

Graduate Assessment—MBA

To: Dr. Regina Waters, Associate Provost of Adult, Online, and Graduate Education
From: Dr. Robin Soster, MBA Director & Chair of Breech Curriculum and Assessment Committee
Date: August 12, 2020
Subject: Breech MBA Assessment Report

OVERVIEW

The Breech School has established a protocol for its assessment of student learning goals for the MBA program that captures our focus on continuous quality improvement. The annual process is designed to ensure we are meeting all university, school, and accreditation requirements. At the same time, we are engaging the Breech faculty in a continuing review of the learning outcomes expected in our programs, the courses supporting each program, and finally a review of student learning outcomes. Such a process ensures and sustains our commitment to assessing our program learning goals and objectives.

The specific program learning goals and objectives were developed by the Breech faculty consistent with the Breech School Mission: “Preparing ethical leaders for the global business community.” For the MBA program, the learning goals include Integrative Thought, Intercultural Competence, Leadership, Strategic Thought, and Teamwork & Communication. These goals are constantly reviewed to ensure currency and alignment with the curriculum and the Breech School Mission.

Breech’s AACSB Accreditation Review and the HLC self-study processes (e.g., program reviews) for Drury University, coupled with the university-led conversion to Watermark and the development of the new MBA Ventures Program (launching Fall 2020) led the Breech Senior Leadership Committee to propose a modified annual assessment plan for AY 2019 – 2020 and subsequent. Specifically, the committee proposed a one-time shift to the traditional pattern of assessment (see tables below). This proposal was approved by Breech’s Curriculum and Assessment Committee (CAC) and Breech faculty.

Original	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
MBA Program					
Intercultural Competence	X		X		X
Teamwork & Communication		X		X	
Leadership			X		X
Strategic Thought			X		X
Integrative Thought		X		X	

Proposed		2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
MBA Program						
Intercultural Competence	MBA 682		X		X	
Teamwork & Communication	MBA 674			X		X
Leadership (Leadership Learning)	MBA 674		X		X	
Strategic Thought	MBA 673		X		X	
Integrative Thought	MBA 671			X		X

Due to this shift, Breech did not assess specific learning outcomes for the MBA Program for AY 2019 – 2020. As such, after a brief discussion of MBA Learning Outcomes for AY 2019 – 2020 and the longer-term plan for the new MBA Ventures Program, the remainder of this document focuses on assessments from AY 2018 – 2019.

AY 2019 – 2020 and Beyond

While the MBA Program learning outcomes were not formally assessed in AY 2019 – 2020, anecdotal evidence suggests that our MBA students exceed all expectations with respect to Intercultural Competence, Teamwork & Communication, Leadership, Strategic Thought, and Integrative Thought. Specifically, for MBA 682 (i.e., what would have been the capstone trip to Greece, which was cancelled due to COVID-19), four student teams (3 students per team) researched the impact of the pandemic on specific industries (meat processing, grocery, restaurant, and banking industries). After attending several day-long case study workshops, these student teams were responsible for the following primary deliverables: individual annotated bibliographies and research reports, fully fleshed out case studies with teaching notes, and formal final presentations. The final products submitted were impressive and at least one is close to “ready for ‘prime time’” (i.e., publication in a pedagogical outlet).

For AY 2020 – 2021, a newly-formed MBA Task Force, CAC, and Breech faculty will work together develop and hone appropriate assessments and rubrics for our new MBA Ventures curriculum, which espouses the following mission and goals / learning outcomes:

The MBA program at Drury University is committed to preparing ethical leaders for the global business community. In pursuit of this commitment, our program has the following outcomes:

1. *Understanding a Firm’s Environment: Identifying and Attracting Resources*
Students will understand strategic partners’ micro and macro economic/regulatory/cultural environments. Students will demonstrate proficiency in budgeting and forecasting, as well as an understanding of the important human, organizational, economic, and financial dynamics of attracting and deploying resources, and of measuring and assessing outcomes.
2. *Understanding the Self and Others: Communication, Leadership, Followership, and Teamwork*
Students will be able to effectively communicate in written, oral, and non-verbal modalities – including those questions and issues required to begin the case/problem-solving process. Students will demonstrate capabilities related to self-understanding, including strengths,

predispositions, values, and areas of vulnerability. They will progress in a lifelong study of self and others with respect to individual performance and reflected in their value as a member of a team – demonstrating the ability to lead and/or follow other members of teams to achieve appropriate outcomes.

3. *Understanding Information: Creating Data Visibility*

Students will demonstrate skill in assessing the quality of data and the degree to which particular data provides a strong basis for decision-making, creating and promoting data visibility to inform decision-making processes.

4. *Understanding Ventures: Setting Objectives; Diagnosing Obstacles; Choosing and Pursuing Opportunities*

Students will be able to apply the appropriate tools required to manage and communicate critical information in the service of setting objectives, considering obstacles through critical and creative lenses, and making and following through with decisions.

