I. Program Reviewed: B.S. in Marketing Education

Program Director: Urs Haltimer

PRC Consultants: George Smeaton and Charles Baird

Date of Review: Spring 2003

Purpose of Review: This review is conducted in order to assess the program's quality as part of the ongoing seven-year review cycle required of all Stout degree programs.

Committee Findings: The PRC recommends that this program continue to function as one of UW-Stout's degree programs for the ongoing seven-year cycle, and recommendations made by the committee be implemented.

II. Abstract:

The B.S. in Marketing Education is designed to prepare students for careers in the broad business fields of marketing (with optional Business Education and Marketing Education Certification). The degree program includes 42 credits in general education, 49 credits in professional education preparation, and 33 credits in marketing and business. Students are also encouraged to pursue minors in other subject areas in order to enhance their professional preparation and employment opportunities.

Student enrollment in the B.S. in Marketing Education program has increased from 102 students in 1995 to 157 students in 2002. The latter statistic constitutes approximately 2.3% of the total Stout enrollment. The program continues to be well received by its enrollees. Placement in the major and its related fields has been at 100% every year for the past 10 years. The Marketing Education program now has an instructional center, which is divided into four sections. The computer lab area and traditional classroom space can both be rearranged in multiple ways to allow the instructor to simulate various lab settings that are encountered in the PK-12 setting.

It is recommended that the B.S. in Marketing Education continue as a degree program at UW-Stout. It is the largest program of its kind in the United States and is recognized nationally as a strong program.

III. Process Followed for the Current Review:

Under the guidelines developed by the PRC, information regarding the program was gathered from the Placement Office, Institutional Research, the program director, key instructors, program committee, students and one- and three-year graduates. Observations were made by the consultants based on these surveys and institutional data. The findings were reported to and discussed by the PRC. The program director presented a summary of his report to the committee and had an opportunity to address concerns.
IV. Previous Review:

The last PRC review of this program occurred in the 1995-96 academic year. Alec Kirby and Ed Wenzel served as the consultants. The program was recommended for continuation. In their review of the program, the consultants noted the following strengths:

1. Placement
2. Small size of the program.
3. Reputation.
4. Evaluation of program director.
5. Team approach and "hands-on" learning.
6. Facilities.

Each of these strengths are still present in the program. With regard to the second strength, however, though the program is still relatively small in size, it increased in size from 102 to 157 since the last review. This rapid growth may account for some of the issues that will be discussed in detail under “Opportunities for Program Improvement” below.

The growth areas noted in the previous review were as follows:

1. Shortage of faculty.
2. Insufficient opportunities to develop computer skills.
3. Overlap between courses.

No comments were made in the survey of current students that indicated a continued lack of opportunity to develop computer skills. On the other hand, a shortage of faculty and the perception of overlap between a few key courses were frequently noted.

Recommendations for the program made in the previous review were as follows:

1. Every attempt should be made to address the lack of full-time faculty.
2. The program director should continue with current efforts to reduce redundancy in course work.
3. Attempts should be made to determine whether the students' concerns with lack of computer skills development are appropriate and, if so, develop strategies to eliminate those concerns.
4. Every attempt should be made to explore and implement a Business Education Certification.

Since the last review of the program, the program has clearly made “Every attempt to address the lack of full-time faculty,” by increasing the number of full-time faculty teaching in the program from 1 to 2.25, but numerous comments by both faculty and key instructors indicate that more faculty are still needed. As course redundancy is currently the shortcoming of the program that is most frequently reported by students, more progress toward achieving this recommendation is needed. Recommendations 3 and 4 have been accomplished.
V. Program Review

Program Strengths

1. Placement. Career Services has reported that placement of UW-Stout marketing and business education graduates has been 100 percent within the major and related fields over the past ten years. Of particular interest is the versatility of the degree which provides graduates the opportunity to choose between business opportunities and teaching positions.

2. Size. The relatively small size of the program has a positive effect on the students. Students report that the small class sizes are easy to get into and the instructors are helpful out of the classroom as well. The program instructors stay in communication with the students, are available, and are knowledgeable. Students have indicated there is a feeling of knowing everyone and being comfortable with each other. The program instructors and students are viewed by the students as a “family.”

3. Reputation. The program is highly recognized within the secondary and postsecondary educational communities. Teachers within the field, many of whom are UW-Stout Marketing Education and Business Education graduates, recommend the program to students who are interested in becoming marketing and business educators.

4. Evaluation of Program Director. Key instructors and students gave high compliments for the program director’s leadership. The former program director received equally high compliments in the last program review. The former program director continues to be an instructor in the program thus providing very effective leadership in this program.

5. Addition of Business Education Certificate. The program has markedly increased its graduate’s marketability because of the addition of the business education certification since the last PRC study.

6. Work Toward Program Accreditation/Certification. All aspects of the program have been reviewed and it is anticipated that the business education certification program component status will be advanced from the initial “Innovative and Experimental” status to full business education certification status.

