

Business Session Notes

Disciplinary Sector Leaders

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Process

During the first session, the segmental leaders, Rhoda Belemjian (STCC) and Miranda Lam (Salem State), suggested that the group break into three smaller groups (by table) in order to reach some agreement about what the appropriate foundational courses might be, based on the matrix provided to the group. During the second session, the three groups shared their discussions to reach large group consensus, leaving related questions or courses not on the potential foundational course list until last. Stephanie Chapko (UMA and MTP) served as note taker and answered any related questions for the group. The group disciplined itself to allow specific content discussions to wait until spring, when syllabi would be available to assist with discussions.

Foundational Courses

Foundational courses were defined as courses that were common to both associate and baccalaureate programs which could be taken at community colleges and prepare transfer students for smooth transitions into and timely graduation from baccalaureate programs. The results of those discussions are listed below:

- **Business Law** – The group agreed that content discussions in the spring would determine whether or not this course could be designated as a foundational course. Constitutional law is part of that consideration. In addition, because all of the baccalaureate institutions were not represented at the meeting and two of them (UMB and UML) use business law as an elective, this matter needs to be researched before designation as a foundational course.
- **Business Info Systems** – The groups found this term confusing, since it could apply to a range of courses, from computer applications to MIS to IT. However, by changing the name of the course to **Computer Applications** (ex: Microsoft Office, with word processing, database, and spreadsheets covered), the group agreed that this would be a foundational course. However, since all of the baccalaureate institutions were not represented at the meeting and at least one of them (UMD) did not list this course in their major requirements, this matter needs to be researched before designation as a foundational course.
- **Cost accounting** – Given variances in community college offerings and differing policies among baccalaureate institutions, the group quickly agreed that Cost Accounting was NOT a foundational course.
- **Financial accounting** – Some schools teach it in two semesters and others teach it in one semester. For two-semester courses, transferability of the course is certain but the number of transferable credits may vary, with some schools awarding elective credit. The group quickly agreed Financial Accounting was a foundational course.
- **Managerial accounting** – The group quickly agreed that Managerial Accounting was a foundational course.
- **Microeconomics** - The group quickly agreed that Microeconomics was a foundational course.
- **Macroeconomics** - The group also quickly agreed that Macroeconomics was a foundational course.
- **Financial management** – Given constraints on the transfer of finance courses to baccalaureate institutions and the fact that so many other courses are already designated as foundational courses, it was determined that Financial Management would NOT be considered a foundational course.
- **Management** – The group spent some time discussing what kind of management would be a foundational course and determined that, while Organizational Behavior would not be a foundational course, **Principles of Management** could be a foundational course (and recommended that the foundational course list be revised to include this course title, for clarification). However, three baccalaureate schools do not list Management in its major requirements (two of the schools, UMD and UML were not represented), so further research/discussion of course content is required to ascertain its status as a foundational course.
- **Marketing** - The group quickly agreed that Marketing was a foundational course.

Mathematics

The group spent a considerable amount of time discussing math foundational courses. All of the AACSB schools must require calculus for accreditation (and some non-AACSB baccalaureate schools also require it). However, the group agreed that statistics was essential to a business major. Others indicated that

having some algebra background was essential to calculus but also advantageous to schools which require finite math, rather than calculus. Finally, one school has developed an innovative math requirement for business majors, one that integrates the various math courses under discussion; however, that school is willing to discuss this matter with its faculty to determine if a compromise can be reached for the purpose of creating a MassTransfer Pathway. The group finally settled on “College Algebra or Statistics,” assuming that College Algebra is part of the:

Intro Algebra → Intermediate Algebra → College Algebra → Precalculus → Calculus sequence. Schools requiring calculus may then add that information in the “Advising Notes” section of the MassTransfer Pathway chart for those schools.

Related Discussions

- 200 vs. 300 level courses – Baccalaureate schools seemed willing to consider 200-level community college courses if the comparable courses at the baccalaureate school were 300-level. In many cases, the level itself is administrative, more indicative of an order in which the major department would prefer students to take the courses, rather than for more content-related reasons.
- Introduction to Business – Most community colleges require this course in business transfer programs, but it is not included in most baccalaureate programs. Although there was discussion, with differing opinions, about the value of this course, the group finally agreed that, while the course may be valuable and (usually transferable as an elective), it was NOT a foundational course.
- Flexibility and change – In general, community colleges understood the implications of discussions for their own institutional programs, both groups seemed in agreement (except for math and intro to business) about what a baccalaureate business program should be, and community colleges in particular were willing to make changes for the betterment of students. However, they also requested that baccalaureate institutions honestly and critically examine the differences in their own baccalaureate programs for the greater good, creating a MassTransfer Pathway, if the changes would not compromise the academic integrity of their programs.
- Number of foundational courses – Two questions were asked, whether the foundational courses plus MTB would exceed 60 credits, and whether the foundational courses would exceed major residency requirements. Both issues were resolved and it was determined that, if all potential foundational courses were approved as such, they would not exceed 60 credits or go beyond major residency requirements.
- At one table, although this was not discussed in the general session (time ran short), the smaller group agreed that it would be important to include some reference to explicitly clarify that the Business MassTransfer Pathway (and not the business career programs) was the appropriate route to transfer, perhaps including that statement in the Advising Notes for every Business Transfer Pathway document.