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# A Critical Analysis of the International Business Degree at the University of Rhode Island 2002-2006

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Brett Glowacki

A Critical Analysis of the  
International Business Degree at the  
University of Rhode Island  
2002-2006

Faculty Sponsor: Mark Higgins

International business is a growing field. Corporations worldwide are seeking individuals with language and cross-cultural experience to complement their business skills. It is the job of colleges and universities to prepare students to enter the workforce with as solid an education as those institutions are capable of giving. After holding various internships, an on campus job, and studying abroad, I have come to the conclusion that the University of Rhode Island can do a better job of preparing its international business students for the corporate world.

This report critically analyzes the International Business Degree at URI based upon first-hand experience. Each required class is critiqued in terms of its usefulness in the real business world; its level of difficulty within the context of which the class was intended and taken (i.e. wrt101 will be assessed in the context of taking the course as a freshman, both the year for which the class was intended to be taken and the year I completed the class, not my current standing as a senior), the benefits to me as a business major, and recommendations for the improvement of each course, should they be necessary. Additional classes, such as those required by my other major of Economics, as well as electives, will be critiqued if I believe they were of any additional value to the international business degree. Skill sets that I believe are necessary, but were not taught in any class offered by URI will be incorporated into several courses which I have designed. In addition to the critical analysis, ideas for the integration of the Leadership minor offered by URI is also discussed.

A Critical Analysis of the  
International Business Degree at the  
University of Rhode Island  
2002-2006

By

Brett Glowacki

April 22, 2006

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## **Preface**

### ***An International Business Degree***

College degrees are often associated with an expertise in a given field. For example, upon graduation, someone with a degree in accounting should be fairly proficient in the field of accounting. What, however, are the proficiencies of someone who has graduated with a degree in international business?

Having been versed in international business means to have a general understanding of all business disciplines; having experience with various cultures and know, to some extent, how business is conducted abroad; having the ability to understand a foreign language; and finally be up-to-date with how the world is changing.

### ***Analysis Objective***

The primary objective of this report is to help the College of Business Administration strengthen its International Business Program. For many corporations, new leadership and management are hired in the hopes of promoting a positive change for the betterment of the firm. The University of Rhode Island (“URI”) is no exception to this statement. The problem with changes made in this manner are that new hires only know what they have experienced and most have not experienced, first-hand, the firm or organization they are trying to change. Beginning my college career at URI with the original intent of graduating with a degree in international business, I believe that my analysis and opinions, coming from first-hand experience, will be of great value in helping the Deans of the College create a stronger program. The greatest business successes were achieved by those individuals who sought the problems of their current time and proposed ideas that revamped industries and brought the state of business to where it is today. My intent is to leave this program better off than when I entered it.

### ***Manner in Which the Paper is Written***

This report critically analyzes the International Business Degree at URI based upon first-hand experience. Each required class is critiqued in terms of its usefulness in the real business world; its level of difficulty within the context of which the class was intended and taken (i.e. WRT101 will be assessed in the context of taking the course as a freshman, both the year for which the class was intended to be taken and the year I completed the class, not my current standing as a senior), the benefits to me as a business major, and recommendations for the improvement of each course. Additional classes, such as those required by my other major of Economics, as well as electives, will be critiqued if I believe they are of any additional value to the International Business Degree. The usefulness and difficulty of each class will primarily be ascertained by relating each class to my three internships, my study abroad experience, and my experience as an RA. In addition to the critical analysis, ideas for the integration of the Leadership minor offered by URI are also discussed. In addition to critiquing completed courses, I will also be suggesting courses that would be beneficial that are currently offered at URI and will also be suggesting a curriculum for several new courses which

will teach pertinent skills that I believe are currently lacking in the business world and which are not currently taught at URI. A summary of the critique of each course can be found in the Appendix.

### ***Study Abroad Experience***

In the spring of 2005, I attended Bond University in Queensland Australia. The perspective, insight, and knowledge obtained through that experience was unparalleled and irreplaceable. Although it is an English speaking country, the culture is vastly different. The university itself also offered many opportunities to experience various cultures of the world. Bond University is the only private university in Australia and caters to students worldwide. During my stay, I met and befriended students from India, England, Germany, France, the Philippines, South Africa, and several other nations. I was able to gain valuable perspectives from various cultures on many matters including, but not limited to: marketing, psychology, management, law, and political science.

Because different cultures approach business situations in a variety of manners, I believe that going through this experience will help me to make better decisions. Many study abroad students partake in classes that fulfill elective credits. By attending classes that fulfilled major requirements, I was forced to study and learn new methods of rationale, communication skills, and discrete cultural aspects that can only be learned through experience. My study abroad experience was the highlight of my college career. It was a remarkable experience both personally and professionally.

The study abroad experience is mandated by the International Business Degree; however, I suggest that the college force the experience to be more than a semester vacation. Typically, three to four classes are taken depending on credit hours. Instead of allowing all classes taken to fulfill elective credits, I suggest requiring at least one class to be of a major requirement or professional elective. A study abroad experience cannot fulfill its intended objective if students are taking classes such as: computer basics, art, photography, and the like. Studying internationally should resemble working internationally, at least to some degree. It is understandable that students may have trouble adjusting to the culture, teaching styles, language barriers, and other variables, thus the reason for suggesting only one class be required to fulfill a major requirement or professional elective. These factors, however, would be the same ones encountered when working in another country and so the experience would help prepare students for an international job.

### ***RA Experience***

I was hired as a Resident Assistant (“RA”) in Weldin Hall, a freshmen dormitory, for the fall semester of 2004 and the entirety of the 2005-2006 academic year. I believe this job to be of great value for my professional career. Although the job does not pertain to this analysis in any direct way, I believe that it is important the reader of this report have a full understanding of my experiences, all of which have helped shape me into the person that I am and the decisions and suggestions that I am making about this degree program.

Being an RA, specifically in a freshmen dormitory, entails certain aspects which can be directly applied to any professional environment. I am an authority figure for thirty-five freshmen. Daily tasks include: conflict mediation, counseling, regulation, programming, and administrative tasks. I work on a team with eight other individuals and a live-in supervisor. Although much of the work of an RA is done individually, teamwork is essential. I depend on my team and they depend on me; without this environment, managing three hundred residents would be near impossible. This job has given me great insight into how to deal with problems, how to depend on a support staff, and how to effectively manage a very diverse group of individuals. These skills are the foundation of any good manager.

I would like to suggest that holding an RA position count for Leadership credit. More specifically, I think that the RA position should count for the leadership internship credit. RAs, as mentioned above, are challenged as leaders everyday and certainly acquire many skill sets from the job. The Leadership Minor will be discussed later in the report.

## ***Internships***

### **West Pharmaceutical Services**

West Pharmaceutical Services is the manufacturer of pharmaceutical elastomers, aluminum and plastic caps, and various other sterilized rubber and plastic containers. The company's corporate headquarters are located in Lionville, Pennsylvania from where it oversees operations of several plants in the United States, France, England, Germany, Denmark, and Singapore.

During the summer of 2003, I interned at West Pharmaceutical Services corporate headquarters. I was hired into the Quality Assurance department where I worked on various projects and helped to clean-up some backlogged work. The majority of projects on which I worked required me to use several skill sets including Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Access. Daily tasks included updating, analyzing, and creating spreadsheets, filing, archive management, and preparing paperwork packages to be sent to various subsidiaries.

Although I was involved in rather menial tasks, I found there were several skills which I lacked and had to learn on site. This internship was completed at the end of my freshman year and so the amount of business knowledge that I had been taught was rather limited. The first thing that I had to learn was how to read a production schedule. I also had to learn how to coordinate production schedules of various plants all of which were producing many products. Even after completing MSI309, I believe that this task would still be difficult. The concepts presented in class are of an extremely simplistic nature. The second skill that I utilized was using Microsoft Excel. The skill set needed was a basic knowledge of computers which BAC110 adequately prepared me for. Microsoft Access, however, was never taught and I had to learn this software on my own.



## **PricewaterhouseCoopers**

PricewaterhouseCoopers (“PwC”) is a provider of financial services including: Audit, Crisis Management, Human Resources, Performance Improvement, Tax, and Transactions to corporations worldwide. The company is comprised of member firms in over 150 countries that are located in most major cities throughout the world. The firms are interconnected through their membership to PricewaterhouseCoopers International Limited.

During the summers of 2004 and 2005, I interned for PwC at their Philadelphia office, but also worked at various times for the Washington, D.C. office. I was hired to work in the Transfer Pricing department that was newly instituted in the Philadelphia office. While there, I worked on various projects and even participated in a small project from start to finish during the second internship. The opportunity of participating on a complete transfer pricing project was extremely beneficial. Not only did I experience the entire process, but I also was able to interact directly with clients. These two internships at PwC were an extremely beneficial experience. I was able to work in a professional environment where I was more than extra help, but part of a project team. It was during these internships over the two summers that made me realize the many skills I lacked and that I was not adequately prepared for the corporate world. During the first summer, I was treated as a typical intern, but learned quickly and was given various parts of projects to work on. During the second summer, I was treated more as an employee. All of my work was reviewed; however, I was given more freedom and more responsibility with each project I received. My experience at PwC is largely the basis from which I make my assessments of classes taken and my suggestions for improving those classes or creating new ones.

While employed at PwC, I realized that my business skill set was severely lacking. During my employment, I was required to use advanced features of Microsoft Word as well as Microsoft Excel. In addition to not knowing many of these advanced features, I also lacked the ability to write a technical, legal document for submission to regulatory authorities, in my case, the Securities and Exchange Commission. I also had to ask many questions when trying to interpret financial ratios as a means for assessing various firms. I noticed that my fellow interns also had trouble dealing with financial ratios. I did not work directly with any other interns; however, of those I befriended, it was common between us to question the meaning of various financial indicators.

## **Critical Analysis**

Upon entering the university with a declared major in international business, I was assigned to a business advisor in University College. The advisor simply approved of my class selection for the initial semester. I was told that by choosing the International Business Degree, my choices of classes were limited and this individual told me to take my requirements and that was the end of my advising session. After my first required advisor visit, I never returned to a University College business advisor. Furthermore, I later discovered that at orientation, I was told that I was required to take BAC120 despite the fact that I had transfer credit for MTH111 and MTH141. This careless mistake on the part of my advisor caused me to take a class that would only count as an elective when I

could have been taking a major requirement. Additionally, I signed up for and completed two science courses, one of which was not required for the International Business Degree program. My advisor for orientation and my required visit were one in the same, essentially useless.

