

TROY UNIVERSITY  
 Sorrell College of Business  
 Response to ACBSP Evaluation Feedback Report  
 November 11, 2008

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| 1        | <p>Although it is noted that the DCCs are a systematic approach to performance improvement, the DCC system appears to be in an early stage of deployment that has not yet achieved consistency nor systematically reported results and implemented continuous improvement. Full deployment of the DCC system may be critical to the achievement of many of SCOB's strategic initiatives reported in the self-study.</p>   | <p>While the DCCs are fully deployed and they are used systematically, we agree that reporting results is not well documented, relying on informal reporting. We have existing archives that support consistent use of DCC mechanisms. We accept the need to formalize these processes within the next 12 months as an action item that requires our immediate attention.</p> |
| 1        | <p>It is noted that Troy and SCOB's organizational structures have gone through a series of modifications and improvements as a result of the merger in 2005. However, there is still residual misunderstanding and concern among some faculty and administrators about the current and future efficacy of the new structure. This is relevant to SCOB's strategic challenge to continue to integrate the three distinct universities involved in the merger.</p> | <p>We understand ongoing concerns among faculty about the challenges brought about by the new structure and evolving organizational culture. SCOB is dedicated to working with all faculty members to facilitate acceptance of the new academic reporting structure within TROY Global Campus.</p>  |
| 1        | <p>While it is noted that a viable Business Advisory Council is in place and active, its representatives are all from the United States, and most are from Alabama. This does not appear to be consistent with SCOB's strategic initiative to internationalize all aspects of its programs and develop international strategic partners.</p>  | <p>As our initial step, we are engaged in merging the BACs for all of SCOB. We agree that we need international members as members of our BAC, and this does not present a problem for us. This will be remedied within the next 12 months.</p>   |

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| 1        | <p>Although a new E-Campus structure has been developed to administer and support online programs, there does not appear to be direct involvement of the DCCs over SCOB’s online programs and courses. DCC involvement may be an important factor in SCOB’s initiatives to improve learning outcomes and achieve consistency across campuses and sites.</p>   | <p>The preponderance of all eCampus courses carry content that originated in the DCCs. For example, master syllabi are determined by DCCs and every SCOB course, regardless of where it is taught, is bound by the master syllabus for each course. We are currently in the third iteration of data driven changes, “closing the loop” changes, for issues that deal with all SCOB courses. eCampus faculty and resident faculty are the same people, so anything that is completed for resident courses is, by definition, completed for eCampus. The common components include learning outcomes, course descriptions, course purpose, and acceptable texts. DCC chairs routinely monitor courses taught by other faculty members for appropriate course content and adherence to SCOB policy across all sites, including eCampus.</p> |
| 2        | <p>Although it is noted that timelines for strategic initiatives are present in Table 6 of the self-study, these timelines are stated in a manner that is non-specific and without evidence of interim goals, action plans and performance measures. The strategic planning system in Dashboard partially addresses this through the work logs and green progress bars that can be updated to reflect progress toward goals. However, this system does not appear to be fully deployed across all strategic initiatives and reporting units in SCOB. Full deployment of the strategic planning and management system may prove beneficial to SCOB in achieving its strategic initiatives.</p> | <p>We acknowledge that there appear to be inconsistencies in the strategic planning Dashboard in that there is no way for us to document “closing the loop.” We are making efforts to implement tracking systems outside of Dashboard that indicate progress toward goal achievement. SCOB will be an active participant in the redesign of a new system that specifically allows Troy University to document actions taken toward completing goals.</p>   |
| 2        | <p>While it was made clear to the site visit team that Dashboard will be improved or replaced in the near future, it is important to note that there were inconsistencies between strategic initiatives reported in the self-study and the initiatives posted on Dashboard. Some of this may be due to the technical linkage to the outcomes assessment system on Dashboard that is not operating as expected. Successful achievement of strategic initiatives may be affected by inconsistent alignment and communication.</p>   | <p>As noted above, technology issues are being addressed immediately. Following our site visit from SACS, the University’s reporting system known as Dashboard will be redesigned. SCOB will have an active hand in this redesign.</p>   |