Opportunities for Program Improvement

1. Perceptions of course repletion or overlap. In his Program Review Report, program director Haltinner noted: “Course content redundancy has been minimized through additional calibration amongst instructors teaching the program’s professional courses.” This view is reflected by comments made by key instructors and members of the program committee who either indicated that there was no unnecessary repetition or overlap of course content in the program or that any that might exist served a useful function. Comments made by students in the student survey, however, indicated that many of them do not share this perspective. Twelve students indicated that course overlap and duplication was a “major weakness of the program,” three students suggested elimination of course overlap when asked how the program could be improved, and 34 of the 75 who completed the survey gave examples of courses that they feel have unnecessary overlap in response to the survey item that dealt with that issue. The bulk of these comments,
cited one of the following sets of courses: MEBE 301, 401, MEBE 201, MEBE 202 which covers CTSO concepts, VTAE-302, and VTAE-360 Co-op.

2. **Credit requirement for graduation.** Although the Marketing-only certification requires only 124 credit hours, the majority of the students in the program pursue the combined Marketing and Business certification, which requires 143 credits to complete. Comments made by many students in the student survey indicated that it is very difficult to complete this requirement in four years. Students in this program are provided with a four-year MEBE Program Plan, it suggests an 18-19 credit-per-semester load for the first three years. Several students noted that this plan is overly stressful and unrealistic. Even if one is able to manage such a course load, requiring such a large number of courses means that many must be offered at the same time. As a result, according to several students in the survey, it is difficult to take all the required courses in four years without taking summer school classes. Data from the Undergraduate One-year Follow-up Survey corroborate this contention. Since 1993 the aspects of the degree program that has consistently received the lowest satisfaction levels are course availability and course scheduling.

3. **Communication Issues.** Eight of the responses to the item asking students about perceived weaknesses of the program reflect a need for improved communication between students and faculty and between faculty members. These include reports of discrepancy in the information given by various advisors, inadequate explanations of changes in the program, and failure to explain the need for course fees. Two similar comments were also made in response to the item asking for any other information students would like to share about the program. When asked how the program could be improved, four responses were communication-related.

In addition to direct evidence regarding the need for improvement in communication, some of the other growth areas of the program provide indirect support for this conclusion. As noted above, none of the faculty believed that there was any unnecessary course duplication, but nearly half of the students gave specific examples of courses they perceived to be overly repetitive. This suggests that faculty in the program may need to make more of an effort to explain why they feel that the repetition that does exist serves an important educational function. In addition to this issue, the credit requirement issue may also reflect a need for improving communication. By making a greater effort to explain clearly to prospective MEBE majors the credit requirements of the degree and the challenges they will face if they plan to complete it in four years, future students may become more accepting of the programs demands.

4. **Shortage of Faculty.** When asked about weaknesses in the program, all five comments made by key instructors from within the department, and three of the four comments made by members of the program advisory committee reflected a need for more faculty in the program. In addition, seven students gave the suggestion to hire more faculty in response to the item asking how the program could be improved. Two others suggested adding sections to courses in response to the same item. These suggestions combined with the comments noted above regarding the difficulty of being able to schedule all the required courses in four years provide further support for the need for more faculty in the program. As one program committee member succinctly responded when asked in the survey for recommendations for improvement of the program, “More staff!”

5. **Size of Program.** As noted above, the program has grown from 102 students in 1995 to 157 students in the current school year. Increasing the size of the program causes classes to fill more quickly and contributes to the difficulty students report in scheduling classes. In addition, the current number of students in the program may also contribute to the communication issues
noted above. As one program committee member noted, “Advising 160 students and delivering all professional courses creates a huge load for two faculty.” Finally, because this is an education program, each student requires supervision during his or her student teaching experience. Increasing the enrollment makes it more difficult to observe and give feedback to student teachers.

**Recommendations to the Program Director**

1. Review MEBE program requirements to determine if reductions in the credit requirements can be made while still effectively preparing students for marketing and business education careers.

2. Work to improve lines of communication between faculty and students. In particular, the program should explore new ways of conveying program and course requirements to students, and the challenges associated with the combined MEBE major. In addition, when instances of duplication of content across these courses represent necessary reinforcement on concepts, the necessity of reviewing these content areas should be clearly explained to the students.

3. Determine appropriate program size given the resources available to it, and work to achieve and/or maintain that size.

**Recommendations to Department Chair**

1. *Continue to work to reduce course redundancy and duplication.* Specifically, all reasonable efforts should be made to eliminate unnecessary duplication from the following courses: MEBE 301 and 401; CTSO, VTAE, and Co-op; and MEBE 201 and 202. When instances of duplication of content across these courses represent necessary reinforcement of concepts, the necessity of reviewing these content areas should be clearly explained to students.

**Recommendations to the Dean (or Associate Dean)**

1. Determine appropriate program size given the resources available to it, and work to achieve and/or maintain that size.