Reengineering the Undergraduate Business Core: A Business Process Approach
AACSB Emerging Curricula Fall 2003

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Associate Dean
for Academic Affairs

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Director
Business Core Curriculum
University of Arkansas
- Flagship land grant university
- Enrollment 16,449

Sam M. Walton College of Business
- 3,319 students
- 3,046 undergraduate
- 273 graduate students
• 2 bachelor degree programs (BSBA & BSIB)
• 5 master degree programs (MBA, MAcc, MIS, MAEcon, MTLM)
• 2 Ph.D. programs (Business & Economics)

• Undergraduate program ranked in top 50 in U.S. News&WR
  – 28th among public universities (up from 40th previous year)

• Six departments:
  Accounting  Economics
  Finance  Information Systems
  Management  Marketing and Logistics

• Faculty: 67 tenure/tenure track and 22 non-tenure track
Today’s Discussion

THE PAST

the curriculum change process

THE PRESENT

content of the integrated core

THE FUTURE

implementation of the new core curriculum
THE PAST:
THE CURRICULUM REVISION PROCESS

99-00

- benchmarking activities with other universities
- evaluative discussions & information gathering
- Undergraduate Program Committee formulated discussion proposal
CONTRIBUTING TO THE DIALOGUE ON THE NEED FOR CHANGE

- WCOB business alumni
- AACSB conference participants
- 15 benchmark schools
- graduating WCOB students
- Dean’s Executive Advisory Council
- companies hiring our grads
- Business Alumni Advisory Council
There is still a need for employees with strong disciplinary training...but that training must be coupled with a stronger understanding of the relationships among business functions.
under the old program, the majority of our students were not actively engaged in our program until some point in their sophomore year
A third issue that was raised... RETENTION!
Fear that students retain little of what they have learned beyond the scope of the individual class; under the new program, we are making a systematic attempt to revisit core concepts throughout the curriculum, applying the material in diverse contexts
### THE PAST:
#### THE CURRICULUM REVISION PROCESS

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<td>- campus visits by five schools w/undergrad curriculum innovations</td>
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                • FIPSE proposal  
                • UPC develops detailed course outlines/learning objectives |

The Past: The Curriculum Revision Process
## THE PAST:  
**THE CURRICULUM REVISION PROCESS**

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• initial drafts of course outlines  
• FIPSE proposal  
• UPC develops detailed course outlines/learning objectives | 78% |
| **02-03**     | • FIPSE grant awarded $230,000  
• faculty vote on new courses and policies  
• course development teams  
• instructional designers  
• position developed for Business Core Curriculum Director | 96% |
The term “business processes” refers to the essential activities that every business must perform to succeed: acquiring resources, producing a good or service, and selling the good or service. These processes are inherently interdisciplinary and provide an organizing background that places each functional area of business in perspective.

~ Walker and Black 2000
Why Should We Have an Integrated Core?

- Mirrors changes in the business community.
- Reflects desires of Advisory Boards, alumni, recruiters.
- Enables better retention as material is learned in context.
- Facilitates students seeing how things “fit together” – an emphasis in student focus groups.
- We should innovate when innovation is needed to support our goals.
Highlights of the Reengineered Core*

- Business core reduced from 42 hours to integrated core of 33 hours
- Courses taught by individual instructors rather than teams
- Courses will be developed/taught from an international perspective and will integrate information technology and communications
- Departments control 24 hours for their majors
- Departments may specify collateral courses in another discipline
- 15 hrs of business electives which allow for elective tracks

*see handout for comparison with old core
Suggested sequence...

Freshman Year

- Freshman Business Connections
- Computer Competency
- Legal Environment of Business

- Microeconomics
- Business Foundations
- Data Analysis & Interpretation
Sophomore Year

- Macroeconomics
- Markets and Consumers
- Production & Delivery of Goods/Services
- Acquiring/Managing Human Resources
- Acquiring/Managing Financial Resources

Junior Year

- Business Strategy & Planning (6 hrs)
Freshman Business Connections

enhancement of personal development skills, including time management, stress management and academic planning, necessary for success; introduction to business career options and opportunities

effective vehicle for disseminating information to new students
Computer Competency Requirement

Includes on-line competency testing to assess students’ skills and knowledge in Windows, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Blackboard, Internet, and Email. Also provides computer-based teaching modules in each area.
Business Foundations

Presents an integrated view of business organizations by studying the business processes that are common to most businesses, including the acquisition of capital & human resources, purchasing, production, and sales; develops the accounting model that captures information about processes and reports results through formal financial statements.
faculty have made a commitment to develop their capability to teach outside their functional specialty...