I was admitted to the College of Business Administration (“CBA”) in my sophomore year. I needed to choose some electives and thus I decided that I would meet with an advisor. I tried to make an appointment and when I did so, I was told that no advisor had been assigned to me because I was an International Business major and so I could choose who I wanted to see. Not knowing any of the professors, I arbitrarily chose one. The meeting was set and when I arrived at my scheduled time, the advisor I was meeting with told me that he was of no use to me because he only advised students in his field which was not international business. I was then told to set a new appointment with a Dean. At the meeting, the Dean simply completed a course sheet and told me what to take in my following semester. I asked questions about economics and various concentrations, but the answers I received were of little benefit. After this experience, I decided that advisors for the International Business Degree were a waste of time.

The experiences listed above are a significant problem for International Business majors. Advisors are supposed to be people with answers and advice. They are the people that are supposed to help guide students throughout their college career. The first step that the CBA needs to take to revamp the International Business Degree is to clearly appoint a Point-person for the program. In most cases, there exists a Head of each department, i.e. Marketing, Accounting, Management Information Systems and the like. International Business is not a department, but that does not mean that the field does not deserve attention. By appointing a Point-person, students in the degree program will clearly know who is responsible and capable of answering questions related to the degree. The person should have a background in international business to further help students determine what electives are best to be taken and what concentration, if any, is right for that student.

## ***Freshman Semester 1***

### **BAC120 – Introduction to Business Analysis and Applications**

“Selected mathematical tools and techniques for analysis of business and economic problems and as aids in decision making. Topics from finite and modern mathematics and applied calculus.”

The class taught basic concepts in algebra and a very quick introduction to calculus. There was an emphasis placed on word problems that dealt with everyday business problems.

The class was taught at a slow pace, but kept to the syllabus. All the topics on the syllabus were covered in plenty of detail and with adequate time. Several in-class quizzes, along with three night exams were administered. All exam content reflected what was taught in class. The difficulty of the course was easy to moderate. The

workload was extremely light. Requirements for success in the class consisted of taking class notes and completing non-mandatory practice problems that were assigned weekly.

I thought the professor was well versed in the material and was extremely good at working with first semester freshmen. Questions were allowed to be asked at the beginning of class that covered previous lectures and these questions were answered and explained very well. Topics were not completed until the entire class had at least a decent understanding of the concepts at hand.

I believe that as the only math course, with the exception of the statistics courses, that the class should have been more rigorous. As a first semester freshman, college math courses should not be easier than those taken in high school. Critical reasoning and problem solving skills are not only essential in the business world, but in all facets of life. There should be an emphasis placed on these skills within this class. After completing BAC120, students should have a good understanding of algebra and basic differential calculus. They should also be proficient at breaking down problems into their component parts and be able to solve them.

Improvements that I would suggest would be to make practice problems mandatory. I also believe that students should be asked to solve problems in a classroom environment where they must explain their methods for solving the problem. Solving a problem is only half of the battle. The other half is being able to explain to others why a problem was solved in the particular manner that it was. By implementing these two suggestions, I believe that the number of questions will be reduced, thereby allowing for a faster paced curriculum and will also imbed the skills deeper in the minds of the students.

### **WRT101 – Composition**

“Writing emphasizing the sharing of information. Varieties and strategies of expository writing for differing audiences and situations. Genres may include reports, proposals, letters, reviews, websites, academic essays.”

This writing class taught basic writing formats. Requirements for the class included three writing pieces which consisted of one persuasive piece, one memoir, and one profile. In addition to these longer pieces, short one page writing assignments were assigned approximately every two weeks.

The difficulty of this course was minimal. I found the concepts taught to be extremely basic and the writing pieces unchallenging. Although the course was below my capabilities as a freshman, I distinctly remember many students who struggled throughout the class.

I thought that the course had the potential to be very useful. The required book explained some writing techniques and fully explained the MLA format which was required on all the pieces of writing. I did not, however, believe that the course was very beneficial.

To further improve this writing class, I believe that a greater emphasis needs to be placed on writing techniques. Many college students tend to have great difficulty making transitions; keeping subjects, verbs, and tenses in agreement; and creating a flowing document. These skills are imperative in the real world and should be taught as early as possible. I also think that some type of writing assessment is necessary for incoming freshman. New students come from a variety of high schools that all teach at different standards. A writing assessment would allow students who are better writers to take higher level courses at the beginning of their college career allowing them to hone their skills at an earlier stage and maximize their education. This suggestion is discussed in more detail in the “Courses for Consideration” section of the report.

## ***Freshman Semester 2***

### **BAC110 – Business Computing Application**

“Applications and concepts relevant to computers and management information systems, including communication, spreadsheet, word processing, and internet software.”

This course focused on various aspects of computers and software. Concepts consisted of: computer components, internal computer processes (i.e. how RAM and hard drives work), basics of Microsoft Word, basics of Microsoft Excel, and simple raw webpage development.

The class was moderately difficult. A lot of emphasis was placed on book content for lengthy exams. Weekly projects were assigned that related to the different software programs that were being discussed. Basic formatting skills along with a very limited number of advanced features were taught. Projects consisted of mimicking the actions displayed in class and creating various types of documents.

The skill sets that were learned in Microsoft Word consisted of basic formatting (i.e. margin size, headers, fonts, font sizes, and text alignment). The one advanced feature of Word that was taught was how to create and perform a “mail merge.” This consisted of using a template document and changing names and addresses that were linked to a list of recipients. Skills learned in Microsoft Excel were: basic formatting, formulas, auto-sum, linked pages, and presentation of data. The skill learned for web-page development was writing raw HTML scripts to produce a personal web-page.

The intention of the class was good, but failed to execute its primary objective. To any business major, learning the ins and outs of Word and Excel are very important. Additionally, in today’s internet dependant world, basic knowledge of web-pages is also very valuable. The first major problem with the class was that at least half of the course time was wasted learning about computer hardware and internal computer systems. This information was not and will not ever be pertinent to a business student.

The objective of the course was to teach computer concepts and software that will be heavily utilized in the business world. Most students, upon entering college, are familiar with how to adjust margins and change fonts in Word. More relevant information to

teach would be how to use styles; how to create templates and fill-in forms; how to generate tables of content and create reference points. This knowledge would be helpful for future writing intensive and research classes, but is also essential when writing formal business reports.

Excel, on the other hand, is a program with which many incoming freshman have little experience. A good portion of the course should have been spent on developing the skills necessary to effectively utilize this program. Excel is capable of many advanced processes and is used daily in most businesses. Upon completion of this course, students should be proficient in both this program and Word.

Lastly, creating raw HTML web-pages, although interesting, was not very useful. Everyone from beginners to experts utilize web-page development programs to create their web-pages. It does not make sense for business students to learn an outdated method of production. Understanding the foundations of how a system works is always good knowledge, but the time spent on this archaic method of producing web-pages could have been better spent learning to use current technology and software.

As of the spring of 2006, some of these changes have already been adopted.

### **LET151J – Global Business Studies**

“Study of the impact of globalization and its implications for business and technology careers in the 21st century. Study of the cultures of North and South America, Europe, and Asia with focus on cross-cultural communication.”

This course was an introduction to globalization, culture, and various worldly business practices. It touched on subjects such as power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long term vs. short term orientations; the theory of globalization mostly through the thoughts of Thomas Friedman; and lastly business practices of major trading countries such as Japan, China, Taiwan, Mexico, the European Union, and several South American countries.

The course consisted mostly of lectures with a midterm and a final exam along with one ten page cultural paper. Throughout the semester, several reading assignments were required. Assignments were mostly short articles about globalization and a few selected chapters from Thomas Friedman’s The Lexus and the Olive Tree. As a freshman course, I would have to say that the difficulty of this course was moderate. The large class size, few assignments, and enormous amounts of lecture time made some of the material difficult to comprehend.

The most interesting aspect of the class was the topic of globalization and its impact on not only the business world, but as well as on normal life. The most valuable aspect of the course, however, was learning about business practices of various countries. A few examples of these business practices are: In Japan and China, business cards are held in high respect and therefore are presented with two hands; in Germany, there is a strong power distance relationship in the workplace and thus speaking to a superior is not a

small matter; and in most South American countries, time is negotiable meaning that a business meeting set for three o'clock may not begin until three forty-five and this would not be considered unusual, rude, or unprofessional.

The class was very enjoyable despite the long lectures. It was taught by two professors who alternated lectures and had very different styles of presentation which helped to compensate for the little amount of class interaction. It would have been nice to have been assessed on more than lectures and one paper, but the class was a good challenge as a second semester freshman. The course could actually have been broken into two classes, each a semester long. The first class could be about globalization. Further discussion of a class of this nature will be brought up under the review for HPR201. The second class could focus solely on culture and business practices. A more in-depth discussion of selected countries would have been very valuable. Particular countries of interest to International Business majors are: China, Japan, India, Philippines, England, France, Germany, Switzerland, Mexico, Brazil, Panama, and Canada. The class should focus on Hofstede's cultural analyses, business practices, major corporations that are hosted in those countries, types of trade that takes place between those countries and the United States, and a general economic background of each country. I believe that this general knowledge of the major global trading nations is an expectation of someone with a degree in international business.

It is my understanding that this course is to be replaced by LET151R which is similar, but is to focus on the European Union. It is my recommendation that if LET151J is to be replaced entirely by LET151R then two other classes be added as well; one to teach about globalization and the other to cover the material stated previously about other major trading nations.

### **PSC116 – International Politics**

“Nature of the state system, foundations of national power, means of exercising power in the interaction of states. Current international problems.”

This course introduced the basics of state sovereignty, global warfare, international economics, terrorism, and weapons of mass destruction. The class also covered the United Nations and current international political events including the war in Iraq and decisions of the President of the United States and members of his cabinet.

This class consisted of two lectures and one recitation per week. A midterm and final exam were administered along with several quizzes and one fifteen page paper on the topic of any current international conflict of choice. Lectures consisted of large amounts of complex material which was then broken down and reviewed in each recitation. This class was one of the more difficult courses freshman year, but was manageable.

The most valuable information obtained from this course was the current political events and the nature of international conflict. I liked the complex material and the nature in which the course was taught. The recitation was supposed to clarify and solidify the

concepts learned in lecture, but many times material that was not covered in lecture was covered in recitation instead.

