

College of Business
Faculty Responses to the Quality Enhancement Plan Discussion Topics

GOAL: TO INCREASE STUDENT AND FACULTY INTERACTION

Current Practices

- ◆ Classroom discussions and group projects are used to encourage student interaction, inviting students to share their knowledge.
- ◆ Case studies and small group assignments.
- ◆ Undergraduate courses utilize a compact disc which contains all lecture notes and sample tests. The purpose of this practice is to allow students to focus on the lecture/discussion portion of the course as opposed to simply taking notes. In addition, all class meetings begin with a 5 minute discussion of the economic implications of current issues in the news.
- ◆ The instructor and students provide examples of work experiences. Study guides are provided to the principles classes.
- ◆ Students fill out questionnaires, engage in role playing activities, analyze and evaluate videos, complete in-class small group exercises, and conduct individual or group facilitations.
- ◆ Team projects and presentations are used along with instructor presentation and case analysis.
- ◆ Each course has required readings for each and every class meeting.
- ◆ Students are given opportunities to attend several industry-related functions throughout the academic year.
- ◆ Office hours specifically for interaction with students are set aside each week.
- ◆ Conduct lab sessions, use handouts, following the textbook allows students to underline and not write as many notes, give classroom quizzes to encourage attendance.

Strengths

- ◆ Teamwork can be a powerful vehicle for interaction. Students form their own teams and they are encouraged to do so based on a diversity of skills and backgrounds. This encourages them to interview each other and to project a potential member's impact on the group as a whole.

- ◆ The strength of the study guide is that the average grade for those classes have risen a letter grade since the use of the guides began.
- ◆ The project-based capstone class combines all of the materials to which they have been exposed in the major study into a single project.
- ◆ The project requires a great deal of interaction between the students on the project team where ideas and concepts can be openly discussed.
- ◆ Reviewing partially completed work is great for class participation and this helps students with their programming skills. This practice is used in real-world programming teams and is called egoless programming.
- ◆ Quizzes have improved attendance.
- ◆ Group case analysis and team problem presentations require students to research current accounting pronouncements and reach a consensus of the preferable treatment.

Weaknesses

- ◆ A limitation is that DSU students are ill-prepared for a true classroom discussion. Needs to be some penalty for non-participation.
- ◆ Many students are highly inarticulate and/or pathologically afraid of class participation.

Goals

- ◆ Courses will emphasize current event topics so that students can relate to the 'here and now'. College will explore the use of business journals (Wall Street Journal) as a requirement for every core course. This will improve the degree to which students are engaged in the world around them, with particularly emphasis on news items.
- ◆ Increased focus on student participation in class discussions
- ◆ Assign projects that will enhance the student's ability to articulate positions as well as increase student confidence.

- ◆ Invite motivational speakers/renown business leaders to address classes and COB majors in a forum. The speakers would discuss current events, career opportunities, public speaking and provide speaking tips to the students.
- ◆ Create the kind of atmosphere within which a class can feel relaxed and at ease so participation can come naturally.
- ◆ Plan for questions prior to class- some questions should be content oriented, some conceptually oriented, and some relating to homework assignments. A reasonable goal might be established a minimum average of 4 (or some other reasonable number) per class.
- ◆ Create or implement guidelines for successful group interaction for teamwork assignments that allow the instructor to assess the success of a group during the semester and give students a little more structure. Consider giving students additional credit if they are willing to work as tutors for other people in the classroom.

Challenges

- ◆ Developing a reading culture.
- ◆ Quiz points are used to encourage their participation however, not everyone takes advantage of the opportunities.
- ◆ The lack of technology in the classroom is an obstacle to encouraging students to participate in the outside classroom.
- ◆ Creation of a tutor agreement to benefit all participants will take additional time.

Resources Needed

- ◆ Technology in the classroom is necessary to teach hands-on resources available to the students. Specifically, a “smart classroom” in the aviation department would give this technology to the faculty and students.
- ◆ The resource that is needed is more wireless access so that students can connect to the internet, outside of the lab, and have a fast enough connection to get the work done.
- ◆ Students need shared storage space on a server so they can save certain assignments.

Measurement of Strategy

- ◆ Accurate recordkeeping by the instructor regarding frequency and quality of participation would provide a measurement.
- ◆ Student comments on the faculty evaluation forms provide feedback on this topic.
- ◆ The results could be measured through a survey/questionnaire being developed and administered to the students and instructors to determine the success of this program.

Responsibility

- ◆ In the case of the CPA Exam, this should be the responsibility of the Chair with cooperation from the Mississippi State Board of Public Accountancy subject to confidentiality constraints.
- ◆ Department Chairs should assess faculty performance.
- ◆ The instructors/professors should be responsible for assessing results in their classrooms.

