

**ST. AMBROSE UNIVERSITY
DOCTORATE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
PROGRAM REVIEW
MARCH 18, 2003**

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PROPOSED ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY THE EDUCATIONAL POLICIES COMMITTEE

We are requesting approval of DBA 931 Special Topics in Human Resources, DBA 960 Special Topics in Strategic Management, and DBA 961 Special Topics in Strategic Management. The four-point facts sheets and tentative syllabi are attached as a separate document labeled DBA Proposed Actions. Once the courses are taught, the final syllabi will be submitted to the Educational Policies Committee.

There are no other courses to be changed, deleted, renumbered, etc.

OVERALL DESCRIPTION OF THE DOCTORATE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

We have reviewed the catalog and have updated the necessary changes.

The DBA Program is designed to enable experienced professionals with an advanced degree to develop a deeper understanding of management theory for the advancement of knowledge and professional practice. Through a 48 credit hour curriculum, the DBA Program is structured for students to build their understanding of organizational strategy and firm performance, advance their comprehension of human behavior in organizations, and to improve their analytical skills. The DBA Program consists of twelve three credit hour courses, written and oral comprehensive examinations, and a twelve credit hour dissertation. The DBA Program is governed by two committees: the Admissions Retention Committee which makes all admittance and retention decisions in the DBA Program, and the Doctoral Faculty Council which is the primary curricular, staffing, and standards committee.

This is the first program review for the Doctorate of Business Administrative Program. The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities conducted a focused evaluation of the Doctorate of Business Administration Program on April 30th and May 1st of 2001. The following strengths and opportunities for improvement were detailed on pp. 8 and 9 of the Higher Learning Commission's report. For the complete report, see the attached file labeled DBA NCA.pdf.

Strengths:

- The DBA Program has strong leadership; program coordinators have developed and enforce a comprehensive set of quality-based policies and procedures to guide the program.
- The top management of St. Ambrose University, including the President and the Provost, provide strong and unwavering support for the program.
- The DBA program is characterized by regular and effective communications, especially among the DBA faculty, in supporting all aspects of the program, but also among the DBA faculty and the rest of the St. Ambrose community.
- St. Ambrose has been able to attract and hire high quality doctorally-credentialed faculty for DBA training; faculty morale, collegiality, and motivation are high.

- St. Ambrose provides adequate resources and support for DBA faculty and students, including library and electronic data bases; especially notable is the providing of teaching load reductions for faculty.
- The DBA program has been able to recruit and enroll quality doctoral students, consistent with the mission and goals of the program as originally formulated.
- Critical external stakeholders of St. Ambrose (e.g., key corporate organizations) have responded enthusiastically to the DBA program and its enhancement of the image of St. Ambrose as a provider of quality education.
- Major internal stakeholders (e.g., Deans of other units on campus) also endorse the program and applaud its results.
- DBA faculty have created a supportive, non-threatening learning environment for students, who perceive that they are treated as professional colleagues.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- The team could find no missed opportunities for improvement that would rise to the level of a concern that the institution must address prior to its next comprehensive visit. This does not mean that the DBA program is perfect. It does mean that there are no obvious deficiencies in the program that if not addressed in the immediate future will prohibit the program from realizing its full potential.

Long-range plans (next five years) for the DBA Program include:

- Maintain the high standards of the DBA Program.
- Establish a regional reputation as a quality DBA Program.
- Develop and conduct an evaluation process for our graduates.
- Maintain relationships with graduates of the DBA Program.
- Develop ties with local businesses to sponsor student research.
- Foster greater faculty/student collaboration in research projects.
- Maintain current enrollment status.
- Hold a research forum exhibiting the research of the DBA students for other students and faculty at SAU.

ASSESSMENT OF THE DOCTORATE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

A) Doctorate of Business Administration Assessment Plan

1) Mission Statement

We have reworded our mission statement slightly from that stated in the 1997 Self Study Report for Continuing Accreditation submitted to the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities. The mission itself has not changed – the purpose of the rewording was to simplify our prior mission statement. The new mission statement is below.

The mission of the St. Ambrose University Doctorate of Business Administration Program is to enable experienced professionals with an advanced degree to develop a deeper understanding of management theory for the advancement of knowledge and professional practice.

In part, the mission of SAU reads, “The University facilitates learning, especially through quality instruction in the liberal arts, along with pre-professional, professional, career preparation, and a variety of lifelong learning programs.” The relationship of the DBA to SAU’s purpose and mission is described in the Self Study Report, some excerpts of which are noted below.

