

# Learning Objectives

- At the conclusion of this presentation we hope you will be able to:
  - Describe what we were trying to do
  - □ Discuss what we believe our quantitative results told us
  - Discuss and critique the "remedial actions" (next steps)
  - Share ideas about how we should/will proceed





#### Lewis University



- Private, Catholic (LaSallian) liberal arts institution comprised of 4 colleges and 1 school
  - Arts & Sciences, Business, Education, Nursing & Health Professions
  - School for Professional & Continuing Education





Lewis University, guided by its Catholic and Lasallian heritage, provides to a diverse student population programs for a liberal and professional education grounded in the interaction of knowledge and fidelity in the search for truth.

## Lewis University Values

- □ Knowledge
- □ Fidelity
- □ Wisdom
- □ Justice
- □ Association





## College of Business



- □ College of Business (COB)
  - 7 Undergraduate Departments/Majors
  - 27 Full-time Faculty
- Goals
  - to help students understand the function of business in the development and stability of local, national and international societies,
  - to assist students in their mastery of the knowledge and skills necessary for careers in business, and
  - to instill in business graduates capabilities for quality decision-making and leadership,
    - with an ethical sensitivity and sense of justice and social responsibility.

# College of Business Student Body

Major	Enrollment
Accountancy	89
Business Administration	178
Business Studies	1
Computer Info Systems	15
Economics	12
Finance	53
Information Security	3
International Business	19
Marketing	68
Undecided	8

Major	Enrollment
Accountancy	6
Business Administration	129
Computer Network Admin	1
Information Tech Mgt.	31
Management	61

## Writing Assessment Initiative

 Assess writing in entry and exit business courses



 establish whether or not our students' writing improves as they progress through our program

#### Institutional Student Learning Objectives

- Lewis' faculty identified 7 Baccalaureate
   Characteristics (BC) in which every graduate
   must demonstrate proficiency including:
  - □ read, write, speak, calculate, and use technology at a demonstrated level of proficiency.
    - This can include the ability to:
      - research, comprehend, evaluate, and synthesize scholarly texts and other information sources.
      - communicate to analyze, inform, and persuade.
      - use technological tools to retrieve, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information.

## **Population**



- □ 92 students in entry (2) and exit (2) courses.
  - Entry courses = 64 students
    - Principles of Marketing and Principles of Management
  - Exit courses = 28 students
    - Business Communication in the Digital Age (Trad. & Adult)
- Of these 92 students, 60 had declared COB majors.
  - 59 COB papers were used in this analysis.

## Assignments

- □ Entry courses (2)
  - We begin to develop our values and sense of ethics by discussing complex issues. The student will locate the article using the library's online databases and write the memo.
  - Article summary
- □ Exit courses (2)
  - Students will interview a person from a culture different than their own and describe communication cultural differences noted by the interviewee. Findings should be presented in a one-page memo format.
  - Persuasive, one page letter to persuade a congressional representative or other political figure to support and take action regarding an issue important to you.

The 7 C's of Communication  Drs. John Baird and Jim Stull (1993). The Seven C's of Communication. Prentice-Hall.			
Clear: Message needs to be clear to be effective.	Υ	N	
Concise: Message needs to be brief if it is to be read by busy people.	Υ	N	
Concrete: Message needs concrete (specific) terms for accuracy and credibility.	Y	N	
<b>Correct</b> : Message must include proper spelling, grammar, punctuation and format.	Υ	N	
<b>Coherent:</b> Message needs to 'hang together' so that ideas flow from one to the next through smooth transitions.	Y	N	
Complete: Message needs to include enough relevant and useful information.	Y	N	
<b>Courteous</b> : Message should be positive to build goodwill, and focus on the audience.	Y	N	