The only suggestion would be to ensure recitations were used for their stated purpose, not to teach new material.

## ***Sophomore Semester 1***

### **ECN201 – Principles of Microeconomics**

“Principles underlying resource allocation, production, and income distribution in a market economy. Topics include demand and supply, consumer behavior, firm behavior, market structure, and elementary welfare analysis. Institutional foundations explored.”

This course was a complete introduction to microeconomics. As the description of the course states, basic concepts applying to demand and supply were explored. Market structures such as perfect competition, monopoly, oligopoly, and a quick introduction to game theory were all introduced. The ideas of marginal theory, opportunity costs, economic profit, and consumer and producer surplus were also part of the curriculum.

This course was not difficult. The class was structured around lectures with numerous examples, four quizzes, two exams, and a final. Outside work consisted only of reading, but the material was presented in such a manner that reading was more of an option for reinforcement rather than a necessity. Quizzes were composed of examples from class whereas exams were composed of problems which were not direct examples from lecture. Exam problems required the application of the skills taught in lecture and the various examples demonstrated how to complete each problem.

This course was great. An ample amount of material was covered, but at a reasonable pace. The best aspect of the course was the format of the exams. They were challenging and required the students to fully comprehend the material and examples in order to complete the exam successfully. The examples provided in class often dealt with situations to which sophomores were accustomed which made the class interesting and therefore enjoyable.

Being the course is often taken by sophomores, I think it should have been more challenging. Despite the fact that a large amount of material was covered and exams were challenging, the structure of the course could have been more rigorous. Within most college courses, students should not be able to obtain a decent grade without having read the text book. More complicated problems and a more in depth study of market structures would accomplish this task.

### **STA308 – Introduction to Statistics (substituted for BAC201)**

BAC201 – “General statistical methods used in the collection, presentation, analysis, and interpretation of statistical data. Includes frequency distribution, measures of central tendency and dispersion, probability theory, sampling distribution, central limit theorem, law of large numbers, estimation, and tests of hypothesis.”

STA308 – “Descriptive statistics, presentation of data, averages, measures of variation, skewness, kurtosis. Elementary probability, binomial and normal distributions. Sampling distributions. Statistical inference, estimation, confidence intervals, testing hypotheses, linear regression, and correlation.”

As stated in the course description, probability, normal distributions, inference, estimation, confidence intervals, and hypothesis testing were covered. Linear regression and correlation, along with kurtosis were not covered due to time constraints. The second half of the semester focused on confidence intervals and hypothesis testing while the first half of the semester covered the rest of the material.

This class was difficult. Two midterm exams and a final exam were administered. Additionally, weekly problem sets were assigned and turned in for credit. In addition to the assigned problem sets, it was necessary to read every chapter and complete book examples to fully comprehend the material. Topics were covered at a fast pace, but enough examples were discussed in lecture to understand the procedure for completing problems.

In the first half of the semester, basic statistical skills were taught. The class was taught to perform probability calculations; differentiate between mean, median, mode, and frequency; draw histograms; and perform normal distribution analyses. In the second half of the semester, the class was taught how to statistically test random samples and ensure that certain standards were met through the use of confidence intervals and hypothesis testing.

No recommendations can be made to improve upon the structure of this course. However, I believe that BAC201 should perform similarly to STA308. This course covers more in one semester than does BAC201. The reason for this suggestion is that BAC202 covers hypothesis testing and linear regression. Linear regression can be a course onto itself and thus it would be more advantageous to make BAC201 cover more material and remove hypothesis testing from BAC202.

### **ACC201 – Financial Accounting**

“Basic concepts and systems used in financial accounting for business organizations.”

This course dealt with a large amount of accounting vocabulary and got students familiar with business jargon. Concepts dealing with T-accounts and equation balancing were a primary focus.

This course posed a moderate level of difficulty. Regular reading and weekly practice problem sets were critical to success in the class. Lecture notes were provided in order to allow the students to focus on examples and make extra notes on topics that were more difficult. Students were assessed based on three exams of equal weight, several quizzes, and a semester long portfolio project which was turned in for credit at various times throughout the semester.



Numerous skills were learned from this course. An emphasis was placed on debits and credits with regard to T-accounts. Several ways of performing a depreciation calculation, as well as LIFO and FIFO formats were also key components. In addition to the vast amount of vocabulary that was taught, several accounting ratio calculations were described and their implications discussed.

The format of the course was well structured. Material was presented at a reasonable pace and the difficulty reflected that of a sophomore course. The portfolio project was interesting and was a good instrument for incorporating the concepts learned in lecture into a real world scenario. Since competing companies were chosen for the portfolio project companies, i.e. CVS vs. Walgreens and Home Depot vs. Lowes, I would have liked to have seen some type of presentation or comparison of the companies at the end of the semester.

Recommendations I would make for this course are as follows. Accounting ratios are used in every analysis that I have read or participated in and unfortunately I could not always remember the implications of certain ratios or how to calculate them. I do not believe enough attention was given to their importance. Due to their significance in the business world, these ratios should be a focal point of the course; they should be ingrained in the minds of the students at the end of the semester. The second suggestion that I would make is in regards to the portfolio. As stated previously, some type of final presentation with company comparisons would make a good conclusion to the course.

### **HPR201 – Honors Colloquium on Globalization**

“Seminar series discussing various elements of globalization such as business, politics, human rights, and communications.”

The Honors Colloquium is sponsored by the Honors College and addresses a new topic every fall. This course was a series of weekly seminars that dealt with various aspects of globalization including: terrorism; the effect on third world countries; technology development; the nation state and dissolving national boundaries; environmental effects; and domestic issues, specifically outsourcing of labor. The course was run by three professors, one each in economics, international business, and international engineering.

This course was not difficult, but was extremely valuable. Students were required to attend every seminar and write a two page synopsis each week which was turned in during the scheduled discussion class period. The only other assessment of the students was a fifteen page paper on a topic of choice somehow related to one of the seminars attended.

It is obviously not possible to host a seminar series similar to this one every semester; however, the lessons taught throughout the course were not only interesting, but valuable as well. Hearing various opinions from highly educated and talented people about the effect of globalization on the world really solidified how the world of business is changing. I believe five of the twelve seminars were business related. The university

taped each seminar and so I believe that it could be advantageous to acquire these tapes and possibly show them as part of a senior capstone course. This idea will be discussed in further detail in a later section.

## ***Sophomore Semester 2***

### **ECN202 – Principles of Macroeconomics**

“Principles underlying aggregate demand and aggregate supply in a market economy. Topics include national income determination, inflation, unemployment, economic growth, and international trade. Institutional foundations explored.”

This course was taught in a similar fashion to ECN201. It included topics concerning the national economy and how decisions made by the Federal Reserve affect the economy. The Federal Reserve was discussed in detail. Other topics included inflation, interest rates, unemployment, GDP, and real versus nominal values.

Like ECN201, this course was not difficult. The class consisted of lectures and performance was measured by two mid-term exams and a final exam. Approximately three pop-quizzes were also administered throughout the semester. Outside work consisted only of reading, but the amount was minimal. Quizzes were composed of examples from class whereas exams were composed of problems which were not direct examples from lecture. Exam problems required the application of the skills taught in lecture and the various examples demonstrated how to complete each problem.

This course was a great introduction to macroeconomics. The topics covered were relevant to any business major, but I do not believe that macroeconomics carries as much weight in importance as does microeconomics. The topics of interest rates and the calculations of real values were very beneficial. Understanding the Federal Reserve and the power it has to manipulate the economy is crucial for anyone involved with financial issues.

The structure of this class is well developed. Some outside reading was required in order to completely understand the material. The concepts were presented at a good pace and the material was sufficient. The class could be more rigorous. As with ECN201, students should be more challenged. The concepts of macroeconomics are definitely more difficult to comprehend than those of microeconomics, but taught correctly, are easily within the realm of sophomores' capabilities.

### **BAC202 – Managerial Statistics II**

“Additional data analysis techniques, including tests of independence and goodness of fit, regression, correlation, analysis of variance, time series, and index numbers.”

The course was supposed to be continuation of BAC201, however, it covered about half of a semester of BAC201 before it taught new material. The first half of the semester consisted of topics in hypothesis testing. In the second half of the semester, topics

relating to regression were covered. The actual processes of regression, along with various tests to check the regression analysis, were taught.

This course was extremely difficult. Lectures consisted of PowerPoint slides created by the book manufacturer. Class time was spent reading from those slides. This information could have been completed simply by reading the required book. One to two examples were given each class period. No outside work was assigned, but completing the practice problems in the book was encouraged. Students were evaluated on two midterms, a final exam, and completing an analysis for the professor's research. The exams were at a much higher caliber than the course was being taught. In addition, the material in the second half of the semester was presented at a rapid pace.

The skills taught in this class were how to perform a hypothesis test, how to manually perform linear regression on a set of data, and how to evaluate the analyses performed.

The course was well intended; however, it failed to leave students with a set of useful skills. First and foremost, the class should have picked up where BAC201 stopped. The problem with the pace at which the material in the second half of the semester was presented could be solved simply by not re-teaching material from the previous course. The second major problem with the course is learning the statistical skills required to perform linear regression are skills not needed by someone in the business world. In many fields, it is important to understand the foundations of the subject matter; however, the course fails to show that it is the analysis of the regression that is most important, not the regression itself. A majority of the class time spent on the topic of regression was dedicated to learning how to create an equation from data and very little time was spent interpreting and analyzing the equation. In business, technology is used to its fullest potential and regression software is readily available. The course should be teaching about the R-squared factor, the F-factor, the T-test, the F-test, residuals, co-linearity and outliers. As a manager, regression analyses will be performed and presented, but it is up to the manager to decide if the analysis has any real meaning. This course needs to be restructured. An emphasis needs to be placed on what happens after data is regressed and the exams need to more accurately reflect the material and difficulty of the course.

### **WRT227 – Business Communications**

“Basic business communications forms, group reports and presentations, effective use of electronic mail systems, and design of graphic aids for successful visual communication.”

Writing in this course covered five topic areas with required writing assignments for each topic. Each topic was discussed during class and then assigned. The topic areas covered were writing a: resume, memo, proposal, bad news letter, and a report.