Having a long history of maintaining a balance between the liberal arts and professional studies and after considerable experience with the MBA, it is felt that the DBA is a significant, logical, and deep commitment to the living mission statement and overall purpose of the University. (p. 195)

The clear and absolute expectation is that those faculty teaching in the Program have an unswerving regard and interest in sustaining the core values of SAU and that wherever practicable course offerings will reflect, among others, one of the Institution’s core belief statements: “St. Ambrose University, rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition, believes in your inherent God-given dignity and your worth as an individual.” (p. 195)

2) Learning Objectives

The goal of the DBA Program is to create a “scholarly practitioner” in the field of management who is able to apply the knowledge gained in the workplace. To meet that goal, the following learning objectives have been developed:

1. To enhance comprehension of human behavior in organizations.
2. To enhance knowledge of human resource issues facing organizations.
3. To build an understanding of organization theory.
4. To build an understanding of organization strategy and firm performance.
5. To develop knowledge and skills in research methodologies.

3) Methods for Assessment

First, we would like to address how the course curriculum helps achieve our stated objectives. Next, we will discuss assessment measures.

How curriculum meets stated objectives (see Note 1):

Objective 1: To enhance comprehension of human behavior in organizations.

DBA 910: Readings Seminar – Organizational Behavior
DBA 940: Special Topics – Organizational Behavior
DBA 941: Special Topics – Organizational Behavior
DBA 990: Dissertation (see Note 2)

Objective 2: To enhance knowledge of human resource issues facing organizations.

DBA 911: Readings Seminar – Human Resources
DBA 930: Special Topics – Human Resources
DBA 931: Special Topics – Human Resources
DBA 990: Dissertation (see Note 2)

Objective 3: To build an understanding of organization theory.

DBA 912: Readings Seminar – Organization Theory
DBA 950: Special Topics – Organization Theory
DBA 951: Special Topics – Organization Theory
DBA 990: Dissertation (see Note 2)

Objective 4: To build an understanding of organization strategy and firm performance.

DBA 913: Readings Seminar – Strategic Management
DBA 960: Special Topics – Strategic Management
DBA 961: Special Topics – Strategic Management
DBA 990: Dissertation (see Note 2)

Objective 5: To develop knowledge and skills in research methodologies.

DBA 901: Research Methods I
DBA 902: Research Methods II
DBA 903: Research Methods III
DBA 925: Case Research in Management
DBA 990: Dissertation (see Note 2)

Note 1. Further information about how the courses specifically accomplish the objectives is included in the four-point forms and syllabi approved by the Educational Policies Committee.

Note 2. DBA 990: Dissertation focuses specifically on the student's major interest area (i.e., organizational behavior, human resources, organization theory, or strategic management). The dissertation will necessarily include a substantial research component regardless of the area of emphasis.

Assessment Methods for the Five Learning Objectives:

The assessment methods described below were developed in 1999 when the first Assessment Plan for the DBA Program was developed. The methods were selected in light of the mission and research orientation of the DBA Program. Following the assessment method, we comment on the progress or/and utility of the particular method.

1. **Written and oral comprehensive exams.** The purpose of the comprehensive exams is to examine the student's command of the management literature and his or her ability to integrate this literature into models that have theoretical significance and practical utility. The written exam will be administered on two days, each consisting of one 4-hour testing period. On the first day students will be given five questions that cover the major content seminars that all students are required to take (910, 911, 912, 913, 925), and each student will choose to answer four of the five questions. On the second day of testing, students will answer three questions: one in methods (901, 902, 903), one question from a self-identified support area, and one question in their emphasis area. The oral exam will be administered after the written exam. Examiners of the written exam will be given the opportunity to question the student at the oral comprehensive exam.

To date, eight DBA students have successfully completed both written and oral comprehensive examinations.

2. **Dissertation.** The dissertation is the culmination of the student's academic achievements and represents an original contribution by the student to the field of management. The student will select a dissertation committee and dissertation chair. Under the guidance of the dissertation chair, the student will prepare a dissertation proposal that demonstrates a high-level knowledge of the relevant literature, makes a unique, specific, and identifiable advance in the knowledge or understanding of the topic, and is of potentially sufficient quality to be publishable in a peer reviewed journal. The student must successfully complete an oral defense of the dissertation proposal prior to continuing with the research project. Upon completion of the research, the student must orally defend the dissertation to the satisfaction of the committee members.

To date, two DBA students have successfully defended their dissertation proposals.

- 3. Grades by instructors.** The grades by instructors are based typically on the major research project required for the course, an oral presentation of the research project, examinations, homework, and participation in discussions.

