning objective or the plan for continuous improvement may be focused on the assessment process rather than on student learning. Similar concerns about the inconsistencies in the assessment program were included in the reaffirmation letter received from the AACSB at the conclusion of their visit during the year.

Furthermore, there appears to be a lack of understanding in terms of developing and documenting assessment plans. There is an inconsistent level of knowledge and appreciation

of the differences between goals, objectives, indicators, criterion, key performance indicators, findings/KPI results, actions, and the summary narratives for updating the previous and current cycles plans for continuous improvement with respect to academic (program) areas and operational areas (academic departments and other operational units.)

**Section 5: Strategies Needed to Address Identified Weaknesses**
*Detail the College's strategies for addressing the general weaknesses identified after reviewing its units' assessment plans.*

Many members of the college appear to be averse to conducting effective self-assessments, although this is likely more due to inadequate training than outright opposition. There is an overall understanding in the importance of improving student learning and faculty and staff are willing to participate in the process, but there is a disconnect on how to complete it in an efficient and effective manner. Perhaps contrary to popular belief, faculty in professional disciplines such as business typically are not familiar with the concept of program assessment and the terminology associated with it (goals, objectives, key performance indicators, etc.)

A first step in the process undertaken this year is a complete review and update of all master syllabi following a standard template. The template should make it easier to see how the curriculum matches with learning outcomes for our various degree programs. The template is simplistic and lays out the most important elements of each course: the course title and catalog description, any course prerequisites, the course learning objectives that are mapped to the learning objectives of the college and/or specified degree program(s), and a summary of the primary topics to be covered by each instructor teaching a particular course. Examining the various master syllabi as a group should help hone the assessment activities associated with each degree program.

Additional steps to be taken include more consistent communication with the university's Office of Academic Planning and Assessment for guidance on improving our assessment efforts and the participation of an associate dean in an assessment seminar conducted by the AACSB to gain better insights into best practices for the assessment of business programs.

**Section 6: Training/Resources Needed to Implement the College's Improvement Strategy**
*Detail the types of training and resources that would assist the College with implementing its improvement strategies.*

Because the College of Business Administration is accredited by an outside agency (AACSB) that requires assurance of learning as part of the accreditation process, funds to send faculty to AACSB assurance of learning training would help the college in its assessment efforts to meet both SACS and AACSB requirements. Furthermore, any resources available through the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment, SACS, or AACSB that highlight and provide examples of best practices and exemplary assessment plans would be useful. The Dean is committed to providing resources to enhance our assessment efforts and we plan to take advantage of those resources. A clearer understanding of the assessment process by more members of the college community should lead to improvements in the quality of our assessment efforts.

**Appendix A**

**(All Completed Meta-assessment Rubrics)**

Following the completed meta-assessment rubrics are summaries of the additional information collected during the COBA meta-assessment process.