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| 2        | <p>Although the importance of human resource planning and its relationship to achievement of the strategic plan is clearly acknowledged by SCOB and Troy administrators, a systematic approach to aligning the hiring process with the strategic planning process was not evident. Addressing this opportunity for improvement may aid SCOB in achieving its goal to recruit and retain doctorally and professionally qualified full-time and part-time faculty.</p>  | <p>For the University as a whole, there is no direct alignment between hiring processes and strategic planning. Hiring occurs as a subcomponent of the University initiative to increase the number of doctorally qualified faculty members. Nonetheless, Troy University has an official process that identifies hiring needs for each college in the University. This process is not apparent to outside entities. This process includes gap analysis by each college, formal proposals from Deans to the Provost and Chancellor, and approval by the Provost and Chancellor.</p>   |
| 3        | <p>While it is noted that satisfaction measures for each student and stakeholder group are defined in Table 9 on pages 68 and 69 of the self-study, these measures are not quantifiable. Furthermore, the site visit team was unable to find evidence of a systematic approach to providing communications channels for students' suggestions and concerns. Quantifiable satisfaction measures and a systematic approach to resolving student's suggestions and concerns may be important to achieving SCOB's vision to be the first choice for higher business education students.</p> | <p>We presented several hundred pages of quantified results, but we were concerned that our visiting team would be overwhelmed with information. Of particular note, all of our satisfaction results are reported as quantified results and are open to the public. The links on page 68 of the self study report provide access to the public data that is used for our analyses.</p> <p>SCOB prides itself on the open door policy that is evident throughout the network. Not only do faculty members have open door policies, but the dean also has an open door policy. In addition to open doors, students have access to the following channels where they might voice their issues or concerns, as specified in the student handbook: email, phone calls, focus groups, class discussion boards in every eCampus course, end of course surveys, end of program surveys, <a href="mailto:ask@troy.edu">ask@troy.edu</a>, AIA discussion boards, and the faculty contact board in eCampus.</p> <p><a href="mailto:ask@troy.edu">ask@troy.edu</a> is a fully deployed support system that provides 24/7/365 support to each and every TROY student, staff, and faculty.</p> <p>To enhance a systematic approach, immediately all survey results will be circulated to all department chairs and associate deans as well as the Program Quality Committee. Because of all that we learned from our self study, the Program Quality Committee has become a standing committee for SCOB. This committee has the responsibility to recommend changes to the Dean and the DCCs as well as all SCOB academic committees.</p> |