The course accurately reflected the difficulty of a sophomore workload. Each writing assignment was peer reviewed by class members before it was to be turned in for initial grading. After being reviewed by the professor, each piece was returned to the student with comments and recommended changes. After corrections were made, the pieces of

writing were handed in once more for final grading. The writing assignments were scrutinized and were required to follow strict formats.

All of the assignments were beneficial. Each piece of writing had a specific objective it was trying to achieve. Learning to develop a proper resume is a skill that will always be required. The memo, proposal, and bad news letter were also great practice for the corporate world. Each of those pieces of writing are demanded on a daily basis in the world of business. The report, however, was not as helpful as the other projects. The requirements for the report were to form a group of four individuals, perform research on a global business topic, write twenty pages in a specified format, and present the findings to the class. Researching topics and writing reports is common among college courses and thus did not teach any new skills.

This course failed to meet some of its objectives as stated in the course catalogue. The class never discussed electronic mail systems nor did it discuss visual aids. As the course title states, the course should have been about business communications; the course in actuality focused on business writing. Perhaps the name and description of the course should be changed. One suggestion is that several presentations be required. One fear shared by many, not only students, but people at large is public speaking. Effective presentations will be expected in the corporate world and thus practicing in a classroom setting not only teaches students how to make good presentations, but allows them the chance to become more comfortable with public speaking and thus makes the quality of each presentation better.

### **ACC202 – Managerial Accounting**

“Basic techniques and systems used by management accountants in budgeting, cost accounting, cost analysis, and control.”

This course met its objective to the fullest extent. It covered some financial ratios and a majority of the accounting techniques utilized by management. Topics included cash flow statements, financial statement analysis, job order cost accounting, cost volume profit analysis, contribution margin analysis, fixed and variable costs, variance analysis, budgeting, and segment performance analysis.

The course was moderately difficult, but accurately so for a two hundred level course. Problem sets were assigned weekly and then gone over in class. The students were assessed on three exams which coincided with the material and difficulty of the course. Material was presented at a reasonable pace, thoroughly explained, and many examples were given to demonstrate various points.

The skills learned in this course were many. A large emphasis was placed on understanding financial statements and cash flow statements. Students were required to reproduce the statements given various pieces of information. Another major component of the course was performance and production analysis. Students learned to use various ratios and other key components to evaluate how well particular segments of a company or companies as a whole are performing.

The course was well taught and the topics covered were pertinent to the degree. The only suggestion is to reiterate the importance of financial ratios, how to calculate them, and how they are used to assess the performance of companies.

## ***Junior Semester 1***

### **FIN301 – Financial Management**

“An analysis of the investment and financing issues facing domestic and multinational business firms.”

Finance 301 is an introductory course in finance, but does not cover multinational finance. The semester is split into two core areas. The first major topic covered is the time value of money and the second core area is bond/stock valuation and capital budgeting. Financial statement analysis and the topics of risk and return are also discussed, but not in great detail.

The course was fairly easy. Topics were presented at a slow pace and example problems were reviewed almost every class period. Four to five quizzes were administered, as well as several graded problem sets. One midterm and one final exam were also given. Exams and quizzes were exact copies of the problem sets that were assigned, but with different numbers and thus were not very challenging.

The major skill learned in this course was understanding the concept of and learning how to calculate interest and determine present and future values of investments. The topic of financial statement analysis was better covered in ACC202. Risk and return were covered briefly, but no substantial skill was acquired from it. Capital budgeting was a topic that was difficult to understand how it would be used practically. It was not presented as a concept that was used very often.

No recommendations can be made to improve this course.

### **MSI309 – Operations Management**

“Operations management problems in global and domestic environments. Operations strategy, service, and manufacturing; forecasting; inventory management; production and material requirements planning; scheduling; just-in-time; and quality management.”

The objective of this course stated above perfectly exhibits the inventory of topics the course covered. The three major segments of the course were forecasting, quality and process control, and inventory and material request control.

The difficulty of the course was moderate. Topics were explained through the use of examples and problem sets. The previous class's problems were reviewed at the beginning of each class. An exam was given at the end of each major topic area and a cumulative final was also administered. Most problem sets that were assigned were not

graded, however, they were graded occasionally. The amount of work and time commitment required accurately reflected that of a 300 level course.

The skills learned in the course were tailored to operations management. Students learned how to forecast production requirements, statically ensure quality of batches, schedule and sequence jobs for completion, and inventory control procedures. Problem solving and decision making were also skills that were developed. Not only were students required to complete problems, but they were also required to analyze the results and state conclusions from their analyzes.

The course was well structured, taught at a reasonable pace, and was challenging. The topics covered were comprehensive and followed the objective of the course exactly and thus no recommendations can be made to better this course.

### **ECN308X – Game Theory and Strategy**

“Elementary mathematics of game theory with interdisciplinary stress on applications in economics, political science, business, biology, etc..”

ECN308X is an experimental class offered by the College of Arts and Sciences. The course covered material from the foundations of game theory to advanced strategy brought about through the use of advanced calculus. Concepts ranged from simple games, game tree analysis, Nash equilibriums, and prisoner’s dilemma to advanced games solved through Cornot equations.

The class was difficult, but definitely within the capabilities of a third year student. Class lectures were dedicated to examples and practice. Reading of approximately seven to twenty pages was required each week which covered the material that was presented in class and also contained homework problems which were also reviewed in class. Several problem sets were assigned to be graded and three exams were administered. The final exam was open note; however, the other two were not. Each exam covered the material up to the exam time only; no past material was ever tested twice. Due to the difficulty of the calculus needed to solve problems presented in the last third of the semester, all math computations were done for the class by the professor. It was the student’s job to be able to assess the outcomes of the mathematical computations.

A great deal of skill was learned in this class. Game theory is a way of predicting what an opponent will do given a certain set of circumstances or how an opponent will react to a change. A firm that is accurately able to predict how its competition will react and or the decisions it will make is a phenomenal competitive advantage. This course teaches how to diagram possible decisions and how to predict the outcome. Game theory also shows what the best possible reactions are to decisions made by competitors.

This course, as of now, cannot be required for the International Business Degree; however, I recommend that if it progresses out of the experimental stage, it should be. Granted, game theory is not an essential skill required of professionals in the corporate world, but having the ability to recognize that firms analyze their competition and make

decisions based on those analyses and having the knowledge to accurately judge those analyses is a formidable advantage and valuable skill. Reasoning and rational thought will always be demanded from any manager. Game theory is another tool to get through the process. As to the structure of the class, no recommendations can be made further enhance it.

## ***Junior Semester 2 (Study Abroad)***

### **MGT301 – Organizational Behavior and Management Studies**

“Management processes, organizational theory and behavior, organizational structure, international business, ethics, and environmental analysis. Emphasis on developing conceptual and analytical skills.”

\*\*Note: This course was not taken at URI

MGT301 was a course that focused on the psychological aspects of individuals and how those aspects affect work ethics, group dynamics, and group communication. The course first discussed the individual and then progressed into a discussion of groups. Simultaneously as these topics were being discussed, the class was divided into teams that had to work together on a semester long project. Topics that were covered included Hofstede’s analysis of masculinity vs. femininity, power distance, leadership, individualism vs. collectivism, introvert vs. extrovert, and emotional stability for individual analysis. Group topics included communication and how to use it effectively, workload dispersion, and specialization of skills.

The class was very challenging, but very rewarding as well. Two chapters of reading were assigned each week prior to class. Class consisted of lectures that discussed the reading and further illustrated the key concepts. Some time each class period was set aside to discuss how the concepts being taught related to our group projects. Assessment was determined through a mid-term exam, a cumulative final exam, the result of the group project, peer assessments from group members, and active participation in class discussions.

The course was rewarding in the sense that it clearly illustrated that every person has certain attributes that determine their work ethic and style and how people of such different personalities are able to overcome differences, negotiate work distribution, and ultimately complete rigorous challenges. Not only did the course teach the topics, but it allowed the students to experience each topic. Every piece of information covered in lectures had happened within the group or was obvious to see within the group. The structure of the course was perfect and after reflecting back on the experience, I see it more as a training course that prepared me for the real world experiences rather than solely an educational course with little practical application.

As mentioned before, the best aspect of this course was the hands on, real life experience that went hand in hand with the material presented. The very first day of class, the students were divided into teams of five or six people. Each team consisted of no more

than two people from any one country and thus the groups were really able to see a great diversity of personalities, culture, and work ethics. The groups' assignment was to create a company, run the company to earn revenue, and donate the profits to any charity of the groups' choosing. Projects were varied and some examples are: organizing sunset sailing trips, selling tee-shirts, planning rainforest hikes, and teaching elementary school children what it is like to be blind and then show them the usefulness of seeing-eye dogs. Deadlines were set for organizing, planning, executing, and wrap-up of the project. Two five page papers were assigned, one at mid-semester and the other after the wrap-up of the project. The papers required the students to discuss how each of the topics presented in class manifested itself within the group.

The entirety of this course obviously cannot be duplicated at URI, however, the structure of the course can and I recommend that it is. A semester long group project that allows for the experience of the material being taught would be advantageous to business students. Due to the time requirement outside of normal class hours, it would be advisable to require the course to be taken in the first semester of the senior year and possibly add a two hour lab period which would ensure at least two hours each week for the group to meet. Conducting the class in the senior year, especially for management majors, may not be feasible since the course is an introductory course. To fix this problem, a second course could be created. This second course would be a course for the project alone and would be similar to a capstone course where no new information is learned, but the concepts from the introductory course are applied.

Furthermore, the more experience students have with working on labor intensive group assignments, the more prepared they will be for the real world. Many courses already require group assignments; the difference between those group assignments and the ones that students will encounter in the corporate world are that in an academic setting, students' schedules are chaotic and group work needs to be done around those occupied times whereas in the corporate world, groups are together for eight hours each day. By adding a lab period to the course, this mandated group time is simulated. I believe these recommendations, if implemented, could raise the quality of the management course offered by URI. It should be noted that the suggested lab period was not required in Australia. Scheduling group meetings outside of class was never very difficult. I have two explanations for this occurrence. The first is that most Australian students do not have jobs during the semester. One reason for this is that Australia has a program in place where students can defer their tuition payments until after graduation and thus part-time jobs are not as necessary as they are in the United States. The second reason is that there is a difference between the education systems of Australia and the United States. Most students take four courses per semester rather than five. Even though the credit hours are equivalent between the two countries, the amount of outside work is not and thus it was easier to schedule group meetings in Australia.