GOAL: TO INCREASE FEEDBACK TO STUDENTS

Current Practices

- ◆ Post class notes on the internet for all students to view.
- ◆ In-class quizzes and problems give students and the instructor feedback on the concepts they are not grasping. Test grades also give students feedback about the instructor's expectations.
- ◆ Make comments on the cases and give students feedback where they can improve. Invite students to come to the office and discuss their cases and tests.
- ◆ Brief oral critique after student presentations.
- ◆ Students complete homework assignments online which are automatically and instantly graded. In addition, sample tests with keys are provided prior to all scheduled tests.
- ◆ In classes which require team projects, the instructor's home telephone number is on the syllabus.
- ◆ Study guides are provided to the principles classes.
- ◆ Students may also email assignments. For these, response is usually on the day that the student emailed the homework. Included are comments to offer suggestions for improvement, but also comments to let the student know when they have done a great job on an assignment in which they completed with limited to no errors.
- ◆ ThinkWave, an online classroom management software, is utilized. Personal accounts can be established for each student. It allows the instructor to post attendance, upcoming assignments/projects, and lecture notes to a secure online site. Using the web, students are able to access their class and personal information from the ThinkWave website.

Strengths

- ◆ Students appreciate the instructor's willingness to take the time to spend with them.
- ◆ ThinkWave allows students to track their progress on a daily basis. There are no surprises at the end of the semester.

Weaknesses

- ◆ Not all students take advantage of additional help of feedback.
- ◆ Better quality feedback from the faculty evaluations would occur if the student evaluation forms were administered during another time rather than dead week (this is too hectic).
- ◆ Some students are afraid to admit they do not understand the material and will not seek help outside of the classroom. An instructor can only encourage students to seek help and cannot force them to do so.

Goals

- ◆ All students should ask for help when they feel they need it.
- ◆ To have students prepare for class before attending.
- ◆ “Work in progress” is reviewed when requested. This reduces uncertainty and increases motivation to avoid the last minute rush.
- ◆ In the future, implement more online testing methods, possibly through WebCT, so that students will have immediate feedback.
- ◆ Make each student with a 70 average or less meet with the instructor personally for consultation.
- ◆ University/College of Business would feature some type of online grading book.
- ◆ Remind students that they can come see the instructor for help after every class meeting. This approach is simple, but effective.

Challenges

- ◆ One challenge is that not all students will participate. Quite frankly, the students that need additional feedback/tutoring are the very students that do not seek help.
- ◆ Feedback **to** students, and “Asking **for** student feedback,” seem to be two very different things.
- ◆ Some students will interpret suggestions (feedback) as criticism of their work.
- ◆ Funds must be available for salaries to teaching assistants for labs and tutoring.

- ◆ The system needs to acknowledge to students and itself when the student is in the role of being a customer and when the student is in the role of being a student.

Resources

- ◆ A handout for students, *Etiquette And Your Role As A Member Of A Class*, would be a great resource.
- ◆ Time and money are the resources needed to purchase online grading software and to prepare faculty to use it.

Timetable

- ◆ The timetable for implementation of these strategies is short-term. Most are already in progress or could be implemented in one to two semesters.

Measurement Strategy

- ◆ Perhaps a measurement of the number of students who stay at Delta State, not transferring elsewhere, because they like the way we handle them and their college experience.
- ◆ Measuring the frequency of interaction with students.
- ◆ Require students to maintain a learning log which includes an abstract of subject material covered in the learning activity, a detailed outline of chapters, and a list of questions to be asked at the beginning of next class meeting.

Responsibility

- ◆ The instructor and the chair should be responsible for assessment.

GOAL: TO ENHANCE THE ADVISEMENT PROCESS

Current Practices

- ◆ Providing one-on-one attention is currently in use.
- ◆ Individual faculty members are assigned advisees whom they meet with during the week of preregistration.
- ◆ A course of study is mapped out and the proper sequence of courses is discussed.
- ◆ When advisees are within two semesters of graduating, an official application for degree (program of study) is completed for the advisee.

Strengths

- ◆ Meeting with each student individually results in the formation of relationships that allows students to feel comfortable to meet with the instructor. Students feeling uncomfortable discussing unresolved problems may lead retention problems.
- ◆ Advisements help to create a bond between students and faculty. It creates favorable student attitudes toward the university.
- ◆ Advisement improves retention and assures timely progress toward the goal of graduation.

Weaknesses

- ◆ There are no safeguards with pin numbers. This process allows the student to go to another faculty member and get a pin number to register without ever consulting their advisor. Also, students can change the agreed-upon schedule after meeting with the advisor.

Goals

- ◆ Make the time to conscientiously and deliberately consult with each student.
- ◆ Students should feel comfortable talking about their problems in academia, personal life, and their future.
- ◆ Course registration online should be able to kick out students or not let students register for classes if they do not have the prerequisite.

- ◆ As schedules for any given semester is charted, the student's progress should be tracked using a form that can be used to create the student's application for degree in a timely manner.
- ◆ Pass on emails from Career Placement reference jobs, career fair, workshops, and interview.
- ◆ Increase the stress on the importance of taking courses in the correct sequence.
- ◆ Establish a database that provides not only information to the advisor, but also digital photo for better identification of our majors.