Grades are reviewed by the DBA Coordinator. Any student who receives a “C” or below, or whose grade point average falls under a 3.0 is reviewed for retention by the Admissions Retention Committee.

- 4. Faculty feedback.** In addition to feedback normally given on course requirements, the instructors will provide detailed feedback during the semester on students’ research projects to facilitate student learning of academic research and writing. In addition, students select faculty mentors after completing their fifth DBA course. The mentors provide students with feedback as needed based on student or faculty concerns.

Faculty typically require one or two drafts of students’ research papers in order to provide feedback to enhance student learning of the research and writing process. In addition, faculty mentors serve as a conduit for students to receive feedback outside of the classroom environment.

- 5. Research presentations and publications by students.** Students will be strongly encouraged to submit their research for presentation at academic conferences and to journals for publication.

A number of DBA students have submitted and presented their research papers at peer-reviewed academic conferences and journals. For details, see Assessment of Teaching and Learning in the DBA Program.

- 6. Other public means of presentations.** Student presentations of their acquired knowledge in the business sector, i.e., outside the academic arena.

While we hear on frequent occasions how the DBA Program has helped our students in their organizations, we feel since our five year assessment program was developed in 1999 that it is unrealistic to collect this information. We believe that “formal” presentations to the business sector of the knowledge the students gain may be relatively rare; however, informal presentations of their knowledge occurs on a recurrent basis.

- 7. Student course evaluations.** An evaluation form was developed for use in the DBA Program. This form asks students open-ended questions about the course content, as well as the instructor’s delivery and classroom climate.

Course evaluations are completed by students at the end of each course. The evaluations are reviewed by the faculty member, the DBA Coordinator, the Dean of the College of Business, and the Academic Vice President.

8. Student portfolio. Students will be required to keep a portfolio of their research papers.

We believe it is unnecessary to continue to require students to provide us with a portfolio of their research papers. We believe that the faculty have a solid grasp of student progress given:

- the discussions at our weekly faculty meetings
- we are likely to have students in more than one class, allowing us to assess their growth
- external feedback when students have research papers accepted at academic conferences (these papers are maintained by our administrative assistant)
- students are required to take written and oral comprehensive examinations, which are graded by faculty (written examinations are maintained by the DBA Coordinator)
- students must complete a dissertation under the guidance of a dissertation committee and chair (dissertations are bound and placed in O'Keefe Library)
- faculty members are often asked to review research papers by students who are considering submission to an academic conference or journal.

9. Employer and graduate surveys. A written survey or structured interview will be devised and administered to graduates of the program and employers to assess the accomplishment of our objectives.

As of the date of this program review, we have not yet had any graduates of our program. Hence, no employer or graduate surveys have been administered.

10. Career pursuits of students. The career orientations of our students vary. Our students are interested in the DBA Program for a number of reasons including: pursuing consulting careers, pursuing academic careers, advancing in one's current organization, enhancing mobility outside one's current organization, and simply self-satisfaction. Through our graduate survey, we will assess how well the program helped our students achieve their career pursuits.

As indicated above, we are still awaiting our first DBA graduates. Thus, at this time we have not formally assessed how well our program has helped our students achieve their career pursuits.

4) Documentation of Student Learning in the DBA Program

1. Grade transcripts, written and oral comprehensive examination results, and dissertation signature page will be kept in the student's file located in the College of Business Office and maintained by the DBA Program Administrative Assistant.

The above items are being collected and stored as indicated. In addition, the DBA Coordinator maintains a copy of all written comprehensive examinations.

2. Student dissertations will be housed in the O'Keefe Library under the direction of the Library Director.

At this time, we do not have any completed dissertations. However, per discussions with the Library Director, we do plan to house student dissertations in O'Keefe Library.

3. Students will be required to keep a portfolio of their class research projects, research presentations, publications, and other public means of presentations.

The DBA Administrative Assistant maintains copies of student manuscripts accepted for presentation at academic conferences and student publications. As indicated in the Assessment Methods section, we believe it is unnecessary to require students to submit a portfolio of their research projects in light of our weekly faculty meetings where we discuss student progress and in light of the other material retained (e.g., written comprehensive examinations, dissertations). In addition, we feel it is unrealistic to collect public student presentations of their knowledge to audiences outside the academic sector.

4. The DBA Coordinator will collect and store the employer and graduate surveys.

At of this date, we do not yet have any graduates. The DBA Coordinator will collect and store this information.

5. The Academic Vice President and Dean of the College of Business will receive the student course evaluations for review and inclusion in faculty personnel files.