## **BSL333 – Legal and Ethical Environmental Business**

“An introduction to the origins, framework, and concepts of the legal and ethical environment of business with emphasis on contractual relations.”

\*\*Note: This course was not taken at URI

Business law met the expectations of the course described. An emphasis was placed on various aspects of contracts including creation, completion, and breach. The course also discussed the foundations of the legal system, case law, a little on ethical behavior, and the judicial system.

The course was very difficult. The workload required and the difficulty of the material is definitely for students of senior standing. Chapter reading was required each week with an additional three to five case examples. Lectures reviewed the reading material, illustrated key points, and debated decisions in the case readings. Students were assessed on a mid-term exam, a cumulative final exam, class participation in case debates, and a presentation of one chapter of material.

Students learned the process of contract creation, execution, completion, breach, and penalty. Another skill learned was how to read and interpret cases. Cases consist of highly technical wording and sentence structure which needs to be deciphered. The skill of analytical reading is highly desirable and was well taught in this course.

The concepts covered in regards to contract law were useful knowledge, however, learning in depth material about the judicial system was not very relevant. The course could be improved by splitting the semester into halves. In the first half of the semester, all material relating to contract law should be covered. In the second half of the semester, an emphasis should be placed on business ethics. In recent years, many corporations have been exposed for fraud or misconduct. Ethics training is on the rise in many major corporations including the two companies for which I interned. It is my understanding that firms are looking to hire individuals with some basic knowledge of business ethics. Topics could explore the differences between good business ethics and bad ones and also look at the many recent past cases such as Enron and Arthur Anderson. It is easy to say that most people know the difference between right and wrong and what is crossing the line and what is not, however, it is those gray areas in which people need help navigating. By simply discussing business ethics and past experiences, students will be able to gain a more concrete understanding of business ethics and at least be comfortable with the subject.

## **MKT301 – Marketing Principles**

“An introduction to marketing from a managerial viewpoint. Examines social, economic, technological, legal, ethical, and other environmental factors and their impact on product, price, promotion, and distribution decisions in a worldwide market.”

\*\*Note: This course was not taken at URI

This introduction to marketing was fully comprehensive. The course focused on all aspects of marketing including the initial stage of knowing the product, to knowing the markets, and then to the process of convincing people in the market to buy the product. The semester was broken into four segments, each one covering the topic of product, price, promotion and distribution. Video segments and commercials were used to illustrate most techniques, but print advertisements, and verbal selling were also demonstrated and discussed.

The class was moderately difficult. Large amounts of textbook reading were required for each week’s lecture as well as several articles that were distributed in each tutorial class. Four, twenty question quizzes were administered during lectures. In addition to the quizzes, students were assessed on a final exam, two random, impromptu presentations on material being discussed, and the creation of an advertising campaign. The material was presented at a rapid pace, but lecture slides were distributed during each class and thus note taking was not difficult.

Two major skills sets were acquired through this course. The first was being prepared and ready at any moment to give a presentation in front of peers. The random selection forced students to read regularly and ask questions about topics they did not understand. It also helped students become more comfortable with public speaking. One of the most important parts of marketing is the pitch to the customer and the professor emphasized that public speaking skills are critical. The second skill learned was how to create an advertising campaign from start to finish and then pitch the idea to a customer. This final project at the end of the semester helped to tie all the material together and allowed the students to really appreciate the time and effort put into the marketing process.

The final marketing project was quite unique. Groups of four to six people were selected randomly. The professor, acting as a customer, gave the groups a request for proposal to create an advertising campaign. The catch was that the product, although already invented and selling well in the United States, has never been introduced into Australia. The groups’ task was to create the initial introductory campaign. The product assigned was Ben & Jerry’s Ice Cream. Upon first glance, the task did not seem so taxing, however, after further inspection, the task was monumental. Australians do not see ice cream as a treat or a snack as Americans do, but rather see it as a quick refresher on a hot day similar to how Americans see slushies. The cross cultural analysis had to be in depth and really forced that the international students leave traditional domestic thinking behind and think on a local level. Marketing is truly about thinking globally, but acting locally.

This concept had to be fully integrated into the design and execution of the campaign. After the campaign was created, it was pitched to the professor, a.k.a. the client, simulating an actual campaign presentation.

Like the management course described, all aspects of this course cannot be replicated at URI. I do believe, however, that a marketing project similar to the one described be a requirement of the course. Students should be assigned a product already in existence, but not currently sold in the United States and then have to create a marketing campaign to introduce it. The project would obviously lack the majority of the cross cultural experience and many of the difficulties faced than if the project required students to market a product in an unfamiliar market. However, the process of recreating an existing product's image and selling it to a new market would be similar. Another option would be to introduce regional products into new regional markets. For example, the United States has many geographic areas that differ vastly in types of people and culture. Marketing a product in Pennsylvania is vastly different than marketing a product in Kansas. This option could nicely simulate the cross cultural experience. If a majority of the class lives in the New England Area, have them introduce a product that exists only in the Mid-West. Again, it is not a perfect simulation, but would definitely serve the educational purpose. Not only would this project force students to use the skills learned in class, but would also teach them to critically analyze all aspects of the marketing process with the additional difficulty of using cross cultural products.

## ***Senior Semester 1***

### **MKT451 – Global Marketing**

“Focus on understanding how cultural, political, economic, legal and other macro factors affect market strategies. Application of these factors in dealing with planning and organizing for global marketing operations.”

The goal of this course was to show how international marketing's different from domestic marketing. The course covered all the same topics as MKT301, but added cultural, economic, and political factors into each segment.

This course was extremely difficult. Two exams and an international marketing analysis and campaign implementation report were the basis for assessment. The exams did not accurately reflect the material that was presented. Chapters were assigned for each class period and slides were shown of key points. The exams questioned subtleties rather than the major ideas which the class was lead to believe were important. Additionally, several correct answers were listed and students were expected to rationalize the minute differences to choose the answer the professor wanted. In several cases, the information in the book slightly contradicted material presented in class and both versions were sometimes offered as answers on exams.

I cannot honestly say that I learned one new skill from taking this course. It is my recommendation that this course be removed from the curriculum. In today's world, marketing is rarely domestic, the majority is international. Marketing domestically can

be easily applied to marketing internationally. As mentioned in MKT301, the United States has many geographic areas that differ vastly in types of people and culture. Marketing a product in Pennsylvania can be vastly different than marketing a product in Kansas and thus the process used for international marketing is being applied domestically. The international aspect of marketing can easily be integrated into MKT301 as it was done in Australia. No additional time was needed to talk about culture, economic, and political factors as they all have to be discussed anyway to teach domestic marketing. The course was laborious and added nothing to the education already received by MKT301. Removing this course, however, would make the need to add the international marketing project discussed previously, all the more important.

### **FIN452 – Multinational Finance**

“Methods of financing multinational corporations. Foreign exchange, translation of financial statements, multinational funds flow and international liquidity, international financial reporting and tax policy, international money, stock, and bond markets.”

FIN452 was composed of three sections of material, the foreign exchange market, transactions exposure, and multinational capital budgeting. The first two topic areas were completely new, but multinational capital budgeting stemmed from material that was covered in FIN301.

This course was difficult, but manageable. The complex problems required practicing problems outside of class on a weekly basis. Students were assigned one take home quiz for each major topic area before exams were given. Two topic exams and one cumulative final exam were administered. The exams accurately reflected the skills discussed in class and the difficulty implied through the lectures.

The skills learned in this course were many. Students learned how to read exchange market quotes and calculate cross rates. They learned to utilize the purchasing power parity, the fisher effect, the international fisher effect, and the interest rate parity to calculate various future prices, interest rates, and inflation rates. Students also learned the differences between using the spot market, forward contracts, futures contracts, options contracts, swap contracts, and utilizing the bare market in order hedge against transaction risks. Finally, students learned to calculate the weighted average cost of capital on an international basis and use it to determine if an international investment is worthwhile.

The course was well structured, well paced, and covered a multitude of topics. It was one of the best international courses I've taken in the CBA. The course truly emphasized international concepts as compared to domestic ones. Students were required to use the Wall Street Journal to find current exchange quotes for problems thus showing the practicality of all the material that was covered. No recommendations can be made to better this course.

## **PSC377 – Politics of China**

“Institutions of the Chinese system including the Communist Party, the state system, the bureaucracy, and the army. Emphasis on China's economic and social progress and relations with other nations.”

This course is not a requirement of the CBA. The semester was split into two sections, the first covering the transition of China from a republic to a communist state and then the reign of Mao Zedong. The second half of the semester covered the transition from Mao to Deng Xiaoping and the current state of China including political, social, and economic problems. Current topics were also discussed such as the up coming 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing.

The course had a typical 300 level workload and was moderately difficult. Two books encompassed the required reading for each class's discussion. Half of each class was dedicated to lectures and the other half was dedicated to discussion of the topics presented or current affairs. Students were assessed on two exams, a cumulative final exam, and a policy initiative paper.

This course was more about information rather than skill sets. It discussed lots of history and focused on how China has become the economic giant, the overpopulated country, and the environmental disaster that it is. The importance of this class, however, should not be overlooked. As stated before, International Business majors should have a general understanding of major worldly affairs and China, the world's most populated country and major manufacturing center in global business, is one topic that every International Business major should know about. The end of the semester focused on the current state of China, its problems, and the world's dependence on the country for its cheap manufacturing capabilities. I do not believe that PSC377 should be made a requirement; however, I do believe that more political science courses should be added to the curriculum. This topic is further discussed later in the report. My recommendation for this course is to make it count for the required culture credit. Not only does the course cover Chinese culture, but it discusses current topics all related to global business and world affairs.

## **ECN328 – Intermediate Economic Theory: Pricing and Distribution**

“Market conditions and forces affecting the pricing and production of goods and services, the allocation of resources, and the distribution of income.”

This course covers topics dealing with various markets and firms. The course progresses from discussing firms engaged in perfect competition, to the allocation of capital and labor resources, then on to monopolies, and finally ends by discussing monopolistic competition. Within each of these topics, price determination, profit maximization, and quantity selection for minimum costs were all discussed.

The course accurately reflected the difficulty of a junior 300 level course. Assessment was based on two mid-term exams and a cumulative final exam. Chapter readings were assigned at the beginning of each topic and practice problems were distributed at the end

of each topic before the exam was administered. The course was taught primarily through examples. Very little new theory was discussed. The class is a good continuation of ECN201.

