

BEST PRACTICES IN MARKETING EDUCATION: UNDERGRADUATE MARKETING PROGRAMS AT NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

This research analyzes and reviews undergraduate marketing courses and programs currently offered at National University (NU). We assess the results for the last three years of student achievement and satisfaction, and make recommendations for improvement. A review of achievement outcomes from student and faculty evaluations, interviews, outbound exam results, enrollment, assessment data, SWOT analysis and the administration's set goals were considered in a strategic context. The primary goal of this study was to improve undergraduate marketing education programs, to assist NU design more relevant academic programs and courses in the field of marketing that are attractive to NU's specific target market, to enhance existing programs, and to eliminate unnecessary courses. The study compared competitive marketing education programs, courses, specializations, and/or certificates offered both in the US and abroad. We analyzed the development of new programs, SWOT analysis, market needs, faculty development, content and course offerings, format offered, accreditations, differentiation factors, target market and promotional strategies. The two key outcomes are: 1) Consider which changes will improve student outcomes for undergraduate marketing courses at National University for the next 3-5 years, and 2) Discover what are best practices for undergraduate marketing programs at universities in the US and globally.

JEL: I2, M3, I200, I210, I230, I250

KEYWORDS: Marketing, Undergraduate Education, Adult Learners, Accelerated Studies

INTRODUCTION

National University (NU) is a private, not-for Profit University in California, founded in 1971. NU is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleagues (WASC) and has additional accreditations in several programs, for example, AACTE in Education, IACBE in Business, and CCN in Nursing. NU is the second largest non-for profit university in California, and 12th largest in the United States. National University has been dedicated to making lifelong learning opportunities accessible, challenging and relevant to a diverse student population of adult learners and working adults. It uses a one-course per month format offering online, onsite evening and day classes. It has five schools and one college, including the School of Business and Management (SOBM), the School of Education. (SOE) School of Engineering, Technology and Media, School of Health and Human Services, School of Professional Studies and the College of Letters and Sciences. The School of Business and Management has four departments: Accounting, Finance, Leadership and Human Resource Management, and Management and Marketing. The Department of Management and Marketing offers the following degrees: Bachelors of Arts in Management, Bachelors and Masters degrees in Integrated Marketing Communications, Global MBA in Spanish, and Masters in Global Management.(www.nu.edu)

New admissions to SOBM have increased from 2548 in 2010 to 3045 in 2012, and almost 5,000 students in 2015 SOBM has 30-fulltime faculty and approximately 300 adjunct faculty in more than twelve programs and certificates (www.nu.edu). A total of 417 classes in Marketing were offered from 2009 to April of 2014 to 3,844 students, with an average of 17.13 students per class., There were 280 undergraduate classes, and 137 graduate courses, and 52 independent studies.. Full-time faculty taught 34% of the classes, and 66% were instructed by part time faculty. (www.nu.edu) The purpose of this study was to examine and analyze the performance of the undergraduate marketing classes and programs and determine what needs to be done to improve the courses and better prepare the students for their future employers. This will in turn attract higher performing students. We needed to learn more about the students' perceptions as to whether they found the courses meaningful, relevant, and if the instructors delivered the material in a motivating, useful way. The results will also assist the university to learn if the courses are "the right ones", if modifications are necessary in content, resources, instructors, and format etc. (i.e., on campus or online).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Bartel (1976) in his Landmark research in Marketing, stated, "The establishment of a market economy wrought marked changes in the social and economic structure. A new attitude toward business revolutionized the economy of the country and that revolutionary element was identified by the term 'marketing.' Historical accounts of trade lead one to conclude that marketing has always existed. Was the original use of the term marketing merely an application of a new name to an old practice? "Marketing must be regarded not merely as a business practice, but as a social institution. Marketing is essentially a means of meeting and satisfying certain needs of people. It is a highly developed and refined system of thought and practice characteristic of a period in the development of market economy. A latent presumption in the practice of marketing has been that marketing gives to society more than society gives to it. According to Ellis et al (2011) "those teaching the subject know what it is that they are studying and how this study should be undertaken. Marketing as a subject has proved almost impossible to pin down, and there is little consensus about what it means to study marketing. Most organizations now employ marketers. Marketing roles were traditionally found in commercial firms, but increasingly all kinds of organizations feel the need to employ marketers or to commission services from marketing consultants.

The popularity and pervasiveness of marketing is, however, a relatively recent phenomenon. Academics have only studied marketing as a discipline in its own right for just over a century, and during its short history the study of marketing has been influenced by many different academic movements, fads and priorities. This variability can be viewed as a positive state of affairs, because it means that the subject is always open to new ideas and new trends. On the other hand, it has the potential to undermine the value of marketing knowledge because there is no general consensus on what the study of marketing should be for, how these studies should be conducted, or what the outcomes should be. We need to understand something about this history and the debates and controversies that have shaped the field."

Lamont L.M. Friedman, K. (1997) in their article, Meeting the challenges to Undergraduate Marketing Education, state "Changing economics and new questions about how students learn have educators rethinking and restructuring higher education. Marketing education is undergoing a similar evaluation due to the decline of student interest and enrollments in business and marketing, concern over the rising costs of education and the criticism of employers and educators about the marketing curricula and teaching methods used to educate undergraduate students." They continue, "there are several forces are already reshaping the marketing education of the future: 1) The declining quality of American primary and secondary education, 2) Students changing learning patterns, 3) Emerging information technology, 4) The globalization of markets, 5) New marketing knowledge. " In 2012 Finch, Nadeau & Reilly published an article titled, "The Future of Marketing Education: A Practitioner's Perspective" in which they looked at the future of Marketing Education from a practitioners' perspective, and they reviewed the marketing

literature, as well as the views of both marketing educators and current marketers in Canada. A survey was conducted of marketing practitioners to determine their top priorities for improvement in marketing education, as well as the key challenges in need of attention. An importance-performance analysis was carried out on these data. Findings indicate that the top current priority knowledge related to areas associated with measuring return-on-investment and strategic marketing. Results also support that meta-skills are perceived as high priorities for improvement, including the ability to creatively identify, formulate, and solve problems; the ability to write in a business environment; and the ability to set priorities.” Leventhal, (2002) states, “Instruction for marketing education is a combination of hard skills and soft skills. Students learn occupational skills that include marketing skills, self-development/personality development, getting along with co-workers/supervisors/customers and leadership skills. In the field of education, all teachers are supposed to have students learn cognitive skills, psychomotor skills and affective skills.