Business Foundations

Development Team:  Staffing Spring ’04:

- Accounting
- Economics
- Info Systems
- Accounting (5)
- Info Systems (3)
- Finance (4)
- Marketing (4)
Enable students to develop an understanding regarding the application/interpretation of basic data analysis techniques with an emphasis on statistical applications; designed to address the data issues that students will encounter in the remainder of the business core.
Data Analysis & Interpretation

**Development Team:**
- Info Systems
- Info Systems
- Management

**Staffing Spring ’04:**
- Accounting (2)
- Info Systems (2)
- Finance (2)
- Management (1)
- Marketing (3)
Markets and Consumers

Build a fundamental understanding of consumers and markets and the business processes related to attracting customers; explore key decisions required to understand the existence of markets and how buyers within those markets may be accessed profitably.
Production
and Delivery of
Goods and Services

The study of the acquisition and movement of materials both within/across firms needed to produce the end-product/service. Focus on concepts and methodologies for managing the flow of material & information, including knowledge of information systems and ERP systems.
Acquiring and Managing Human Resources

Study the process of acquiring, motivating, and retaining employees; emphasis given to the development, implementation, and assessment of policies and practices consistent with legal, social, human, and environmental dynamics.
Acquiring and Managing Financial Resources

Key decisions related to the acquisition and management of capital resources, including decisions regarding what to acquire, how to finance the acquisition, and issues related to the accounting of those capital resources; focus on decision models and the identification of information needs.
Business Strategy and Planning: Theory and Practice

Integrative study of the managerial decisions that ensure the long-term effectiveness of the organization; introduces students to an understanding of strategic competitiveness and the way in which business strategy in large and small decisions is formulated and implemented; includes theoretical & experiential components.
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<tr>
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<th>FRESHMAN COURSES</th>
<th>SOPHOMORE COURSES</th>
<th>JUNIOR COURSE</th>
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<td>02-03</td>
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IMPLEMENTING THE NEW CORE

Dean & Assoc. Dean

Business Core Curriculum Director

course development teams/leaders

course coordinators

instructional design team & media support

FIPSE

Undergraduate Program Committee
Course Development Teams

Responsible for:
• Detailed course development
• Teaching material development
• Faculty training workshops
Course Coordinator

Serves as the lead faculty member among those teaching each course

Becomes the key personnel in the implementation and oversight of the course
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<td>An instrumental entity in the identification of strengths/weaknesses of the previous curriculum as well as general design of the reengineered program.</td>
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<td>Serves in an oversight capacity, ensuring that all courses continue to operate in a coordinated, integrated fashion.</td>
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The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) is providing $230,000 to support the development and implementation of the integrated curriculum.
Business Core Curriculum Director

Responsible for:
• Oversight of course development
• Management of implementation
• Scheduling/staffing of core
• Evaluation of effectiveness
• Dissemination of core-related info
Instructional Designers/Media Support

Responsible for:
• Arranging content to best serve the learning process and the learner
• Developing a coordinated, seamless presentation
• Providing alternative ways to evaluate whether learning objectives are met
• Serving as an additional mechanism for transferring information between teams, ensuring that we are all keeping on task
IMPLEMENTING THE NEW CORE

ASSessment

NECESSitates

strategies

Dean & Assoc. Dean

Undergraduate Program Committee

course coordinators

FIPSE

Business Core Curriculum

Instructional design team

media support

Course development teams/leaders
Plans To Share
Our Efforts With Others

- Continued discussions with other schools
- Systematic documentation at all stages
- Develop brochures containing overviews
- Publication and presentation at conferences
- Invitations to visit campus/observe program
- Integrated curriculum website
WALTONCOLLEGE.UARK.EDU
CLICK ON NEW CORE CURRICULUM