The course taught how to calculate the profit maximizing levels of output in various markets. It explained the process of why firms in perfect competition are price takers and why firms that create monopolies are able to set prices, but are still subject to certain constraints, mainly the demand curve. An emphasis was placed on understanding marginal utilities, marginal costs, average costs, and variable costs. The course also discussed the allocation of capital and labor in order to maximize profits and minimize costs.

This course is not a requirement of the CBA for the International Business program; however, I recommend that it should be. Microeconomics focuses on the theory of firms and specifically, the supply and demand of products, the pricing of products, costs of production, and marginal theory. These are all topics of which business majors should have extensive knowledge. ECN201, a requirement of the CBA, is a limited introduction into microeconomics. ECN328 further discusses the material taught in the introductory course, but adds extensive detail and provides a solid base for understanding how firms operate in specific markets. In the International Business program, two courses are required for each department: two finance, two marketing, two accounting, etc. the second always building from the first. Two courses are also required for economics; however, the two economics courses required do not build from each other. They are two independent courses, each one being a base course on its own. Very little information can be carried from micro to macroeconomics and vice versa. By requiring ECN328, the essential second intermediate course, which builds from its base, would be put into place. The transition of adding this course could easily be accomplished by removing one professional elective from the course curriculum.

## ***Senior Semester 2***

### **MGT410 – Business Policy**

“Case analysis is used to study strategic issues and problems of mission and goal setting, planning, implementing, and controlling in domestic and multinational firms.”

MGT410 is the capstone course for business majors. Its intent is to allow students to pull knowledge gained in all areas of business and apply that knowledge to a lifelike simulation. The simulation used is a program called Capsim. Within the simulation, students must make decisions about R&D, prices, sales budgets, promotion budgets, sales forecasts, production scheduling, plant capacity and capital assets, stock, and long term and short term debt. These decisions are made for five products which exist in an actual industry. In conjunction with the simulation, students are taught about strategy and preliminary strategy development analysis.

The workload of this course does not reflect that of a senior capstone course. Very little time commitment is required. Students are assessed on their performance in the

simulation and two strategy papers. The first paper focuses on the pre-strategy development analysis and the second focuses on making changes to the initial report based on the results of implementing the strategy in the simulation. The most challenging aspect of the course is not the decision making process, but rather the assembling of the group members in order to make decisions collectively.

Since the course is a capstone course, no new material should really be presented. Its focus, as stated previously, is to draw together the accumulated knowledge from previous business courses. I believe that the course does this well. The major problem with the course is that it is extremely quick paced and due the lifestyles of most seniors, gathering five to six people for a few hours several times a week is nearly impossible. Decisions are required to be made twice weekly. Two possible solutions could solve the problem. The first solution would be to add two lab sessions during the week. If two decisions remain to be required each week, the lab periods would allow for a common time for all the group members to meet without interference from their outside lives. The second solution would be to elongate the simulation and only require one decision to be made per week allowing the weekends to be utilized for meeting times. It should be noted that some class time was given to be used to make decisions.

## ***Transfer Credits***

### **MTH111 – Precalculus**

“Equations of first and second degree, systems of equations. Inequalities. Functions and graphs. Exponential, logarithmic, and trigonometric functions. Applications. Introduction to analytic geometry.”

This course was not taken due to transfer credits from AP courses and thus will not be reviewed.

### **MTH141 – Introduction to Calculus with Analytic Geometry**

“Topics in analytic geometry, functions and their graphs, limits, the derivative, applications to finding rates of change and extrema and to graphing, the integral, and applications.”

This course was not taken due to transfer credits from AP courses and thus will not be reviewed.

## **Other Opinions about the Curriculum**

### ***Foreign Language and Culture***

The College of Business Administration currently requires that International Business majors take two semesters of one language or up to the 104 level, then an additional three semesters of either language or culture, and then one semester of a combined letters and culture course. It is my belief that to only have language skills up to the 104 level is not sufficient. Although all people are different, I took language courses up to the 206 level and am only moderately proficient. I can speak moderately well and can comprehend

about seventy to eighty percent of what I hear. This amount of skill, should I ever be in a Spanish speaking foreign country, would allow me to get by. Additionally, each year that I do not practice any of the skills that I learned, I seem to lose some of my speaking and listening capabilities. If this is true of most students, those with the skill level only at the 102 or 104 levels will surely have lost most of their foreign language proficiency before graduation. It is my recommendation that the requirements for foreign languages be raised to the 201 level or higher.

In addition, two semesters of culture should still be required. I believe that the definition of what constitutes a culture course should, however, be widened. Culture can take on many forms and knowledge can be obtained through history courses; major event courses i.e. the holocaust, the cold war, development of communism, etc; and international political science courses. Any course which discusses the in-depth workings of a people or particular geographic location heightens a student's knowledge base of unfamiliar people, which ultimately is the point of taking culture courses.

The study abroad experience is a great way to become fluent in a foreign language and really allows students to understand slang and be fully immersed in the culture. I do not, however, believe that students should be required to study in a country which speaks the language they are studying. Using myself as an example, I studied Spanish, but studied abroad in Australia. This in no way helped my foreign language abilities; however, I still gained a vast amount of knowledge of other cultures, not just the Australian culture. Culture is just as important as language to students of international business and so if students have a desire to study in countries other than those that speak the language of their studies, they should be encouraged to do so. Knowledge of any country's culture is valuable when conducting business with that nation and the language barrier can be overcome through the use of a translator should the need arise.

### ***Courses for Consideration***

Many courses are offered at the university and requiring some additional courses could help to improve the knowledge base and skill sets of students within the International Business Degree.

### **Economics**

As my review of many economics courses indicates, I firmly believe that International Business students should be required to take more economics courses. The study of economics is crucial to the understanding of the world of business. The discipline studies the behavior of people and firms and how they interact with each other. Business is companies interacting with people and thus learning the art of business are to learn the skills required to maximize the results of the relationship between firms and people. Economics further explains how the relationship between business and people works rather than just the skills needed to do it, in essence, it is a theoretical foundation for the skills that need to be applied. More advanced studies in microeconomics would serve students better than advanced courses in macroeconomics, however, both will create a more solid foundation for business majors. In many courses required by the CBA, students are required to evaluate the current economic status of countries in order to make



various decisions in marketing and finance. It would be most advantageous for students to make those assessments based on skills learned in the discipline of economics itself.

## **Political Science**

Political science is a subject area where there is very little focus within the International Business Degree. The subject area, however, should be given more attention. Many political science courses cover international aspects highly relevant to anyone in international studies. Many of the courses cover topics including economic situations, relationships between various countries, culture, and history. All of these elements would serve to enhance students' knowledge of the international arena. Below I have listed several courses that I believe would complement the International Business Degree nicely and should be suggested courses of study and or be available for culture credit.

- **PSC321 Politics and Problems of Israel**  
“Analysis of the evolution of political institutions and the dynamics of public policy in Israel. Emphasis on contemporary political problems.” (Pre: 113 or 116)
  
- **PSC350 From Cold War to Cold Peace**  
“Provides essential political and historical background to understanding the evolution of U.S. and Soviet relations over the past 50 years.” (Pre: 116)
  
- **PSC377 Politics of China**  
“Institutions of the Chinese system including the Communist Party, the state system, the bureaucracy, and the army. Emphasis on China's economic and social progress and relations with other nations.” (Pre: 116)
  
- **PSC401 Comparative European Politics**  
“Concepts and methodologies relative to the study of comparative politics. Structural-functional approach to survey of the formal and informal features of the political systems of Great Britain, France, Germany, Soviet Union, and one other country.” (Pre: None listed)
  
- **PSC406 Russian Foreign Policy**  
“An upper-level introduction to the issues of Russian foreign policy, including relations with newly formed states of the CIS.” (Pre: 6 credits in social sciences)
  
- **PSC407 Politics of the Russian Commonwealth**  
“An upper-level introduction to the politics and society of Russia and the newly created states of the CIS.” (Pre: 6 credits in social sciences)
  
- **PSC408 African Governments and Politics**  
“Political developments in the new nations of sub-Saharan Africa. Main stress is functional: role of parties as integrative forces, democratic centralism, one-party states, African political thought, and common developmental problems.”  
(Pre: 113 & 116)

- **PSC410 Issues in African Development**  
“A seminar focusing on the dynamics of African development, including political and social change, economic development, education, urbanization, rural development, environmental management, labor and business, industrialization, and technology transfer.” (Pre: 113 & 116)
- **PSC431 International Relations**  
“Analysis of the various theories of international relations and study of the major forces and events shaping the politics of the Great Powers.” (Pre: 116)
- **PSC432 International Government**  
“General development of international government, with particular attention to structure, methods, and operations of the League of Nations, the United Nations, and related agencies. Problems of security, conflict resolution, and social and economic issues.” (Pre: 116)

## Writing

It has been my experience that the writing abilities of many of my peers are far below acceptable levels. During the two required writing courses, WRT101 and WRT227, I was required to perform peer review of papers and it was shocking to realize that there were students who were unable to put together coherent sentences let alone create a document whose verbiage flowed. Even as a senior, I am often asked to edit papers of friends and residents and am surprised at their lack of writing ability. Obviously not all students are capable of being outstanding writers, however, there should be a minimal standard.

Throughout my internships, I was required to write reports, proposals, memos, and letters. I consider myself to be capable of writing moderately well, however, upon reaching the business world, I quickly realized that I had much to learn. Every document I was required to write had to be written in the most professional manner and with the most technically explicit verbiage. For example, the word “deal” could never be used in a formal report, “transaction” or some similarly explicit word had to be used instead. Sentences had to be short, clear, and to the point. I have found that in many college courses professors put page and word requirements on writing assignments. By using these constraints, students often fill papers with useless information known as “fluff.” Doing this is poor practice for the business world where time is money. Management wants to know as much as possible in as little space as possible. Management looks for explicit details that are only relevant to the topic. Since this type of writing, technical verses academic, is what is required in the business world, the former type of writing should be taught in the degree program.

Teaching technical writing, however, poses a significant problem because, as mentioned previously, many students do not have a solid writing foundation. To help correct this problem, I proposed that a writing assessment be given to incoming freshmen. Should students be able to pass this assessment, they would be required to take WRT227 and an advanced technical business writing course. Should the students not pass the assessment,

they would be required to take a course similar to WRT101, but with a more demanding emphasis on basic skills rather than document creation. After completing the basic course, students would then have to complete WRT227 and the advanced technical business writing course. Having to complete the basic class would fulfill a free elective requirement and thus would not change the credit requirements.