The affective area is based on emotions/attitudes/values that are essential in working in the field of marketing. Other teachers often avoid working with the affective area because of the sensitive and delicate nature of the subject matter. Career and technical educators have long been concerned about the value systems of students and how they fit into the workplace. Marketing education has always worked with all skill areas in preparing students for careers and for employment. Since other educators have not worked with the affective area very much, one of the newer areas is character education, which covers all the affective performances that have been concerns to marketing educators.” He continues “Providing related supervised work experience as part of the school's marketing education program is an established component. From the early 1900s, the on-the-job training was an important ingredient of the school program. The federal guidelines for distributive education specified half a day in school and half a day of related supervised work experience--paid, for at least 15 hours a week. Every state followed these guidelines and incorporated them in their state plans. Now that America is losing its industrial and manufacturing base, there is greater awareness of sales/marketing and service occupations. The occupations that are part of the marketing cycle are best served by programs in marketing education.

There is a greater need for more marketing education programs in the secondary schools. In our society, most people do not hold four-year college degrees (79 percent), and there is need for well-trained personnel. At the same time, there are students who plan to attend college and study marketing, and the local schools could use marketing education programs to accommodate these students and to better prepare them by giving them training and experience in marketing occupations. ”He continues “Many administrators with academic or liberal arts orientation are not aware of the value of having marketing education in their schools. As retirements result in personnel changes in the schools, there is a greater need to re-educate new administrators to the rich opportunities that are available to students through marketing education. The U.S. Office of Education, and some state education departments, no longer have program specialists in marketing education who encourage schools to develop and offer programs. Yet, a field with huge numbers of job openings and career opportunities, marketing education, is ready to be utilized. It is up to local educators to take the lead to offer programs that meet the needs of students and employers.”

According to Kumar (2015) “over the decades the marketing discipline has experienced changes in terms of its dominant focus, thought, and practice.” He continues, “marketing must be an integral part of an organization’s decision-making framework. This calls for the complete integration of marketing activities with other business functions and creates unique opportunities for marketing scholars whereby research studies must now consider not only the marketing function, but also its interface with other business functions.” He continues “Like other disciplines, the marketing discipline in higher education is constantly adapting to changes and needs. Education of marketing principles needs to adapt as well. Emerging themes in the marketing discipline academic journals since 2013 are changes in media usage, focus on marketing efficiency and effectiveness and firm value by engaging stakeholders. So how does this relate to Marketing education and curricula? Both Leventhal (2002) and Kumar (2015) identified future directions in Marketing

Education and these are the directions that the authors took in this paper.

Students Changing Learning Patterns

Davis et al (2000) reported, “Learning styles of marketing students have changed over the years. They reported that in a study by Nulty and Barrett (1996) indicated that business students prefer pedagogies that are active and concrete. Stewart and Felicetti (1992) examined preferred pedagogies of marketing majors and non-marketing major business students and found a significant difference between the two groups. They found that marketing majors, relative to non-marketing majors, preferred a learning style that was either methodological or holistic. The former refers to the use of computer-aided instruction, direct application problems, hands-on opportunities, and programmed instruction, whereas the latter refers to short lectures with discussion, short assignments with reflection time, group discussion, television, and movies. Karns (1993) examined pedagogical preferences of marketing students for learning activities and found a positive relationship between level of stimulation, level of effort, and concrete or real-world applications. The major conclusions of the study were that marketing students prefer pedagogies that have more involving content and are oriented toward the application of marketing knowledge. Other studies have investigated specific pedagogies, such as team projects (Batra, Walvoord, and Krishnan 1997; Williams, Beard, and Rymer 1991), experiential learning (Wynd 1989), gaming and simulation (Laughlin and Hite 1993; Wellington and Faria (1996), and Web-based courses (Canzer 1997).

Emerging Information Technology

Technology is changing the definition of the marketplace and is the driving force changing marketing. Such as the Internet, mobile phones, social media, and customer relationship management systems greatly affect the way companies communicate with prospective customers. These new forms of communication are changing the media landscape and the type of messaging strategy organizations use (Boundless 2015).

The Globalization of Markets

Lundstrom et al (1996) declare “that with the US increasingly depending on international trade for economic growth it tends to be reactive to changing economic conditions. The world trade for the US has increased ten fold for the past 20 years. In 1994 AACSB required an increase in the International business content of the curriculum in accredited business schools. The question is to whether integrate this information into separate courses or add material to existing courses.”

New Marketing Knowledge

Lamont & Friedman (1997) identify, “new organizational designs, technology and globalization will force marketing educators to rethink managerial marketing. The interest in relationship marketing will continue. Services marketing will grow in importance as traditional marketing concepts are adjusted to accommodate the special characteristics of services and their importance in the global economy. Revision of the Marketing mix as expressed by the 4P’s will result as changes are made to improve the integration of promotion, relationship marketing and the marketing of services.” They conclude that “students will need more than a knowledge of marketing, they will also need additional skills in problem solving, communication, leadership and teamwork.” Kumar (2015) adds “over the decades the marketing discipline has experienced changes in terms of its dominant focus, thought, and practice.” He continues, “marketing must be an integral part of an organization’s decision-making framework. This calls for the complete integration of marketing activities with other business functions and creates unique opportunities for marketing scholars whereby research studies must now consider not only the marketing function, but also its interface with other business functions.” He continues “Like other disciplines, the marketing discipline in higher education is constantly adapting to changes and needs. Education of marketing principles needs

to adapt as well. Emerging themes in the marketing discipline academic journals since 2013 are changes in media usage, focus on marketing efficiency and effectiveness and firm value by engaging stakeholders.” Crittenden & Crittenden, (2015) “found that while students use contemporary digital tools for communication and entertainment, they did not think it necessary to use them for educational purposes. Thus, there appears to be a gap between digital and social media tools for personal use and for instructional purposes. Given that digital and social media marketing is a fast moving phenomenon and that marketing educators need to be at the forefront of marketing practice, it is imperative that educators continually innovate both with curriculum content and social media tool usage.” The authors want to use these themes in updating and developing new Marketing courses/programs at NU. On examination of published lists, we found which universities are currently ranked by independent sources. U.S. News Calculated the 2016 Best Colleges Ranking (<http://www.usnews.com/education>) The U.S. News ranking formula gives significant weight to the opinions of those in a position to judge a school's undergraduate academic excellence. The academic peer assessment survey allows top academics – presidents, provosts and deans of admissions – to account for intangibles at peer institutions, such as faculty dedication to teaching.

The U.S. News ranking system rests on two pillars. The formula uses quantitative measures that education experts have proposed as reliable indicators of academic quality, and it's based on our researched view of what matters in education. First, regionally accredited schools are categorized by their mission, which is derived from the breakdown of types of higher education institutions as refined by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in 2010. The Carnegie classification, which is used extensively by higher education researchers, has been the basis of the Best Colleges ranking category system since our first rankings were published in 1983. National University was not ranked using any of these criteria, nor could we find ranking for schools catering to working adults, the non-traditional students, who are National University's target population. (<http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com>).