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| 3        | <p>Satisfaction survey data from alumni and employers are made available to regional directors, site directors, campus administrators and faculty. This data does not appear to be analyzed or used for continuous improvement in a systematic manner throughout SCOB's campuses. A systematic approach to analysis of survey data and continuous improvement may help the college meet its vision to become a model for 21<sup>st</sup> century business education and community service.</p>  | <p>These data are circulated to faculty at the Troy University Business Research Symposium and the annual Convocation and Strategic Planning meeting. They are also circulated to faculty through associate deans and department chairs and will now be circulated to the Program Quality Committee to support evidence based improvement. These data will now be formally reviewed and acted upon by the Program Quality Committee.</p>  |
| 4.1      | <p>Although SCOB has historically analyzed MFT results, it is not apparent how the results of other direct measures of student learning are analyzed and used for continuous improvement. The MFT is a vital and necessary component of knowledge assessment, but it is not sufficient to measure other organizational goals. SCOB's strategic initiatives and mission statement clearly identify multiple objectives that are not measured. For example, the mission states that SCOB will be the "first choice for higher business education students in their quest to succeed in a dynamic and global economy" as well as SCOB "will create the model for 21<sup>st</sup> century business education and community service." These mission points do not currently have multiple direct measures. Addressing this gap may assist SCOB in achieving its mission and other strategic initiatives.</p> | <p>This is a legitimate concern. Although we have capstone exams for each of our graduate programs, the exams are new and do not provide sufficient trending information to be of significant help at this time. As explained in the self study, capstone exams are currently being developed for every undergraduate major. Full implementation of capstone testing in the undergraduate programs will begin August, 2009. The next step for us is the implementation of standard exams that cover the student learning outcomes for each core course. For example, any student who completes FIN 3331 will be tested over standard questions for SLOs, regardless of site. These exams are not controlled by the faculty member. They are, instead, controlled through a testing site that reports data directly to our data analyst.</p> |
| 4.1      | <p>The site visit team understands the role of the DCC in outcomes assessment. However, it appears that student learning outcomes and content in courses offered through E-campus and some international sites are not assessed in a fully-deployed manner that is systematic and consistent with other SCOB campuses. Consistent and systematic oversight of all courses offered throughout SCOB may assist in achieving the strategic initiative to improve learning outcomes and overcoming the strategic challenge of continuing to create one integrated university.</p>   | <p>We recognize our system's immaturity, but we know where it needs to go. Your concern is shared among most faculty members in SCOB. Currently, the Accounting and Finance disciplines are moving forward on standard exams in all core classes. Other disciplines are moving in this direction, following guidance and recommendation from the Program Quality Committee to ensure comparability at all sites and courses.</p>  |
| 4.1      | <p>Student learning outcomes vary significantly in rigor and breadth across SCOB programs. For example, at the master's level there are six student learning outcomes for the MBA and fifty-eight for the MSHRM. A systematic approach to establishing a learning outcomes system that is consistent across programs may be important to improving results and addressing inconsistencies within the post-merger organization structure.</p>  | <p>We do not understand this comment. Our programs typically have 5-6 SLOs. We have not yet discovered where the team found 58 SLOs for the MSHRM. We will continue to investigate this problem, because it suggests that we need to clarify SLOs by program and by course. Each program in SCOB has a specific set of student learning outcomes. Similarly, each course in SCOB has a specific set of student learning outcomes. This comment suggests that we need to clarify the difference.</p>   |

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| 4.2      | <p>Although SCOB has implemented and deployed the use of MFT and capstone comparative data to measure student success, the site visit team was unable to determine how SCOB uses other direct comparative measures, if any, to measure overall student performance. Multiple direct assessment instruments are important to validating fulfillment of the mission and improving student learning.</p>  | <p>We agree and have implemented capstone testing for all graduate programs and for the business core. Capstone testing for all majors will begin August, 2009. As noted earlier, we are moving toward a comprehensive testing system that will measure outcomes wherever our courses are taught.</p>   |
| 4.2      | <p>MFT is the primary direct assessment measure. Targets have been set (70% to exceed national mean minus one standard deviation) and comparisons are made for MFT results. Identified gaps in performance at the program and class level are not systematically used to drill down to root causes of problems and drive improvement. Furthermore, selecting one summative measure may not be sufficient to identify deficiencies in student learning at the program and class level to take corrective action. This is important to SCOB's strategic initiative to improve learning outcomes.</p> | <p>We understand the need to increase the number of assessment devices as part of a broad based assessment system. While we acknowledge that our system is in its early stages, we want ACBSP to know that additional assessments and measures are being developed and implemented. For example, MGT 4479 is now designated as the capstone course for the Management major and is now the designated course for administering the Management major capstone exam. Further development of standard exams will allow us to mine deeper to understand student achievement of learning. Additionally, SCOB has appointed an Assessment coordinator who sits on the Executive Committee for SCOB. We want ACBSP to understand that assessment of is very important to us.</p> |
| 4.3      | <p>Although there are several mechanisms in place to collect information and analyze results, there does not appear to be a systematic approach to establishing information importance, setting goals, or tracking performance improvements made as a result of the information. Several anecdotal examples of such improvements were provided, however the development of a systematic approach to this area of opportunity may help SCOB better address its identified challenges of worldwide consistency in quality.</p>   | <p>The Program Quality Committee, initiated in the Fall of 2007, is charged with the responsibility to review and analyze assessment results, to develop plans to address issues and to review implementation by the DCCs.</p> <p>With the recent establishment of this committee, there has not been adequate time to trend the data. While these results may appear to be anecdotal, they are the direct result of the Program Quality Committee activities.</p>  |
| 4.3      | <p>Although SCOB has used discrete direct student outcomes assessment data, a systematic approach to trending of data was not evident to the site visit team. Data trending is an important step in the development of a continuous quality improvement system.</p>  | <p>As a new entity, we acknowledge that our data do not provide sufficient trending information. We will continue to collect data and provide yearly reports to the Dean, associate deans, department chairs, and the Program Quality Committee and to all SCOB faculty members.</p>  |