AY 2018 – 2019 Assessment Report Information

Structure and Process

The Breech Curriculum Assessment Committee (CAC) coordinates assessment activities. The CAC committee is chaired by a Breech faculty and supported by six additional Breech faculty members, the MBA program director, and the Breech Director of Academic Support Services (Ex-officio). The CAC committee is responsible for the continuous review of program learning goals and objectives, tools, measuring rubrics, and data collection. This is a cycle that begins with the review of results from previous academic years and collection of information during the current year in order to assess our learning goals. Monthly committee meetings with posted agendas and minutes enable the continuous quality improvement process. The work of the CAC committee culminates with the annual faculty assessment workshop. The chair of the CAC committee leads the annual workshop, which is attended by all Breech faculty. Extensive review and discussion of the findings from the assessment activities for that academic year occurs at this meeting. The annual workshop provides the foundation for recommendations related to faculty activities/plans for learning improvements in the Breech program and helps set the agenda for the CAC committee's activities for the next year.

Committee Procedures

The CAC committee reviews and acts on findings from previous years and coordinates the assessment of specific learning goals each year. At the same time, the committee is implementing continuous improvement actions from previous assessments.

The CAC committee has responsibility for coordinating the assessment of specific learning goals each year by utilizing a rotation strategy. This rotation schedule provides more time to be spent on the action items and for "closing the loop" discussions with the Breech faculty. Each learning goal is assessed at least twice every five-year review cycle as suggested by AACSB (see above tables for original and proposed [i.e., new] rotations).

For each academic year, CAC committee members are identified as “point persons” for the learning goals to be assessed. The role of “point person” is central to our assessment process. A CAC committee member serves as the point person for a learning goal and is joined by the faculty member teaching the course in which the assessment will be conducted. This faculty team is responsible for designing, administering, and collecting the assignments as well as choosing “raters” who employ rubrics to evaluate the assessment instruments. The team also reports the findings and makes recommendations to the committee. Each point person reports the assessment progress during the monthly committee meetings, which include identifying the classes being assessed and the methods being used for the assessment. Specific rubrics have been developed for each learning goal, which afford comparable data results for subsequent analysis. After completion of the assessment, a final report from each point person is delivered and discussed at the annual workshop with the entire Breech Faculty. At the workshop, the committee point person(s) identifies the learning goal, reviews assessment procedures, and outlines the results of the assessment.

Assessment Tools

CAC uses a variety of assessment tools to assess each learning goal. The CAC committee in consultation with the Breech faculty established rubrics for assessing each particular learning goal. For instance, when we assess ethics as a learning goal, the instructor may assign a case problem to be used for assessment. The point person (or rater if they are different) will evaluate student work using the rubric that the committee created for assessment so as to be uniform in the evaluation. We have a number of rubrics that the committee developed to assess specific learning goals.

2018-19 Assessment Workshop Agenda/Action Items

In addition to following up on areas from the previous assessment, the CAC committee is also charged with carrying out assessment activities each academic year. Consistent with the existing rotation plans for learning goal assessments, Teamwork & Communication and Integrative Thought were assessed at the MBA level.

The work of the committee was presented at the annual assessment workshop on April 25, 2019. Findings were presented and discussed with action items being developed for the 2019-20 year. These items and key issues discussed, along with findings from the workshop are briefly outlined below.

MBA Learning Goal- Teamwork and Communication

1. *Point people:* Soster and Henley
2. *Method of Assessment:* The Teamwork and Communication Learning Goal of the MBA program was assessed using a Qualtrics survey for peer reviews on a Group written report and oral presentation. Students were asked a series of 5-point Likert scale items (1 =always, 5 = never) that related to 4 dimensions: timeliness, planning, teamwork, and communication. Two faculty members (Robin and Walt) reviewed student ratings, to reach consensus on accuracy of ratings.
3. *Findings:* The MBA students in MBA 674 exceeded expectations as they relate to the Teamwork and Communication evaluation survey.
4. *Closing the Loop:* Student self-evaluations for groups is generally considered inflated. Gramzow, et. al, Self – Evaluation Bias (2003). The raters suggested that the survey not be related to final grade in order to counter student bias.

5. *Follow up:* Review survey instrument so that scales more closely measure the constructs of Teamwork and Communication.

MBA Learning Goal- Integrative Thought

1. *Point people:* Soster and Prince
2. *Method of Assessment:* The Integrative Thought Learning Goal of the MBA program was assessed using student work samples (answers to a case-based assignment completed in MBA 671).
3. *Findings:* The MBA students in MBA 671 exceeded expectations as they relate to the integrative thought learning goal.
4. *Closing the Loop:* Repeat the same activities for the next assessment cycle.
5. *Follow up:* Consider standardizing the case used for student work samples (year to year).

Continuous Improvement

In addition to carrying out assessment activities, the CAC committee is also charged with improving the assessment process utilized in the Breech School. This requires the committee to listen carefully to faculty about the need for making the assessment process less intrusive and more meaningful to all involved. This requires closely monitoring whether our rubrics appropriately describe the learning goals and making sure that faculty agree and understand what these goals are.

We appreciate your commitment to the assessment process. Please let me know if you have questions or comments about the work of our committee.