Recent searches did find NU ranks for one specific academic program. National University's Bachelor's in Integrated Marketing was ranked #20 by TheBestSchools.org. Rankings were based on several weighted factors, including academic excellence, course offerings, faculty strengths, and reputation, including reputation for online degree programs. TheBestSchools.org is a leading resource for prospective students seeking a college or university degree. Many schools in the United States reference this top 20 ranking, including Auburn University, Boston University, Texas A&M University, and Fordham University. In order to learn more about the distinctive qualities of some of these institutions and other prestigious ones, the authors asked several experienced professors and administrators at National University and other schools to share some of their thoughts on marketing courses and programs.

Interviews

A series of interviews were conducted to various professors of universities to find out their input as to what makes the best marketing courses and programs. Prof. David Reibstein, currently the William Stewart Woodside Professor of Marketing at University of Pennsylvania, identifies a strong faculty, select students, and job placements as key factors in building a reputable program. He has been a professor at three of the most recognized business schools in the US, Wharton, Harvard and Stanford, and has served on the American Marketing Association as an officer. In relationship to Wharton attracting top faculty, he said: “Brands are built over a long period of time, and some of our success is just the longevity,” He attributes the branding results to the quality of faculty. “If you attract really good faculty, it starts to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. There really are network effects, using today's terminology.” Branding, one of the goals in Marketing, is very important for a university and their faculty, and it takes time to build a good reputation. He continues, “If you concentrate on who is in the classroom that will be the best way to create better classrooms, and not just accept anyone with the resources to attend. It's about the caliber of the students themselves. Your students want job advancement. If I go there, I have a higher likelihood of advancing in their careers. If I was working there and wanted to take some classes, and pursue a degree, I would look to

see if it was worth the money and worth the time. Did the people who went there get job increases? Do we have distinguished alumni? What are the opportunities after you leave?" Therefore, job placement is also an important consideration since most students expect to have a good department in the university to help them in finding a job. Strong connections with alumni is also critical in building reputation and attracting good students to a program, therefore, it is necessary to organize events and other venues to keep alumni engaged with the university's activities". He also mentioned other important universities to explore globally, such as INSEAD in France, ITESM in Mexico, Fundacion Gertulio Vargas in Brazil, Hong Kong University, CEIBS in China, and Indian Institute of Management in India. He also emphasized the importance of offering Executive education and certificates, to better position the university in any particular region. We asked Reibstein about academic trends, including Massive Open Online classrooms, (MOOCs). MOOCs are relevant because of the large number of online students that they serve worldwide with college level coursework. He thinks they will increase significantly. It is not a fad, he said emphatically. He also added that they might have an important role in the future.

Abigail Sherwood the Director of Development from a traditional Midwestern university, the University of Dayton, and Irene Dickey, marketing faculty, identified bringing professionals to students and students to professionals as the successful goal of improving marketing academic programs. They described their school the University of Dayton as similar in tax-exempt status, to NU. It is a private non-profit, with 7800 undergrad students, 2000 MBA, and 4000 graduate students. Dickey spoke about bringing professionals to content and vice versa, and mentioned the P&G (Proctor and Gamble) Marketing Challenge, where students get face time with brand managers and return measurable analytics. She also discussed client projects (capstone projects) with the Cleveland Indians and Cincinnati Bengals and other firms, as well as finding practical applications to marketing research for a specific local business. Emphasis on metrics and analytics is crucial, according to Sherwood and Dickey, and they mentioned Teradata Corporation as a good source for business analytics. They have 150 members of the Marketing Club and a virtual internship. They have a Center for Project Excellence where students work in teams for a project with a company, and business plan competition that receives 100 entries each year to compete for seed money.

They do a lot of surveys with graduates and find a 95% response rate. Dayton emphasizes "experiential learning' as an important component of new business models everywhere, with a strong connection to real business solutions. Another connecting idea was a new student run organization called "Women in Business" with over 120 students to deal with specific issues, such as finding resources to land a job that they are passionate about. They also have a combined Marketing and MIS program that is very attractive for employers. Finally, they also organize some events for community outreach like the "Christmas at Dayton", a "magical evening" for underprivileged people in the community. Professor Angie Johnson's 2014 phone interview gave her perspective of two universities, National University and Franklin University, an online not-for profit university serving also working adults. She teaches at both schools. She talked about connecting students to industry, building a network of contacts, and making sure that students receive the experience they need in the degree in which they are enrolled. She mentioned conference opportunities, and hands on engagement as two very important criteria for students to be involved. She is holds live debates with her students online. Johnson uses simulations, case studies and practicum activities. "The ones we remember are the real world examples." said Johnson. She also uses guest speakers and provides opportunities for critical thinking within the content of the class by students evaluating each other.

We met with long-time Marketing NU adjunct faculty Richard Hopkins, an area manager for the Safeway Company, to ask if we are matching the needs of employers. He suggested that we add more electives and database marketing courses. He also said that better writing skills are needed by students. He does see a gap between what students learn and what employers seek as job skills .He believes that you need to use what you learn, and make it very practical. At Safeway/Vons, his employer, 'Just For U' is their Customer Relationship Tool (CRM). This provides valuable customer information. In class, Hopkins shares with the class the importance in his business an example, Hopkins continues, "Content is not useful unless the

context is created.” Bruce Buchowicz, a former Dean of a business school and an experienced business and strategy professor states, “Faculty make the difference. Consulting practices by faculty, supported by graduate students will produce more engagement. The trends that I see today include Ted Talks, and the 18-minute lecture is a relevant manner to present information today”. Louise Kelly, a faculty member from Alliant International University points to her advisory board that helps her focus on content and curriculum that is relevant, and action-oriented projects. For example, about 80% of the conversation is about digital elements of marketing today. Topics include: e- portfolios, working with the non-profit community (such as internships), innovation, global projects, Neuromarketing, data analytics, gamification.

