

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
ACCREDITATION REPORT AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Action Requested: Receive the accreditation report for the College of Business at Iowa State University.

Executive Summary: The College of Business (1) underwent a self-study that addressed the standards of accreditation defined by the accrediting body; and (2) had an on-site visit by peer evaluators. The College was accredited for the maximum five-year period through 2020. However, two concerns were identified and must be addressed by the next review. This accreditation report addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priorities for “access, affordability, and student success; educational excellence and impact; and economic development and vitality.”

Background:

- ◇ **Description of College of Business.** The mission of the College of Business is to create and share research and educate tomorrow’s business leaders to be prepared to face the challenges of the 21st century. The College’s core values include an emphasis on scholarly research, linking theory and research with practice, and providing students with skills and experiences needed to succeed in a complex, technology-driven, global society. The programs provided by the College include a Bachelor of Science in Business (Accounting, Business Economics, Finance, International Business, Management, Management Information Systems, Marketing, Supply Chain Management), Master of Accounting, Master of Business Administration, Master of Science in Information Systems, and Ph.D. in Business and Technology.
- ◇ **Purpose of Accreditation.** An accredited educational program is recognized by its peers as having met state and national standards for its development and evaluation. To employers, graduate schools, and licensure, certification, and registration boards, graduation from an accredited program signifies adequate preparation for entry into the profession. In fact, many of these groups require graduation from an accredited program as a minimum qualification. Accreditation is also intended to protect the interests of students, benefit the public, and improve the quality of teaching, learning, research, and professional practice.
- ◇ **Accrediting Agency.** The accrediting body is the Association to Advanced Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International).
- ◇ **Review Process.** The self-study prepared by the College of Business contained the responses to the appropriate standards required by the accrediting body – strategic management and innovation; participants – students, professional staff, and faculty; learning and teaching; and academic and professional engagement.
- ◇ **On-Site Team Report.** In October 2014, the visiting team determined that the College of Business met the requirements for accredited status, although two concerns were identified that must be addressed prior to the next review.

◇ Sample Strengths Identified by the Visiting Team.

- ☑ “The current leadership team is action oriented. In the relatively short time Dean Spalding has been at ISU, he has earned the support of faculty, staff, and students and has a reputation for listening and following through.
- ☑ The College’s interdisciplinary programs are a strength, particularly those with engineering, which serve as a model for other similar programs.
- ☑ The communications lab is a conscious effort to address an ongoing challenge for business schools, the improvement of oral and written communications skills of graduates.
- ☑ Themed international trips in supply chain, entrepreneurship, and risk management are effective learning opportunities for students.
- ☑ The Ph.D. program has advanced quickly to its current stage, given that it is relatively new.”

◇ Concerns Identified by the Visiting Team.

- ☑ “One of the College’s core values is to ‘Develop educational programs linking theory and research with practice and use these programs to enhance our outreach programs.’ This value is consistent with the AACSB’s objective of increased engagement of students and faculty with business. The school should strengthen faculty ties with the business community by developing additional opportunities for engagement by a greater segment of the faculty. Closely related is to develop a system for systematically tracking faculty engagement activity. One approach to consider to encourage stronger faculty engagement is to hire or develop among current faculty Scholarly Practitioners and to encourage some academically qualified faculty to more closely align their activities with business as Practice Academics. A natural outcome of stronger faculty engagement will be opportunities for increased student engagement. (Standard 15 – Faculty Qualifications and Engagement)
- ☑ Explore new and innovative ways to broaden the impact of research and other faculty activity, and demonstrate how the scholarly activity of the faculty and engagement of students are improving business outcomes. This can be done through theory-driven engaged applied research (i.e., engaged scholarship), by expanding the connections with business through increased activity such as CyBIZ experiential learning lab, and in other ways. The appendix to the 2013 AACSB accreditation standards provides guidance on a wide range of impact activities. (Standard 2 – Intellectual Contributions, Impact, and Alignment with Mission)”

- ◇ Accreditation Status. In January 2015, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business awarded accreditation to the College of Business at ISU for the maximum five-year period through 2020. The Continuous Improvement Review Application which initiates the continuous improvement review process, will be due on July 1, 2017. ISU will be expected to provide an update on progress in addressing the concerns stated by the visiting team in addition to other relevant information for initiation of the next continuous improvement review. The College of Business is in the process of reviewing the concerns and developing appropriate action plans.