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| 4.3      | <p>Although SCOB has used MFT institutional mean scores to improve student learning, it is not apparent how it has used the scores from MFT's assessment indicators in a systematic manner. This is relevant because these assessment indicators (five for MBA and nine for Undergraduate) provide student learning performance measures on Accounting, Economics, Management, Quantitative Business Analysis, Finance, Marketing Legal and Social Environment, Information Systems, and International Issues.</p>   | <p>The MFT sub-scores are reported throughout SCOB and used as a foundation for bringing about improvement. For example, the third iteration noted earlier is the result of actions taken based on sub-score reporting to the DCCs. The additional (second) finance course and the additional (second) statistics course that are now part of the business core are a result of direct action taken by DCC sub-committees to address assessment indicators.</p>   |
| 4.4      | <p>Although an approach is in place and some improvements have been made to date, the overall impact of and a systematic approach to continuous improvement has not yet been established. In other words, improvements appear to be made in an ad hoc manner in many instances and are primarily reactive rather than proactive in nature. For example, the site visit team was not able to identify a process to assess the linkages between student learning outcomes, program outcomes and SCOB's mission. Addressing this opportunity for improvement is important to closing the feedback loop.</p> | <p>We respectfully disagree with the use of the term "ad hoc." With the DCC involvement, this system has been deployed. An excellent example of this is the third iteration of master syllabi and associated learning outcomes which were created as a direct result of the OGU merger in 2005. These changes were driven by results from data collection including graduate capstone exams and MFTs as well as survey data from the TROY Fact Book. Data are collected on a regular basis and are reported for each academic year.</p> |
| 5.1      | <p>While it is noted that the human resource plan includes elements addressing faculty development, a systematic approach is not evident. SCOB's strategic initiative to improve full-time and part-time faculty development and engagement suggests that development, deployment and continuous improvement of a systematic approach to developmental planning are appropriate.</p>   | <p>We agree. Dean Hines is committing travel funds for adjunct faculty development effective in the AY 2008-2009 beginning with the Troy University Business Research Symposium in 2009. Implementation of the structure within TGC will facilitate formal faculty development processes which can be documented, formally planned and implemented. There will be more direct supervision and mentoring available with the new process.</p>   |
| 5.2      | <p>The site visit team recognizes that SCOB has a system in Digital Measures to track faculty credentials and activity. Furthermore, SCOB espouses a strong commitment to quality in the classroom and the recruitment of quality faculty. However, the team was not able to find documentation that systematically links faculty credentials and performance evaluations to student learning outcomes. Addressing this opportunity for improvement may be important to demonstrating alignment with SCOB's vision, mission and values as well as building a quality learning environment.</p>           | <p>We agree. We are currently exploring a software pilot designed to make an implicit process, intent and focus more explicit by providing documentation that clearly tracks and quantifies this process while improving the learning environment and aligning with the vision, mission and values. We anticipate implementation in AY 2009-2010.</p>   |