Alliant is working toward more interdisciplinary content ideas, for example in Management and Psychology. Kelly states, “Problems in society don’t present themselves like marketing or management decisions.” Critical thinking in the classroom is missing and needs to be stressed more. New project developments foster creativity, innovation and technology. Linking CRM and Social media may become very important in the next few years for all retailers. She also underlined that the delivery and customization of courses need to be based on how students learn, so universities need to be always open to make changes and adaptations. Dr. Kelly mentioned newer universities, for example HULT-The world’s most international business school, with a good reputation and several global campuses, as well as the Minerva project, designed for the brightest, most motivated students. In addition to qualifications, teaching skills are very important for a successful and competitive marketing program, with good, well-designed and prepared lectures. Trans-disciplinary programs may also be considered to integrate other relevant areas in today’s complex landscape, like Health Management. Faculty needs to become facilitators for problem solving. According to Dr. Kelly,” students expect the school to have good business connections and offer real-life experience, like a teaching hospital”

In addition to the interviews, we reviewed and evaluated signature assignments, from our students the textbooks and learning platforms for Marketing at NU. All in the introductory marketing course develop and write a Marketing Plan which also acts as a Direct Assessment measure of Student Learning. Our Marketing Faculty constantly examine our textbooks to evaluate whether they are the most effective teaching tools. Case studies are used whenever possible, so students can apply what they learn. The University has currently switched to a new Learning Management System (LMS) Blackboard, which we anticipate will advance us to a new level of learning.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

All students graduating from the SOBM Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) program are required to take an external examination administered by a 3rd party organization, Peregrine Academic Services (<http://www.peregrineacademics.com>) in the Capstone course BUS 480, as a Direct Assessment measure. “Peregrine academic services provide nationally normed, summative assessment exams in Business Administration used for internal and external academic program evaluation and benchmarking. The online exam assesses retained student knowledge related to the degree program’s learning outcomes. The online exam service is designed to satisfy the AACSB, ACBSP, and IACBE accreditation requirements related to learning outcomes assessment, quality assurance, and external academic benchmarking. The Outbound Exam is administered to the students at the end of the academic program, is provided online, without an exam proctor, using a secure web service that includes safeguards to ensure exam integrity. It allows academic officials to benchmark student performance against specific aggregate pools and determine the value-added by the institution based upon the student’s academic experience. The exam contains 10 questions for each CPC topic and each exam is unique as questions are selected at random from the test bank of over 200-400 questions per topic. This document provides information on the following: The Topics and Sub-Topics are:

Accounting
 Business Ethics
 Business Finance
 Business Integration and Strategic Management
 Business Leadership
 Economics
 Macroeconomics
 Microeconomics
 Global Dimensions of Business
 Information Management Systems
 Legal Environment of Business
 Management
 Human Resource Management
 Operations Management
 Organizational Behavior
 Marketing
 Quantitative Techniques/Statistics”

The results can be found in Figure 1 below. 146 students took this exam between July 1, 2013-June 14, 2014. The focus is on the discipline of Marketing.

Figure 1: Outbound Exam Results

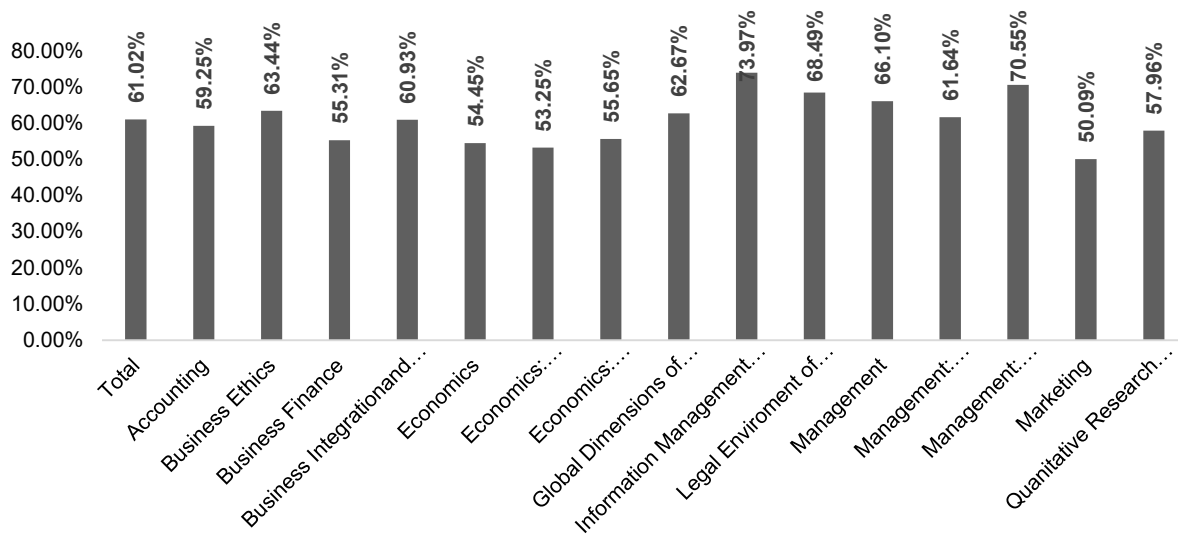


Figure 1 shows the results of the outbound exam for the different areas and classes taken in the BBA Program at National University, reported by the Peregrine Company, and this data is published with their explicit authorization. The vertical axis shows the percentage of what student’s competency for the various disciplines learned in the program, in the horizontal axis. IMS was the highest with 73.9%, followed by Organizational Behavior with 70.5%. Marketing was the lowest of the disciplines for student’s performance with only 50.9%.

Preliminary results were shared with the Program Lead for the BBA program who made the following comments, Altamirano (2014) “At National University, quantitative courses performed well” on these tests. Overall, NU performed as expected. National University will have additional data to share from results at the end of Feb 2015, and ongoing every few months. Out of all the courses the lowest scores were in Marketing, which is not a quantitative course.” He continued “It may be that students perform poorly on questions pertaining to marketing because marketing courses are taken early in the program, so many

students may not remember the concepts a few years later. A refresher course could possibly help them to study for this exam

Table 1 shows the relative interpretation of student’s competency compared with the exam scores obtained. 80-100% is the highest and correspond to a very high student competency, and the table shows all the intervals down to 0-19% corresponding to “very low” competency. Please note that above average is 60-69%, which is much lower than one would consider as a course grade, in fact a failing classroom grade. Benchmarking helps to clarify the average scores. We noted that we were similar to other schools in our rankings, on the high side of the curve of this discipline. Figure 2 shows similar data than Figure 1, but also separates the online mode of delivery to students. It is interesting to note that student’s competency for the BA program taken online is lower for all disciplines, compared with the students who opted for the traditional campus based delivery format.

Table 1: Peregrine Academic Services learner comparison levels

CPC-Base Comp Exam Score (%)	Relative Interpretation of Student Competency
80-100	Very High
70-79	High
60-69	Above Average
40-59	Average
30-39	Below Average
20-29	Low
0-19	Very Low

Table 1 shows the relative interpretation of student’s competency compared with the exam scores obtained. 80-100% is the highest and correspond to a very high student competency.