Challenges

- ◆ Sometimes students need to "vent" problems and are unsure what exactly they want to do after graduation.
- ◆ Students' ability to re-enter Pipeline and change courses/hours is an obstacle.
- ◆ Never merely give out student PIN numbers. Always take the time to ask students questions such as, "What are the courses you are planning to take?" What about graduate school? What career options are you considering?

Resources Needed

- ◆ Calendar and a clock are the only additional resources needed.
- ◆ Computer software must be developed to check for prerequisites and to prepare applications for degrees. This will require time and funds.

Timetable

- ◆ These strategies can be implemented in the spring 2004 semester.

Measurement Strategy

- ◆ Perhaps a measurement of the number of students who stay at Delta State, not transferring elsewhere, because they like the way we handle them and their college experience.
- ◆ Measuring the number of course substitution.

Responsibility

- ◆ Instructors, students, and administrators should assess the results.

TOPIC: STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Current Practices

- ◆ All departments offer and encourage internship with local businesses.
- ◆ Capstone courses, direct internships, and use of the internet are used to augment course assignments.
- ◆ Research projects with existing businesses.
- ◆ Use of WebCT by selected instructors for online course materials.

Strengths

- ◆ Enrollment in graduate classes is growing at a rate of 75% a year.
- ◆ Requiring students to work with existing businesses and professionals teaches students how to interact with various participants in the business world.

Weaknesses

- ◆ The only negative is the limited number of students that can participate in the internships.
- ◆ Course enrollments of 50+ in undergraduate and as many as 50 in graduate courses are not compatible with student engagement with the faculty or one another.
- ◆ Community involvement is not encouraged.

Goals

- ◆ ALL students in the future must be orally tested and examined to guarantee original work.
- ◆ Encourage students to become more involved in campus and community activities.
- ◆ Implement an internship requirement for all College of Business majors.

Challenges

- ◆ Finding more companies willing to have an intern programs for our students.
- ◆ Internships are successful but only a few students are fortunate in getting them.
- ◆ There are only a few computer-related internships in the Mississippi Delta area.
- ◆ Students often don't have much extra time because of course load and work hours, so they don't want to add anything more to their schedules.

Resources Needed

- ◆ The formation of a relationship between the department and community businesses would be significant in the development and implementation of the program.
- ◆ More communication with employers, which necessitates travel expenses.

Timetable

- ◆ The process should begin in the 2004-05 academic year and will require 3 to 5 years to fully develop strong relationships.

Measurement Strategy

- ◆ This strategy can be measured with improved term paper scores and verified with a student survey.
- ◆ The number of internship opportunity for students.

Responsibility

- ◆ The professor and department chair are responsible for assessment.

TOPIC: ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE

Current Practices

- ◆ The online graduate program requires students be able to use Word, e-mail, chat rooms and other computer skills.
- ◆ Students are required to use spreadsheets, computer simulations, the internet, Powerpoint, Adobe Acrobat, and web sites depending on the particular course and its applications.
- ◆ Small papers, case work, presentations, web-based research, and library research.

Strengths

- ◆ The undergraduate CD is particularly useful as students are required to use the technology as opposed to being lectured about it.

Weaknesses

- ◆ Many students do not know how to use the internet or library resources to gain access to the latest aviation information.
- ◆ Many students do not have access to computers at home and the DSU computer labs are not open 24/7.
- ◆ There aren't enough machines for every classroom to use PowerPoint.
- ◆ There is no computing essentials class in the general education core.

Goals

- ◆ By senior year, students will have a portfolio of projects/assignments.
- ◆ Seminars and workshops must be provided for faculty to improve their technology skills.
- ◆ Add a faculty member with a strong networking background including real-world and academic experience.
- ◆ Establish a computing essentials course such as CIS 205 as a general education requirement.

Challenges

- ◆ Some students have no idea how to type, or do an academic research on the internet.
- ◆ The lack of technology in the classroom is an obstacle to encouraging students to participate in the outside activities.
- ◆ Not enough faculty are comfortable with the technology that is available, much less any new technology.

Resources Needed

- ◆ All this technology costs a good deal of money. University policy makers are going to have to commit to spending large amounts of money to buy new technology as it becomes available.
- ◆ We need more time and resources to evaluate technology.
- ◆ The campus as a whole could benefit from a research class that focused on online databases and the various research methods.
- ◆ Making sure the computer labs are available to students enough hours of the day and evening.

Timetable

- ◆ One to two years will be necessary to implement many of these strategies.

Measurement Strategy

- ◆ Students should be tested on computer and technology skills.
- ◆ The number of employment opportunities available to students upon graduation. Student portfolios should enhance the marketability of our graduates.

Responsibility

- ◆ Instructors, students, and administrators should assess the results.