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| 5.2      | While it is noted that there is a good working relationship between full-time and part-time faculty, the site visit team was unable to ascertain how SCOB determines and justifies the appropriate percentage of full-time versus part-time faculty. Addressing this opportunity may help SCOB establish a systematic approach to meeting student and program learning outcomes.                                 | SCOB uses historical benchmarks for faculty deployment as a guideline. In 2007-2008 SCOB was privileged to add 13 doctorally qualified faculty members to our full-time faculty, and we anticipate we will be as successful in 2008-2009.   |
| 5.2      | Evidence of systematic participation in department activities by part-time faculty was not available. Part-time faculty members are an integral part of the operations and course delivery in SCOB. Addressing part-time faculty participation in department activities may help SCOB achieve its strategic initiative to improve faculty engagement and development.  | The SCOB will be offering stipends to adjunct faculty beginning in 2009 to attend and participate in the Troy Business Research Symposium, as noted earlier. Part-time faculty members are already invited to site faculty meetings and participation is encouraged. In addition, the new structure in TGC will facilitate a higher level of engagement between part-time faculty and the academic unit.                              |
| 5.3      | Although the faculty is well deployed, a systematic approach to ensuring that there are sufficient human resources at every location to address advising and administration needs was not evident. The lack of sufficient human resources at all locations may hinder the ability to meet advising and administration needs for specific locations.  | We agree. We continue to struggle with balancing HR needs against the current supply of faculty, considering the shortage of business faculty in higher education. The realignment plans in Troy Global Campus will address the concerns and assist in drawing a line between faculty responsibilities and site administrative activities.  |
| 5.4      | Appendix 5G. Faculty Load lists nine activities required of faculty. Troy University has an opportunity to develop a systematic process to ensure that all faculty members at all locations are involved in some of the nine functions of faculty members.   | We agree. The full implementation of Digital Measures will allow a more formal and systematic process to track and monitor the activities of faculty members and to identify gaps in faculty performance. Gaps in performance will be noted in performance evaluations.   |
| 5.5      | While a faculty evaluation system is deployed, an opportunity exists to fully deploy the process to facilitate continuous improvement of the educational systems and processes.  | We agree. When the professional development plan (PDP) is added to Digital Measures in 2009, SCOB will be able to more effectively track and monitor continuous improvement in both faculty development and the process itself.   |
| 5.6      | Allocation of faculty and staff development resources seems to be at the discretion of site administration. There does not appear to be a systematic process deployed across all campuses to support faculty and staff engagement. Deploying a systematic process may ensure that faculty and staff development resources are sufficient on all campuses and provide faculty and staff engagement opportunities. | <p>We appreciate the strength noted in the use of the PDPs, but we would like to note that the PDPs have been in use at TROY and throughout the TROY system for at least 15 years.</p> <p>We agree that development resources have been at the discretion of site directors. With the reorganization in TGC, a realignment of budget resources within SCOB will establish direct control within the academic reporting structure.</p> |

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| 5.8      | <p>It is not clear how the balance of faculty involvement in scholarly and professional activities is improved and aligned with SCOB's mission. For example, are the scholarly and professional activities appropriate and consistent across all sites?</p>  | <p>Mission alignment between faculty scholarly and professional activities is achieved through the PDP and year-end evaluation. Both reports focus on engagement in the discipline, and engagement in the discipline is an essential element of providing the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to contribute to the mission. Please also see 5.5 on the implementation of Digital Measures.</p>   |
| 6.1      | <p>It is recognized that the Master of Science in Human Resource Management and Master of Science in Management programs are delivered by SCOB with focus on the role, theory and practice of human resource management and general management in organizations, often for non-business baccalaureates. For that reason, SCOB does not currently address all components of the CPC in these curricula. However, competency in all areas of the CPC must be documented in all degree programs. SCOB may consider alternative methods of documenting these competencies in ways that are consistent with the program target markets and learning objectives. Addressing this opportunity may assist SCOB in enhancing the depth and breadth of these programs.</p> | <p>We have adopted the historical MBA approach to address this concern. Beginning August, 2009, graduate programs (MBA, MSM, MSHRM) will be required to complete the four prerequisite bridge courses that include all components of the CPC, or to complete the nine undergraduate courses representing the CPC. The undergraduate courses can be completed in lieu of the four prerequisite bridge courses. This will allow us to be in full compliance with the requirement of 30 hours past the CPC. This has already passed the SCOB Graduate Committee and will be addressed in the Troy University Graduate Council in November, 2008. This will appear and become effective with the 2009-2010 Catalog.</p> |