Figure 2: Overview: Outbound Exam Results Compared to the Aggregate Pool for Traditional/Campus-Based Delivered Programs

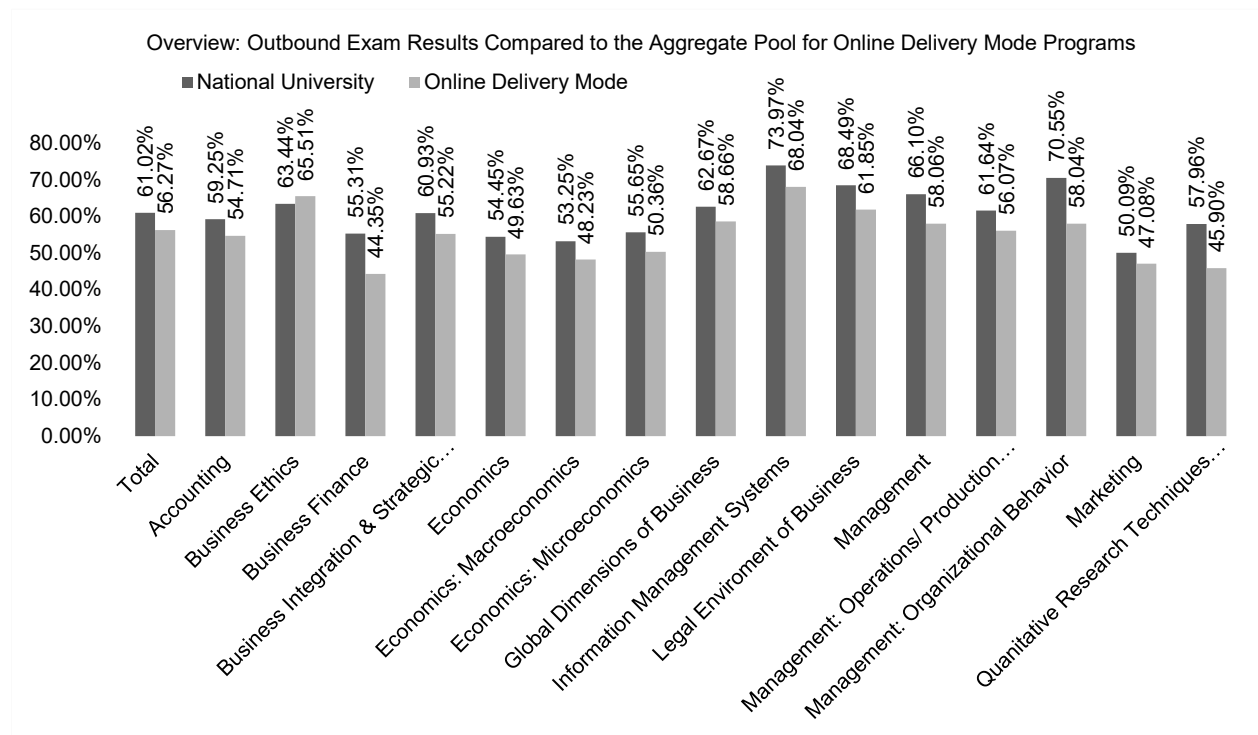


Figure 2 shows similar data to figure 1, However, Figure 2 separates the online mode of delivery to students.

In Figure 3 above shows the same parameters as figure 2 but it refers to online programs offered by National University, and the aggregate data for online delivery from all BBA programs offered online by all universities in this study. Based on these results and comparing National University versus the aggregate of online programs, In the Marketing discipline, National University has a slight advantage vs. other online delivered Marketing Programs (50.09 vs. 47.54). It is better than other universities, but still the lowest of all disciplines.

Figure 3: Overview: Outbound Exam Results Compared to the Aggregate Pool for Online Delivery Mode Programs

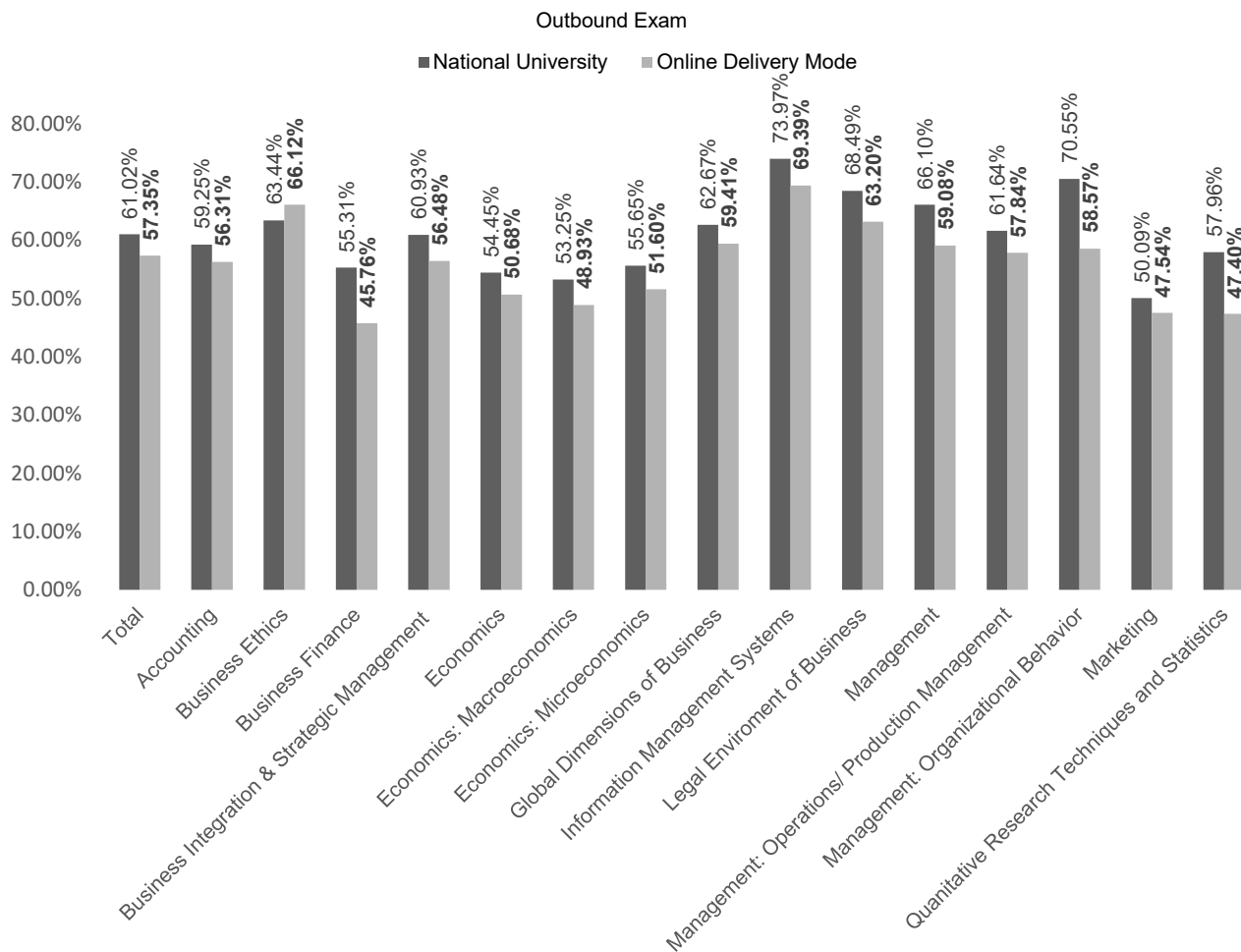


Figure 3 shows the same parameters as Figure 2 but refers to online programs offered by National University, and the aggregate data for online delivery from all BBA programs offered online by all universities in this study.

