

To: Curriculum Committee
From: John McGee
Re: Assurance of Learning "Goals"
Date: November 12, 2004

Jon has asked me to attend your meeting on November 22 to discuss learning goals. I thought this memo might be helpful in understanding our mutual task:

1. We have to show that we are teaching the things we say we are in the core and that the feedback from the assessment committee is used to evaluate and revise the curriculum, if necessary; we also have to make sure that the learning goals are properly written and being evaluated. Ultimately we are trying to say what it is we intend our students to learn, where we are providing that information/skill development in the curriculum, also making sure that all our core courses cover those agreed upon areas in each section, then how we are assessing whether or not they are actually learning those things, and taking the assessment data, discussing it and modifying the curriculum where appropriate.
2. The dean's strategic plan for 04-05 calls for us to complete learning outcomes and assessment plans for BBA and all graduate degrees.
3. AACSB reviewers will expect us to explicitly identify the (learning) goals and the demonstrations of achievement.
4. While the learning goals cannot be exhaustively stated for any higher education program, it is possible to set educational targets and to assure that the learning is progressing in the specified direction. The AACSB timeline calls for us to begin use of some measures with monitoring and revision to refine definitions this year. By next year we are expected to have an assurance of learning (assessment) system in place with measures and record keeping for assessing programs. By our visit year (fall 2006) we must assure that results from assurance of learning (assessment) measures guide continuing development of degree programs and have processes in place to evaluate and update the assurance of learning system
5. The college must specify learning goals for each separate degree program. Generally, such goals are anticipated for each degree, not for separate majors or concentrations within a degree.
6. At the course level, faculty members sometimes have very detailed learning goals. The standards do not focus on such detailed learning goals.
7. The faculty in aggregate are the persons responsible for listing and defining the school's learning goals. The Curriculum Committee is the faculty's representative for this task. Other schools may do it differently, but deep involvement of faculty members in the process is a critical feature of whatever mechanisms the school uses.