DBA course evaluations are given to the Academic Vice President and Dean of the College of Business, and are placed into the faculty member's personnel file.

6. Course instructors and faculty mentors will be sources of feedback information on student progress.

At the weekly meetings of the faculty teaching in the DBA Program, course instructors and faculty mentors discuss student issues and, if necessary, how to address students having difficulties.

5) Use of Assessment Information to Improve Education

The DBA Coordinator and faculty meet on a weekly basis to discuss the program. As assessment information is gathered it will be studied at these meetings and needed steps for program improvement will be implemented.

The DBA Coordinator and course instructor also routinely provide students with performance feedback. The faculty mentor is an additional resource for both students and faculty to address concerns. In addition, students receive feedback on their written comprehensive examination performance from their faculty mentors. The DBA Coordinator provides students with formal letters indicating their performance on written and oral comprehensive examinations. For their dissertation proposal, students receive a completed signature page indicating whether they received a pass, conditional pass, or failure. In addition, to achieve a successful defense of their completed dissertation, students must obtain signatures by all members of their dissertation committees.

6) Evaluation of the Doctorate of Business Administration Assessment Plan

The assessment plan will be evaluated on an annual basis every April at a weekly meeting of the DBA Coordinator and faculty.

B) Assessment of Teaching and Learning in the DBA Program

- 1) Present and describe any data which assesses student learning of DBA Program objectives.

Student Paper Presentations/Publications:

Year 2003

Duster, S. (2003, April). **The influence of national culture on organizational culture formation.** Symposium to be presented at the Midwest Academy of Management, St. Louis, MO.

Parise, M. (2003, April). **CEO selection: A model and direction for future research.** Paper to be presented at the Midwest Academy of Management, St. Louis, MO.

Parise, M. (2003, April). **Does organization culture influence the effectiveness of a mentoring program?** Symposium to be presented at the Midwest Academy of Management, St. Louis, MO.

Natrujirote, P. (2003, April). **The importance of organizational culture in public sector reforms.** Symposium to be presented at the Midwest Academy of Management, St. Louis, MO.

Year 2002

Allison, J. (2002, March). **The social boundaries of organizations: The influence of e-commerce.** Paper presented at the Southwest Academy of Management, St. Louis, MO.

Allison, J. (2002, March). **Virtual teams and boundary activities: The effects of electronic communication.** Paper presented at the Southwest Academy of Management, St. Louis, MO.

Delaney, J. (2002, February). **Why firms outsource internal auditing: A transaction cost perspective.** Paper presented at the North American Accounting Society Meeting, Chicago, IL.

Hibbeler, P. (2002, November). **Teleworking and fairness: Examination of referent comparisons in the virtual world.** Paper presented at the Institute of Behavioral and Applied Management Conference, Denver, CO.

Pillutla, A., & Stacey, W. (2002, October). **New entrants vs. incumbents in the online used car industry: The case of AutoTrader.com.** Paper presented at the 22nd International Annual Conference of the Strategic Management Society.

Stacey, W. (2002, March). **Boundaryless careers attributes for individual success.** Paper presented at the International Applied Business Research Conference, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

Sundberg, L. (2002, June). **Sexual harassment in the workplace.** Paper presented at the American Society for Training and Development International Conference, New Orleans, LA.

Thurman, C. (2002, April). **Product innovators in high-technological markets, knowledge isolating mechanisms and relative firm performance.** Paper presented at the Midwest Academy of Management, Indianapolis, IN.

Year 2001

Allison, J. (2001, November). **E-commerce strategies: A look at choices.** Paper presented at the Institute for Behavioral and Applied Management conference in Charleston, S.C.

Allison, J. (2001, October). **E-commerce firms versus physical firms: An initial strategy framework.** Paper presented at the International Business & Economics Conference, DePere, WI.

Delaney, J. (2001, March). **The impact of power on internal audit outsourcing decisions.** Paper presented at the meeting of the North American Accounting Society, Chicago, IL.

Doyle, S. (2001, November). **Toward an integrated theory of sexual harassment: An open systems approach.** Paper presented at the Institute of Behavioral & Applied Management Conference, Charleston, SC.

Parise, M. (2001, March). **Organizational readiness: The change to an e-business delivery channel in a bank.** Paper presented at the meeting of the International Academy of E-Business, San Francisco, CA.

Pillutla, A., & Allison, J. (2001, October). **E-Commerce 2.0: Nature of competition and suggestions for effective strategies.** Paper presented at the Annual International Conference of the Strategic Management Society, San Francisco, CA.