Figure 4 shows the results of the competency of National University students compared to other universities of the International Assembly of Collegiate Business Education (IACBE) in the same Bachelor of Business Administration program (BBA). The results show that NU has the same advantage from the previous figure compared to other participating universities offering marketing programs (50.09v 47.54).

In Figure 5, the Marketing subject matter is broken out by six categories and compares NU to other online programs. To arrive at this comparison, questions are pre-coded to the specific subject matter. For example, one question could be specific to Marketing Research, and that would be included in the first column. NU

has an advantage in the first four categories, Marketing research, Planning and Strategy, People, Place, Price. For Product and Promotion, NU scores are lower.

Figure 4: Overview Outbound Exam Results Compared to the Aggregate Pool for IACBE Region 8 (Western) Programs Online Delivery Mode

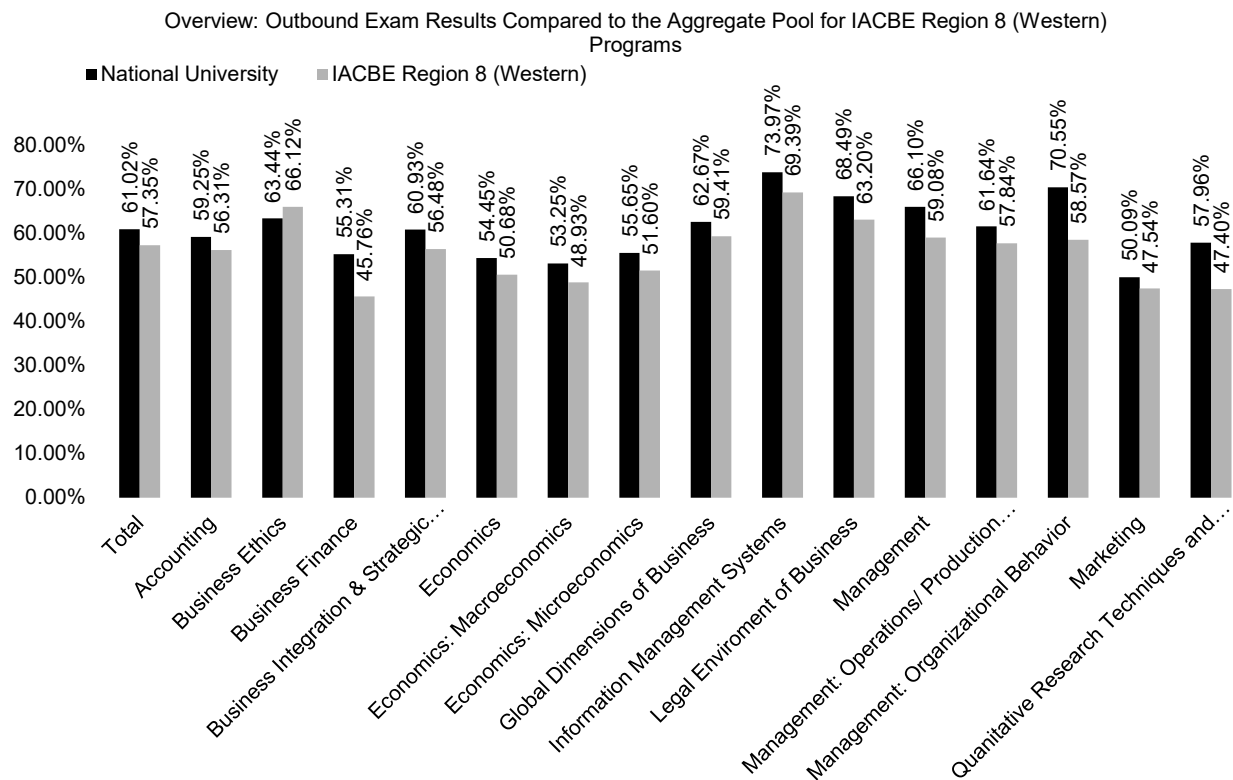
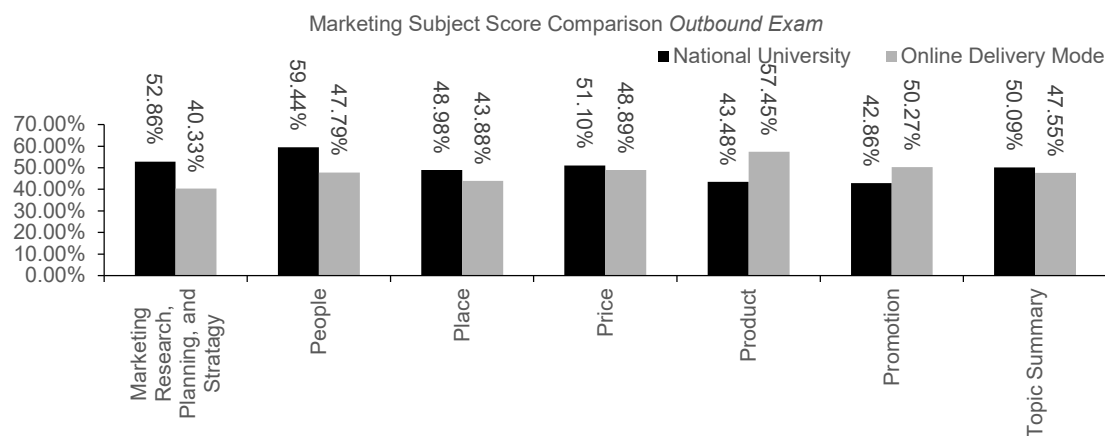


Figure 4 shows the results of the competency of National University students compared to other universities of the International Assembly of Collegiate Business Education (IACBE) in the same Bachelor of Business Administration program (BBA).

Figure 5: Marketing Subject Score Comparisons for National University vs. all Online Delivered Programs.



In Figure 5, the Marketing subject matter is broken out by six categories and compares NU to other online programs. To arrive at this comparison, questions are pre-coded to the specific subject matter.