The new SAT has a writing section which is intended to assess the writing skills of each student. This assessment, if used correctly, would help to resolve some of these issues and separate students into the courses that challenge them.

### ***Existing Courses for Consideration***

Several courses are currently being offered at the university that cover topics currently lacking in the degree program and could be beneficial to students in the International Business Major. As mentioned in the review of BSL333, ethics was not a topic that was thoroughly discussed. In today's world, ethics seems to have taken a backseat to earning profits and pleasing shareholders. Several major corporations such as Enron and Arthur Anderson were unfortunately destroyed by management personal who lost sight of their ethical responsibilities. I believe that it would be in the CBA's best interest to include a course specifically tailored to the topic of business ethics. I also think that making this change would speak highly of URI's International Business Degree in showing that it is dedicated to producing quality and well rounded applicants for the business world. BSL334 - Legal and Ethical Environment of Business II appears to be a good fit to fulfill this recommendation. (It has come to my attention that the CBA has added a course relating to ethics starting in the fall of 2006 and thus this recommendation may be disregarded.)

Another class for consideration is BAC500 – Computing for Management. This course appears to offer the advanced skill sets of Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel that were lacking from BAC110, however, it is a graduate level course. It is my suggestion that another course in Excel be created to teach these advanced skills. Another possible class for consideration in this category is MSI350 which focuses on the use of Excel for analysis purposes. The computer skills required in most business related jobs today are quite demanding. Word and Excel are used on a daily basis and are often a staple of many companys' activities. The more comfortable students are with these pieces of software, the more likely they will be hired, have an easier transition into the job, and be comfortable with the tasks that will be asked of them. Overall, finance, economics, and analytical courses should all incorporate Excel in some fashion. The diversity of use in these various subjects will further enhance students' knowledge of the program's application capabilities and thus only make their skill set stronger.

### **New Courses to be Created**

Several elements and skill sets are lacking from the degree program and are not offered through any course currently offered at URI. I propose that the following classes or some variation of these classes be created and offered or required by the College of Business Administration.

## ***Business Communications***

Throughout my three internships, I had a great deal of experience with many people in the corporate world. I worked for different bosses, different groups of people, people in different parts of the country, people in different parts of the world, and people in different levels of management. Through this experience, I discovered that there are many communication styles and techniques and some worked well while others failed miserably. It is my intention that by creating the course of business communications, students will learn how to effectively communicate in specific business situations by offering practical applications rather than just theory as presented in COM100.

The specific topics of study would be:

- How to run an effective meeting: local and long distance;
- How to give an effective presentation;
- How to communicate via email both professionally and effectively;
- When is it appropriate for direct vs. indirect communication?; and
- How and When to ask for Help.

### **How to Run an Effective Meeting: Local and Long Distance**

There are two types of meetings, ones that are effective and ones that are not. Meetings take up time and time is extremely valuable and thus ineffective meetings that are unproductive, waste money, time, and in the long-run, possibly lose customers. This topic area would cover:

- Starting on time;
- Having an agenda and keeping to it;
- Staying on topic;
- Allowing everyone to speak;
- Creating a comfortable atmosphere in which people are not afraid to speak;
- Emphasizing that criticizing of initial ideas is not effective;
- Making sure everyone participates;
- Taking notes on topics discussed; and
- Creating an agenda for the next meeting.
  - For long distance meetings via telephone: making sure that everyone understands what has been said;
  - Making sure all questions are answered;
  - Making sure everyone involved is working from the same information and material.

### **How to Give an Effective Presentation**

Presentations are unavoidable. I have had to sit through many on topics which were of absolutely no interest to me, however, despite my lack of interest, there were some presentations to which I paid attention and others to which I did not and the only difference to one verse another was the quality of the presentation. Within many courses, students are required to give presentations and practice public speaking. The problem is that students are never really taught how to give a good presentation. Furthermore,

students are NEVER taught how to effectively use Microsoft PowerPoint despite the fact that ninety percent of presentations incorporate the software. The program, in my opinion, is overused, but should its use persist or even grow from its current usage level, it is all the more important that it be used more effectively. Topics in this area would include:

- How to cope with nervousness;
- Know the topic;
- Highlight important points;
- Use examples to explain what is meant;
- Use visual aids; and
- Practice.

This part of the course would be devoted more to theory of which I do not have much knowledge and thus will not elaborate on any of the topic areas. I will, however, give examples of what I believe to be an effective PowerPoint presentation.

PowerPoint is a tool, not a crutch. Students, faculty, and businessmen alike misuse the software constantly. Some key points to keep in mind when using PowerPoint are the following:

- Keep slides simple. Don't use pictures, lots of colors, strange fonts, or animations;
- Keep slides consistent; they should all look similar;
- Fonts should be big, clear, and readable;
- Never read from a slide. A minimal amount of information should be present on each slide.
- Know the information, not the slides. The minimal amount of information on each slide should be used to keep the presenter on topic and highlight key elements;
- Look at the audience, not the slide;
- The slides are not the presentation, the presenter is the presentation. By keeping a minimal amount of information on slides, the audience has no choice but to focus on the presenter. Slides with too much information cause the audience to read and not pay attention.

### **How to Communicate via Email both Professionally and Effectively**

During my internship experience, I received hundreds of emails. Email has become a staple of communication. The biggest problem with email, especially for students who are entering the corporate world for the first time, is using email professionally and effectively. This would be a short topic that covers things such as:

- Don't use abbreviations;
- Say what you mean and mean what you say;
- Never assume the receiver has all the information that you do;

- Reference all previous discussions and or material as precisely as possible with dates and times;
- Be careful with jokes, they might be offensive;
- Never use sarcasm, tone of voice is difficult to understand when reading text;
- Include the your contact information; and
- Use titles of respect (Dr., Mr., Ms, etc.), especially when in doubt.

### **When is it Appropriate for Direct verse Indirect Communication?**

With the advent of new technology, indirect communication now constitutes more time than direct face to face communication. Cellular telephones, faxes, email, and Blackberrys allow for instantaneous communication, but are these devices always the best way to communicate? I think students need some instruction as to when face to face communication is required as to when electronic communication is acceptable. This would also be a short topic covering:

Personal information (direct);  
 Problems with work, tasks, coworkers, etc. (direct);  
 Good news (direct);  
 Rewards (direct);  
 Simple questions (indirect);  
 Requesting a meeting (indirect); and  
 Asking for help; (either).

More topics could definitely be covered, but the point has been made that there are times when face to face communication is more appropriate over electronic communication.

### **When to Ask for Help**

Asking for help is never easy. It makes some people feel uneducated, inferior, or as if you are wasting other people's time. The truth is, asking for help is a necessity. Students need to understand that asking for help is not a sign of weakness and should be done whenever necessary. The only way that people learn is by asking for help when they don't understand. It's ok to ask questions, most managers are happy to explain why things are done a certain way and how to complete the task. It is much easier to take two minutes of someone's time to ask a question than it is to take hours of their time when they have to fix a mistake because a question wasn't asked. It is however, not wise to utilize someone else's time when the answer to a question, more specifically a trivial question, can be found through other means such as a book or a website. Only after a question cannot be answered through secondary sources should a primary source be asked. This topic area could be simulated by assigning a project which is so complex that students would be required to utilize office hours to get certain answers they needed to complete the project. Only through practice or experience will students learn to ask for help.

## ***From Bookbag to Briefcase***

This would be a course for second semester seniors. Graduation is fast approaching and real life is about to hit students square in the face. URI101 is a course designed to help students transition from high school to college and this is a course designed to help students transition from college life to the real world. Brief discussions of the following topics should be covered:

- Managing money: checking accounts, savings accounts, CDs, Stocks and mutual funds;
- Effectively using credit cards and knowing about credit reports;
- Getting an apartment, finding one, things to check, leases, buying, landlords;
- Health Insurance, HMOs, point of service plans;
- 401Ks;
- Taxes, W-4, tax brackets, filing; and
- Budgeting for food and bill payments.

## ***Senior Year Structure***

Senior year, for most students is quite stressful. They are assembling resumes, taking interviews, and frantically trying to complete courses. Their motivation is often dwindling and thus full semester courses which should not be very difficult become very cumbersome. Additionally, as stated earlier in this critique, international business has come to mean that students have a general understanding and background in most business topics. More often than not, the skills needed to complete a job are learned on the job. The education provided in college is simply a foundational skill set onto which each job will add specific skill sets. It is for these reasons that I propose a new course be developed that is modular in structure and which students possess the power to choose the topics in this final course. The course is broken into either three four week sessions or four three week sessions. Each session is a different topic and the topics can be chosen by each student. Possible modules that could be included are:

- From Bookbag to Briefcase
- Transfer Pricing
- Corporate Tax
- Viewing selected videos from the Honors Colloquium on Globalization
- Read and discuss Thomas Friedman's [The World is Flat](#)
- How to Interview
- Practice in public speaking
- Portfolio Class (discussed under leadership)

## ***Integrating Leadership***

### ***Overview***

The leadership minor at URI was created and is run by student affairs professionals who act as role models, advisors, and educators. Staff members act as role models by

participating in community activities outside the university; as advisors by creating personal relationships with each student enrolled in the program and following them through the minor's process; and as educators by teaching several of the courses and participating in experiential learning experiences.

The leadership minor strives to “engage in research and assessment in order to contribute to the field of leadership studies and to provide developmental opportunities for students to become informed, inclusive, and effective leaders in their careers communities, and family lives.”<sup>1</sup> The minor is interdisciplinary and tries to encourage leadership in all aspects of life, not just professional. The program is designed to develop and refine various skill sets including the following:

- The ability to analyze, criticize, synthesize and utilize information in their career, community, and family leadership roles;
- The organizational and interpersonal skills to implement their knowledge;
- The ability to utilize historical / multicultural / alternative theories and methods;
- The ability to be inclusive, not by being an expert on all cultures (race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, ability), but by having a general knowledge and respect, different and varied perspectives, and by being able to consider and include cultural differences in membership and leadership roles; and
- The ability to think critically; neither to manipulate when communicating nor to be manipulated.