Rouse, P. (2001, March). **Executive information systems: A means of eliminating informational overload through improved decision making.** Paper presented at the International Business Education and Technology Conference, Cancun, Mexico.

Rouse, P. (2001, March). **Escalation of commitment: Explanations of how the technology adoption process breaks down.** Paper presented at the Applied Business Research Conference, Cancun, Mexico.

Sundberg, L. (2001, June). **How to integrate a leadership system into a community college.** Paper presented at The American Society for Training and Development International Conference, Orlando, FL.

Thurman, C. (2001, March). **Hampton Corporation: Implementation of 360 degree feedback.** Paper presented at the meeting of the Midwest Business Administration Association, Chicago, IL.

Year 2000

Allison, J. (2000, February). **Reducing impression management: Selection with accuracy.** Paper presented at the meeting of the Industrial/Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior Graduate Student Conference, Knoxville, TN.

Quinlan, T. (2000, April). **Relationship of human resource policies to total productive maintenance management.** Paper presented at the meeting of the Midwest Decision Sciences Institute, Chicago, IL.

Rouse, P. (2000, March). **Technology adoption: The process, success factors, and outcomes in a manufacturing environment.** Paper presented at the Applied Business Research Conference, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

Sundberg, L. (2000, September). **Leadership today: Is gender still an issue.** Paper presented at the Emerging Issues in Business & Technology Conference, Myrtle Beach, SC.

Thurman, C. (2000, April). **Relationship of visioning training to organizational strategic plans.** Paper presented at the meeting of the Midwest Academy of Management, Chicago, IL.

Defended Dissertation Proposals:

Lori Sundberg – The Relationship Between Proactive Coping Skills and Personal and Organizational Outcomes. Dissertation Chair: Dr. Monica Forret

Connie Thurman – The Effect of a Collective, Formal, Serial Socialization Program for Recalled Employees on Employee Behaviors and Attitudes. Dissertation Chair: Dr. Bonnie Leonhardt

Examples of Application of Knowledge to the Business Sector:

A number of our students have utilized the knowledge and skills they have gained in their organizations. To illustrate, **Marc Parise** developed and implemented a formal mentoring program in First Midwest Bank. In addition, he examined his company's readiness for electronic banking and also developed and conducted a sophisticated statistical analysis to examine loan officer performance. **Phyllis Roth** developed a conflict management curriculum that was subsequently implemented at Elkay Manufacturing. **Connie Thurman** developed a socialization program for employees at Maytag. This program is currently being implemented and tested (utilizing both a control and experimental group) for recalled employees.

a) What does this information reveal about the strengths and weaknesses of the educational experience being offered by the DBA Program?

We believe the information shows strong external validation of our students' scholarly achievements. The Higher Learning Commission report of their focused visit was extremely positive. While we continue to improve and strengthen our Program on an ongoing basis, at this time we feel there are no apparent weaknesses in the Program.

b) How has this assessment study informed the program changes described in Part 2, "Proposed Actions"?

As part of conducting our assessment, we wanted to complete all of our course offerings as detailed in our 1997 Self Study Report.

2) Evaluate the DBA Program in terms of requirements, sequencing of courses, and prerequisites.

The DBA Program is a total of 48 credit hours. Students are required to complete twelve three-credit hour courses, written and oral comprehensive examinations, and a twelve credit dissertation. Eight of the three-credit hour courses are required, and students have a choice of four three-credit hour elective courses. The Readings Seminars, Research Methods, and Case Research courses are required, and students select four Special Topics courses in their area of interest. We believe these requirements are both rigorous and flexible in that the students can emerge themselves in topics of their interest. Student feedback is utilized to determine which courses to offer as Special Topics courses. The sequencing of the courses is flexible; however, students are urged to enroll in the Readings Seminars and Research Methods I in the initial phase of the program. The only prerequisite in the program is that Research Methods II must be completed before Research Methods III. The lack of additional prerequisites has not been a problem in the program. Instead, the added flexibility has been very beneficial for our students, the majority of whom are working professionals.

C) General Education Assessment of Teaching

The Doctorate of Business Administration Program is for students at the doctoral level only. It does not pertain to the General Education Program.

REVIEW OF COURSES OFFERED

Fact sheets for each individual course offered in the DBA Program are attached in a separate file, labeled DBA Fact Sheets.

The syllabi for each course are attached in separate files. The syllabi for the readings seminars are in a file labeled DBA Readings Syllabi, the syllabi for the research methods courses are in a file labeled DBA Research Methods Syllabi, and the syllabi for the special topics courses are in a file labeled DBA Special Topics Syllabi.