In Table 2, the number of questions per topic and in summary is listed. This information has never before been available to help us fine tune our courses. Based upon the dataset of 1160 total questions, the frequency

correct was 50.09%. There were 280 questions on Marketing Research, Planning and Strategy. Price had 272 questions. People had only 143 questions, and the highest frequency correct, 59.44%. Our weakest area was in Product, where we scored low on the 207 questions, getting 43.48% correct. Overall, our score was higher than the average for the selected aggregate pool 50.09% to 47.55%. correct. This data shows us that our strongest topics on the outbound exam were in the areas mentioned above, Research, Planning and Strategy, plus People and also Price. This data drives us to consider whether we are teaching the best concepts. It is important to review the scores and over the course of two to three years, determine if we are trending in a direction that indicates students are improving their outcomes. Higher scores on Peregrine assessments are one measure of improvement.

Table 2: Frequency of Questions Offered on Outbound Exam

Marketing	Results for This Report's Dataset		Averages for the Selected Aggregate Pool		% Rank for This Report's Dataset	Required Scores for Identified Percentiles Based on the Selected Aggregate Pool			
	Number of Questions Offered	Frequency Correct	Number of Questions Offered	Frequency Correct		80th	85th	90th	95th
Marketing Research, Planning, and Strategy	280	52.86%	5,482	40.33%	*96	46.59%	47.49%	48.53%	50.00%
People	143	59.44%	1,678	47.79%	*89	56.58%	57.93%	59.08%	63.30%
Place	147	48.98%	1,169	43.88%	*69	51.50%	53.25%	54.29%	58.45%
Price	272	51.10%	6,643	48.89%	*64	54.52%	55.60%	57.59%	59.08%
Product	207	43.48%	3,328	57.45%	*3	63.53%	64.58%	66.00%	68.77%
Promotion	119	42.86%	563	50.27%	*22	56.67%	60.00%	60.00%	66.67%
Topic Summary	1168	50.09%	18,932	47.55%	71	50.25%	52.38%	53.55%	55.48%

In Table 2, the number of questions per topic and in summary is listed. Note that either the aggregate pool sample and/or school sample for this data set is relatively low for the Percentile Rank calculation

Figure 6 shows that the number of courses and students was relatively flat for four years, and then took a 31% increase in students in 2013. This reflects an increase of 24.4% growth in the number of courses offered. NU internal sources indicate that Marketing is the most popular concentration for students outside of the School of Business and Management. Why is it the most popular concentration for students who are not in the business school? That is a question we are looking at for the future. We will need to review this information in 2014 to see if this is a trend. More students enrolled is one measure of improvement. School

Table 3 shows a breakdown of the demographics of the National University student in marketing courses. We see a total of 3,844 students were enrolled in our marketing courses, and the largest percentage of them was aged 25-29 (28.9%). The second largest demographic was 30- 34 at 25.6%. Ten students were aged 61-65, and 6 were older than 65 years of age. As far as the ethnicity, the largest percentage was white, at 37.6% and next Hispanic at 17.0%. Close behind at 16.9% was Nonresident alien. Knowing the age and the gender of the students may not be significant towards improvement in what we teach. However, we want to be sure that we know who is our student, and this may provide assistance in how we reach our students best, and what behaviors they may exhibit. For example, students under the age of 20 are considered “native” to digital media, versus those over 60 may not be comfortable with some newer technologies.

Table 4 indicates that there were 8 locations where undergraduates took marketing courses at National University. Most of them were online, 57% and the remaining 43% were onsite. 26% of the total were onsite at San Diego, the top location. If we combine NCNTY, that number grows to 665 or 28%. If we combine those two locations, remove the online students, we find that 67% of the marketing students are taking classes onsite in San Diego. Most of the military locations are in San Diego, so that percentage would grow if we added them. Table 5 indicates which classes were most popular (i.e. and required) for students

in the business school at National University. The most enrolled course is MKT 302a, with 2045 students and the next most popular was MKT 420, Consumer Behavior. Larger enrollments are one measure of improvement of programs.

Figure 6: National University Marketing Course Enrollment 2009-2013

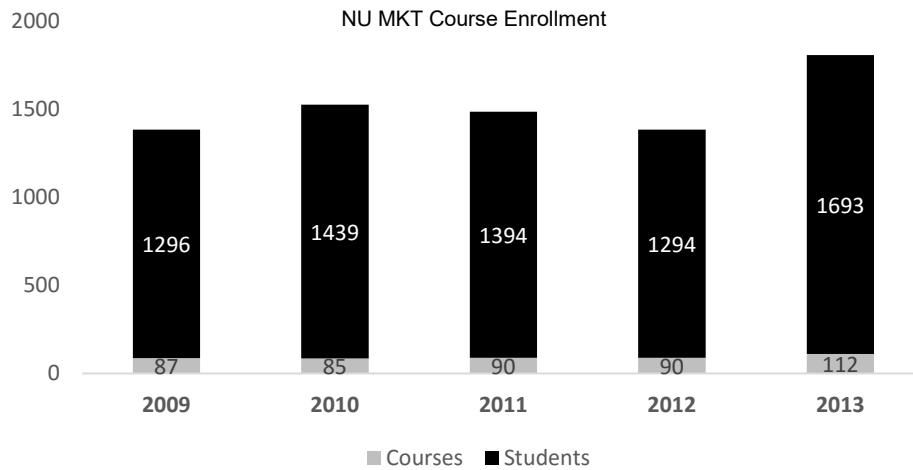


Figure 6 shows that the number of courses and students. Report of Assessment Run Date: 2014-08-20-11.17.15.000000 Run By: K JERRED Institutional Research, 2014.

Table 3: Marketing Students’ Demographics at National University

Ethnicity	N	%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	22	0.6%
Asian	346	9.0%
Black or African American	358	9.3%
Elected not to respond	186	4.8%
Hispanic	655	17.0%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Island	59	1.5%
Nonresident Alien	649	16.9%
Two or more races	123	3.2%
White	1446	37.6%
Grand Total	3844	100.0%
Gender	N	%
Female	1802	46.9%
Male	2042	53.1%
Grand Total	3844	100.0%
Age Group	N	%
19-24	375	9.8%
25-29	1111	28.9%
30-34	985	25.6%
35-39	515	13.4%
40-44	342	8.9%
45-49	243	6.3%
50-54	175	4.6%
55-60	81	2.1%
61-65	10	0.3%
66-70	4	0.1%
75+	2	0.1%
Unknown	1	0.0%
Grand Total	3844	100.0%

Table 3 shows a breakdown of the demographics of the National University student in marketing courses.