The leadership program teaches the theory and demonstrates the application of leadership skills. The program is designed to teach students how to be leaders in the real world. The topics covered in each required course, to some extent, are decided upon by the students taking the course. The courses all have some set structure, however, if a course consists of students who are interested in one topic verses another, the curriculum of that particular class can be modified with relative ease. While the courses teach theory, they stress application. Additionally, many types of leadership are discussed. Many students, depending on their major, have a sense of what leadership is and often try to apply that to all leadership scenarios. This philosophy, however, does not always work. The program, therefore, strives to unlock students' preconceived notions of leadership by incorporating various leadership styles and approaches into the curriculum. The course requirements are as follows:

- Eighteen credits are required for this minor, twelve of which must be at the 200 level of instruction or above. A course grade of “C” or better must be earned in each graded course. At least twelve of the credits must be earned at URI.
- No course may be used to apply to both the major and minor fields of study. Courses in General Education or for other minors may be used for the minor. With the exception of internship credit, all courses for the minor must be taken for a grade.
- HDF 190 “FLITE” (3 credits) or

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the leadership mission statement which can be found at <http://www.mu.uri.edu/leadership>



- HDF 290 “Modern Leadership Issues” (3 credits)
- HDF 498 “Historical, Multiethnic, & Alternative Leadership Studies” (3 credits)
- HDF 492 “Portfolio Class” (1 credit)
- Internship (80 Hours, 2 credits)
- Electives (9 credits)

HDF190 “FLITE” is a course offered only to second semester freshmen. The course focuses on personal leadership development. It is the program’s philosophy that in order to lead others, one must be able to lead one’s self. The course requires that students assess themselves and determine what type of person they are and how they work best. From that point, learning to lead one’s self can then be assessed and taught. If this course is not taken, HDF290 must be substituted.

HDF290 “Modern Leadership Issues” is a course offered to sophomores and juniors or students who enroll in the program after freshman year. The course teaches leadership approaches for various societal scenarios. This portion of the program is focused on the community and family section of the minor’s mission.

HDF498 “Historical, Multiethnic, & Alternative Leadership Studies” is a capstone course which discusses four separate units: critical thinking, leadership in crisis, cultural anthropology, and overcoming exclusion. The topics develop very advanced skills in the area of leadership. Critical thinking teaches how to assess various arguments through the use of logic and the process of breaking down arguments into the smallest possible increments for analysis. Leadership in crisis focuses on case studies of when good leadership goes bad in the event of a crisis, exactly the time when good leadership is needed the most. Cultural anthropology teaches students to filter through various mediums for valuable information. Today’s media is littered with useless information, however, those people that are able to filter out the noise, are those people who are most informed. The program believes the skill to be very important. Overcoming exclusion explores theory as to why some people choose to exclude themselves or are excluded by others in team or democratic situations. The topic then discusses how to help overcome this problem.

In addition to the core requirements, nine credits of electives must also be completed. A current list of accepted courses follows:

<p><b>AAF 300L</b> Civil Rights Movement in the US  <b>COM 100</b> Communication Fundamentals  <b>COM 202</b> Public Speaking  <b>COM 210</b> Persuasion: The Rhetoric of Influence  <b>COM 220</b> Small Group Communication  <b>COM 221</b> Interpersonal Communication  <b>COM 302</b> Advanced Public Speaking  <b>COM 322</b> Gender and Communication  <b>COM 361</b> Intercultural Communication  <b>COM 383</b> Rhetorical Theory  <b>COM 411</b> Advanced Rhetorical Theory  <b>COM 415</b> Ethics of Persuasion  <b>COM 421</b> Advanced Interpersonal Comm.  <b>COM 422</b> Communication-Conflict Intervention  <b>COM 450</b> Organizational Communication  <b>COM 451</b> Leadership and Motivation (also a capstone option)  <b>COM 461</b> Managing Cultural Differences in Org.  <b>CSV 302</b> URI 101 Mentors (and other mentors)  <b>HDF 290</b> Modern Leadership Issues  <b>HDF 297</b> Leadership and Mentor Program for Women of Color  <b>HDF 497/498</b> All-RI Philanthropy Class  <b>HDF 498</b> Historical, Multiethnic, and Alternative Leadership  <b>HDF 498</b> Leadership in Fraternities and Sororities  <b>HDF 498</b> Student Organization Leadership Consultants 136kb.pdf)  <b>HDF 498</b> Leadership for Activism and Social Change  <b>HDF 498</b> Leadership for Student Athletes  <b>HDF 498</b> FLITE Peer Leaders</p>	<p><b>MGT 300</b> Intro to Management and Supervision  <b>MGT 301</b> Organization and Management Theory  <b>MGT 302</b> Organizational Behavior  <b>MGT 303</b> Personnel Administration  <b>MGT 306</b> Skill Development-Org Behavior  <b>MGT 401</b> Women in Business and Management  <b>MGT 407</b> Organization- Management Theory II  <b>MGT 408</b> Organizational Development, Change  <b>PEX 375</b> Women in Sport-Contemporary Perspectives  <b>PSC 304</b> Introduction to Public Administration  <b>PSC 369</b> Legislative Process and Public Policy  <b>PSC 504</b> Ethics in Public Administration  <b>PHL 212</b> Ethics  <b>ROTC</b>  <b>SOC300P/WMS350U</b> Women and Work  <b>THE 221</b> Stage Management  <b>THE 341</b> Theater Management  <b>WMS 150</b> Introduction to Women’s Studies  <b>WMS 310</b> Race, Class, Sexuality in Women’s Lives  <b>WMS 350</b> Feminist Politics and Militancy  <b>WMS 350Y</b> International Women’s Issues</p>
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Other courses not listed may be counted for credit upon request and approval of the Leadership Advisory Committee. The committee is very willing to examine any courses within any field of study that includes some aspect of leadership.

HDF492 “Portfolio Class” The final requirement of the leadership minor is the compilation of a personal portfolio. The portfolio is composed of a variety of items aimed at allowing the student to reflect on all the material that was learned and the skills that were developed throughout their academic career, however, it is more specifically tailored toward the experience within the leadership minor. The portfolio also serves as evidence of education and skill sets which can be given to prospective employers. The types of materials that are included are:

Physical Items:

- a) resumes
- b) cover letters
- c) references
- d) applications
- e) acceptance/rejection letters
- f) recognition
- g) conference/workshop/program publicity, agendas, booklets, notes, etc.
- h) pictures
- i) other relevant items

Written Reflections:

- a) application statements
- b) goals/objectives
- c) style/skill inventories
- d) other relevant items

### ***Assessment of the Leadership Minor in the International Business Degree***

The leadership minor is extensive in its requirements, but allows for some flexibility in regards to electives. Despite what seems to be a rigorous set of classes, adding a minor in leadership to the International Business Degree could easily be accomplished. Some electives offered for the leadership minor would complement any business degree nicely.

Today's business world is starving for good leadership. The diversity of the workforce, especially in international settings, requires that managers be able to effectively communicate, manage discussions, and be flexible in their approaches to various situations. The leadership minor emphasizes all of these characteristics. An additional advantage of the minor is that it does not solely teach theory, but teaches how to apply the skills that are learned, thus giving a hands-on experience which seems to work better than teaching theory alone.

Adding the leadership minor would require students in the International Business program to add additional courses and thus might not be a viable option for some students. The leadership program, however, allows students to take some of the courses even if they are not enrolled in the minor and thus I would recommend that this opportunity be highly considered. The program offers two courses that I believe would be extremely valuable, HDF498 "Historical, Multiethnic, & Alternative leadership studies" and HDF492 "Portfolio Class." The skills that are taught in HDF498 will give any student a formidable advantage in a management position. All four topics encapsulate a quintessential person in a position of power. The portfolio, on the other hand, is a great tool to help students sell themselves to employers who are picking from a vast pool of applicants. The portfolio class would help students get themselves organized for the culmination and wrap-up of their college careers.

## Appendix – Summary Critique of Courses

Course	Positive	Negative	Suggestion
BAC120	Good introduction to Calculus and business mathematics	Not very difficult – too easy for freshmen	1.) Make homework mandatory 2.) Require students to explain their solutions to the class
WRT101	Taught basic writing formats	Didn't teach the concepts of writing	1.) Teach basic writing skills 2.) Assess students' writing ability prior to taking the class
BAC110	Taught basic concepts of Excel and Word	Focused on irrelevant material (i.e., how the computer worked)	Focus on Excel and Word
LET151J	Good introduction to globalization	Didn't go into depth of culture or business practices	Split the course into two semesters; one covers globalization, one covers culture and business practices
PSC116	Reviewed current international political events	Too much material covered too quickly	Use recitations to solidify lectures, not teach new material
ECN201	Relevant material covered at a reasonable pace	Not very difficult – too easy for sophomores	Make the course more rigorous
STA308 / BAC201	Basic and some advanced statistical methods were taught	Solid course – hard, fast paced	None
ACC201	Good introduction to financial accounting, portfolio project	Not enough emphasis on financial ratios	1.) Emphasize financial ratios 2.) Comparison presentation of portfolio projects
HPR201	Covered various topics from various perspectives of globalization	None	None

<b>Course</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Suggestion</b>
ECN202	Topics covered were a good foundation for business majors	Not very difficult – much too easy a course for sophomores	Make the course more rigorous
BAC202	None	Reviewed too much old material, pace was too rapid	1.) Cover new material, not old 2.) Focus on analysis skills rather than calculations 3.) Exams should reflect difficulty of the course
WRT227	Beneficial assignments	Didn't cover visual aids or email etiquette	Practice presentation skills
ACC202	Focus on financial statements and cash flow statements	None	Review financial ratios
FIN301	Understanding the time value of money	None	None
MSI309	Well structured and well paced while still challenging	None	None
ECN308X	Analysis skills and understanding and implementing strategy	None	None
MGT301	Multicultural group work and semester project	None	Incorporate the semester long project
BSL333	Understanding contract law and analytical reading skills developed	None	Put an emphasis on ethics
MKT301	Presentation skills and developing a marketing campaign	None	Incorporate the new product campaign project
MKT451	None	Information was redundant and the course was too difficult	Combine this course with MKT301

<b>Course</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Suggestion</b>
FIN452	Challenging, covered topics relevant to International Business majors	None	None
PSC377	In depth discussions of a country and culture which are important to the business world	None	Add more political science courses to the curriculum and allow it to count for culture credit
ECN328	Advanced concepts dealing with firms and markets	None	Make this course a requirement that replaces a professional elective
MGT410	Simulates management decisions	Pace is too rapid	Add lab periods and slow down the pace