Scoring Level	Information formatted appropriately for type of document	Use of the 7 C's of Communication	Synthesis of ideas and issues
Excellent (5)	Formatted appropriately; no errors.	Message is well written, interesting and easy to read. Writing style applies all 7 C's of communication.	Well organized and effectively defines or demonstrates ideas and issues with smooth transitions.
Proficient (4)	Formatted appropriately; few or minor errors.	Both overall pattern and internal organization are good. Writing style applies most of the 7 C's of communication.	Well-developed synthesis of ideas and issues.
Acceptable (or satisfactory) (3)	Formatted appropriately; some or several minor errors.	Average writing, incorporating some of the 7 C's of communication.	Adequate synthesis of ideas/issues.
Unacceptable (poor work with major flaws) (2)	Inadequately formatted; weak; major errors.	Multiple grammatical errors and little or no use of the 7 C's of communication.	Weak and underdeveloped synthesis of ideas/issues.
No credit (1)	Completely unacceptable format; many, major errors.	Completely unacceptable work.	Ideas/issues not developed.
Scoring (Max 15)			
Total Score			

## Methodology

- □ Teams of 2 (4 member committee)
- □ Read and scored all of the papers
- □ Teams each met twice during the assessment phase.
  - Compare scores on a single paper to work toward inter-rater reliability.
  - □ Discuss any large (over 2 point) discrepancy in scores.



## Findings/Conclusions

Using 60% as a passing score (9)

- 24/32 (75%) of the COB entry students passed
- 23/27 (85%) of the COB exit students passed

	Entry Courses		Exit Courses	
	<9 (No Pass)	>=9 (Pass)	<9 (No Pass)	>=9 (Pass)
Total	8	24	4	23
Denominator	32	32	27	27
Pass Percentage		75%		85%

## Next Steps/Next Time



- □ During next assessment process (5 years) keep the passing score at 60% while increasing the passing percentage for exit students to 88%.
  - Only score COB students.
- Writing Center
  - It is our suggestion that if all faculty adopt a standard rubric, we will have the ability to diagnosis and direct students to the Writing Center with more frequency and earlier in the students' academic career.

## Next steps cont.

- □ Revision of the Rubric (Inconsistency)
  - **□** Coherency
    - In some cases a student's work was judged to not be coherent yet they received a passing score. (?)
  - **□** Grade Inflation and Deflation
    - Overlap in the "reasoning" elements (concrete, coherent, complete). "Reasoning" is heavily weighted. Thus students may be overly penalized or rewarded on this factor.
  - We have suggested a revised rubric
    - "Piloted" before the next assessment
    - We believe this rubric could be a "standard" rubric for evaluating writing in the COB

The 7 C's of Communication  Drs. John Baird and Jim Stull (1993). The Seven C's of Communication. Prentice-Hall.			
Mechanics of Business Writing			
Correct: Message must include proper spelling, grammar, punctuation and format.	Υ	И	
Clear: Message needs to be clear to be effective.	Υ	И	
Concise: Message needs to be brief if it is to be read by busy people.	Υ	N	
Format: Information formatted appropriately for type of document.	Υ	Ν	
Reasoning in Business Writing			
Concrete: Message needs concrete (specific) terms for accuracy and credibility.	Υ	Ν	
Coherent: Message needs to 'hand together' so that ideas flow from one to the next through smooth transitions.	Y	N	
Complete: Message needs to include enough relevant and useful information.	Υ	Ν	
Social Conventions in Business Writing			
Courteous: Message should be positive and build goodwill, and focus on the audience.	Υ	N	
Total [Each Yes = 1 point, maximum = 8 points]			

#### Discussion

- □ Not surprised by the results.
- □ Should we use a higher passing score?
  - Writing assessment as part of entry to LU?
- □ Recognize that our sample size was small.
- Rubrics improve grading and provide a 'teachable' moment that crosses curriculum.
  - Adopt a common writing rubric across disciplines.
- Standardize a few writing assignments to be used throughout the curriculum.
  - Include more writing assignments throughout program/curriculum.