Table 4: Number of Students Enrolled in Marketing Courses Between 2011 and 2014 at National University, Including Number of Students in Each Location for Undergraduate and Graduate Students

FY11-FY14 MKT Enrollment of Unique (Unduplicated) Student Count by Career and Course Location (Campus)					
Subject	Career	Campus	Student Enrollment Total		
MKT	GRAD	CMESA	9		
		INGWD	167		
		MILIT	97		
		NCNTY	31		
		OLINE	815		
		SDIEG	386		
		GRAD Total		1505	
		UGRD	BAKER	16	
	FRSNO		12		
	INGWD		58		
	MILIT		213		
	NCNTY		57		
	OLINE		1371		
	SDIEG		608		
	SOAKS		4		
	UGRD Total		2339		
	MKT Total		3844		

Table 4 indicates that there were 8 locations where undergraduates took marketing courses at National University. Most of them were online. School Report of Assessment Run Date: 2014-08-20-11.17.15.000000Run By: K JERRED Institutional Research, 2014

Table 5: Course Enrollment 2011-2014 of Unique (Unduplicated) Student Count by Specific MKT Catalog Number and Career

Subject	Catalog#	GRAD	UGRD	Student Enrollment Total
MKT	200		16	16
	302A	2	2043	2045
	420		43	43
	430		40	40
	434		22	22
	440A		16	16
	441		11	11
	442A		58	58
	443		42	42
	445		17	17
	446		13	13
	448		4	4
	480		1	1
	602	1430	13	1443
	620	32		32
	631	11		11
	634	20		20
	651	4		4
	660	6		6
MKT Total		1505	2339	3844

This Table 5 indicates which classes were most popular (i.e. and required) for students in the business school at National University. The most enrolled course is MKT 302a, with 2045 students and the next most popular was MKT 420, Consumer Behavior. Larger enrollments are one measure of improvement of programs. . School Report of Assessment Run Date: 2014-08-20-11.17.15.000000Run By: K JERRED Institutional Research, 2014.

Table 6 above indicates the student’s evaluation of their teaching assessment. Every one of these courses had scores that were higher than 4.0, and some were as high as 4.72/5. This assessment is only one indication of student satisfaction, but it sends a clear message that students feel they are being taught the material they believe they are learning. Every student is asked to complete the end of course anonymous survey, and they are made available to professors a few weeks after the class completes. The dean, chair and lead faculty also review these surveys, which are delivered monthly. Student comments also help push us toward better teaching overall.

Table 7 is a summary of the current SWOT analysis of NU Marketing programs and courses, based upon the interviews, data, and personal assessment by the authors. This is a current state of affairs. The strengths and opportunities are where NU can be confident are winning hearts and minds of students. However, the strategic perspective also considers that there are other factors to consider, and the weaknesses and threats are very important to evaluate.

Table 6: Average Student Evaluation of Teaching for Each of the Marketing Courses at National University, for Both Undergraduate and Graduate Courses from 2011 to 2014, Using a Likert Scale of 1 to 5, the Latter Being the Highest

FY11-14 Evaluated Teaching Assessment Data	
MKT302A	4.42
MKT420	4.60
MKT430	4.28
MKT434	4.24
MKT440A	4.46
MKT441	4.06
MKT442A	4.44
MKT443	4.33
MKT445	4.41
MKT446	4.37
MKT448	4.16
MKT480	4.36
MKT602	4.49
MKT620	4.34
MKT631	4.25
MKT634	4.12
MKT651	4.72

Table 6 above indicates the student’s evaluation of their teaching assessment. School Report of Assessment Run Date: 2014-08-20-11.17.15.000000 Run By: K JERRED Institutional Research, 2014

Table 7: SWOT Analysis of NU Marketing Programs

Strengths	Weaknesses
WASC & IACBE Accreditation	Low retention/engagement outside of class
Top 20 ranking of Integrated Marketing Programs	Product and Promotion are weak subject areas in outbound BBA exams (exhibit 7)
Practicing Marketers as Faculty	High attrition rates in some courses
National/Regional Memberships in Marketing	Not AACSB accredited (yet)
Rigor in academics	Not connected to the internship community
Nationally known for advancing working adults	No student mentorship program
Scores better than competition	Out of date textbooks
EXTERNAL	
Opportunities	Threats
Lack of marketing classes at community colleges	Rising cost of higher education
Flexible enrollment scheduling; open enrollment	Competition from new Bachelor’s degrees at Community Colleges in California
Private non-profit status	Financial aid restrictions

Table 7 is a summary of the current SWOT analysis of NU Marketing programs and courses, based upon the interviews, data, and personal assessment by the authors.

Table 8 consists of a list of actions and best practices to follow as a result of the goals of the study, the SWOT Analysis and interviews, in an effort to improve existing results in the marketing discipline at National University.

Table 8: Best Practices and Action Steps

Marketing career development	Grow student internship programs
Student business involvement	Add hands on projects to curriculum
	Review content and applicability annually
Grow enrollment	Hire best faculty/branding
Improve outbound scores	Offer refresher courses
Student Involvement growth	Create more student-run organizations
Use relevant textbooks/resources	Embed in course at reduced fees/lease
Case Studies	Students create/adapt cases

Table 8 consists of a list of actions and best practices to follow as a result of the goals of the study.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Our goal of this research was to give an objective snapshot of the Marketing Programs at National University and see how we could improve them. We learned that our student population is growing, mostly satisfied, and learning at above our peer institutions based upon outgoing third party data. There is a lot of competition for college students as demographics show fewer students entering college ages. NU is a non-traditional school, due to its approach towards working adults and more mature population. One of our important values in our mission is open access, which causes the acceptance of many students not fully prepared to start a rigorous academic program, and thus creating some issues and disadvantages versus other business schools. NU will need to adapt to future changes in the demographics of students. This study concentrated on secondary data that was available, including student satisfaction, enrollment and scores from standardized tests. We believe that by looking at student employment after graduation, salaries, employer satisfaction and other factors, we could further quantify and measure improvement. When we presented these initial findings at a poster session in September 2014 at our NU Annual Research Conference, our colleagues suggested we should also gather data from other courses in other disciplines, such as Management. We can explore these data in the future. We can also consider eliminating courses that students don't feel are as valued in today's changing discipline. The number one concern from interviews seemed to be helping students with job opportunities. One idea that resulted from this process was to have a portfolio for students to post their work, so future employers could see the output and quality of student work. More data needs to be collected from these outbound tests from Peregrine and other organizations to better understand student's perceptions in the field of Marketing. Employers need to be contacted to find out how successful our graduates are in their positions. Student satisfaction after receiving the degree could be gathered too. This study suggests that more research is required on these issues in order to determine the possible actions to improve our marketing programs and courses at National University.

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