The University of Texas at Dallas
Annual Report to the GAC
December, 2006

INTRODUCTION

The past year has been fairly stable, with a few administration changes and an increase in alumni involvement. We added one module on International projects and one instructor to our Certificate phase and our Managerial Accounting professor retired, and was replace by another faculty member. Late in the year our online administrator moved to a new group and was replaced by our on campus administrator who in turn was replaced by a transfer from another school within UTD. We also added a 2nd computer science technician. We signed an agreement with Illuminate to implement Web conferencing and VOIP technology for our online communication. We also made an agreement with PMForum, publishers of the online magazine PM World Today for our students to review books and write reports for publication. We introduced a series of one day professional development workshops dealing with International projects. As of September, we had 46 online students and 51 on campus students enrolled in classes.   Our academic year ended with an income of $1,378,598 and expenses of $1,000,961 before allocations from the Dean.

Comments from the site visit team on strengths and opportunities of the program are:

Areas of strength of this program include:
- The PM program is contemporary, responsive, and applied.
  - **We continue to get good comments from our graduates about the usefulness of what they learn.**

- The PM program covers the content areas relevant to the learning objectives specified in the Accreditation Handbook.
  - **Nothing new here. We make sure that any changes we make are in alignment with the learning objectives by review of the director and the course coordinators.**
- The PM program covers PM content in an integrated, geodesic, non-linear manner.
  - **We continue to improve in the management of our integrated curriculum in the 21 hour certificate phase. Fortunately we now have a stable group of instructors as turnover has been very low.**

- A balance of academic rigor, creativity, and practical industry applications.
  - **As with the above, students report that the curriculum is difficult and challenging but worthwhile.**
- Qualified, capable faculty.

- o **I am particularly proud of our faculty. They are working better together in coordinating topics covered, especially within the Certificate phase integrated curriculum because as mentioned earlier, turnover has been zero and they understand it better. Faculty in our non-project specific courses are beginning to add project related cases, etc. also.**
- Effective professional support staff.
  - o **While our support staff is professional, The departure of our long term coordinator to help build up a new program has put a strain on our staff. As mentioned in the introduction, the on campus class coordinator moved to take over the online and a new person from another area within UTD took her slot. Given the complicated nature of our curriculum, the learning curve is steep and we have had a few more gliches than usual. However, both key administrators are learning their jobs and things are improving rapidly.**
- Full support by UTD leadership.
  - o **All is well here.**
- Coverage of traditional business topics as well as new and advanced topics.
  - o **Our Strategic Management professor was selected for a 6 month teaching fellowship to Germany. We did add a business simulation, Cap Sim to this course with great success. While it is a general business simulation, the professor reports that the project management students seem to be better organized in pulling the pieces together to run the simulation than other students.**
- Strong involvement with industry.
  - o **Our advisory board continues to be very active in promoting the program and offering advice.**

Opportunities for improvement of this program include:

- More discussions of program management.
  - o **We now place more emphasis on this in our Organizational Management modules, which also covers Portfolio and Maturity models.**
  - o **I formed a group of alumni and others to study how we an best increase the emphasis on Program Management. I hope we have concrete proposals by mid 2007.**
- More frequent local classes.
  - o **We have done nothing here as this relates to the schedule of classes, which is set for 3 consecutive days per month. No change anticipated.**

- Clarifying further to program participants the difference between the first year's integrated program and its delivery approach vs. the second year's individual courses and their traditional delivery approach.
  - **Investigation revealed that the move from the Certificate program which has the heavy project management focus to the more traditional business courses, such as Accounting, Statistics, etc. created a shock effect. Suddenly students were moved way from our heavy team based case/project/exercise oriented courses to more traditional, less familiar, less intuitive courses. We had been doing a poor job of warning them. Now, some of the professors and I spend time at the end of the Certificate phase discussing and holding mini-tutorials. "This is called managing expectations". This helps but we will continue to find ways to "ease the pain".**
- Allowing team conference calls.
  - **We added stations to our Teleconference system and are now in the process of moving to Illuminate, a VOIP Web conferencing system. This will be initiated with the online class beginning in February. Team use of the Teleconference facility has increased dramatically.**

Future

Our Supply Chain/New Product Development professional development certificate program is working on plans to move to a graduate certificate program. Because of the close connection between project management and this area, we will blend our marketing efforts and leverage the expertise of each program to the benefit of both. Once students have completed the Supply Chain/New Product Development certificate program, they will have the option of joining the Project Management program for phase I and II to earn either the MS or MBA.

We are making a strong effort to determine if we need to add some separate courses in the area of Program and Portfolio management in addition to what we currently teach in our present Project Management program.

We decided to continue to exhibit at not only the PMI North American Congresses, but also the Cost Engineers and NASA conferences. The Cost engineers now offer a certification for project and program managers. We had exhibited at the Cost Engineers the past 2 years and NASA last year, on a trial basis.