

**Report of the Academic Program Review Panel
For the Faculty of Business Administration
Memorial University**

Prepared by:

Dr. Grant Gardner
Associate Dean
Faculty of Science
Memorial University

Dr. Ernie Love
Segal Graduate School of Business
Simon Fraser University

Dr. John Scott
Department of Philosophy
Memorial University

Dr. Malcolm Smith
Asper School of Business
University of Manitoba

June 2007

Table of Contents

1. The Review Procedure	4
2. Key Issues	5
2.1. Expectations for Growth	5
2.2. Physical and Human Resources	5
2.3. Faculty Recruitment	6
2.4. The Use of Contractual Appointments and Per-course Teaching	6
2.5. Prospects for the New Ph.D. Program	6
3. Undergraduate Program	
3.1. How well is the unit performing its undergraduate teaching function?	7
3.2. Is the curriculum sufficiently comprehensive and rigorous?	7
3.3. Are the grading norms consistent with those used in similar programs in Canada and elsewhere?	9
3.4. Is the unit properly staffed to fulfill its undergraduate responsibilities?	9
3.5. Are classes the appropriate size to accomplish its teaching goals?	10
3.6. Is there sufficient demand from students for the program?	10
3.7. How competitive are the unit's undergraduate programs nationally and regionally in attracting qualified students and placing graduates in suitable positions?	11
3.8. Are recruiting and retention opportunities being maximized, both by the unit and the university?	12
3.9. Does the University supply the library resources, computing and laboratory facilities, and other resources necessary to support the undergraduate programs?	13
3.10. Is the unit fulfilling its service responsibilities to other units?	14
4. Graduate Programs	14
4.1. How effective is the unit in its graduate and supervision responsibilities?	17
4.2. Is the research and scholarly productivity of the unit's faculty appropriate to its graduate responsibilities?	17
4.3. Are the graduate program's admission criteria appropriate?	17
4.4. How successful are the unit's graduate programs nationally and regionally in attracting qualified graduate students and placing graduate degree holders in professional employment?	17
4.5. How competitive are the unit's graduate programs nationally and regionally in attracting qualified graduate students and placing graduate degree holders in professional employment?	17
4.6. Is the curriculum sufficiently comprehensive and vigorous?	17
4.7. Are the assessment standards consistent with those used in graduate Programs in Canada and elsewhere?	18
4.8. Is financial support for students at a level appropriate for the scope of graduate education activities desired within the unit?	18
4.9. Does the University supply the library resources, computing and laboratory facilities, and other resources necessary to support the graduate program?	18

5. Faculty Research and Scholarship	
5.1. Are the research, creative activity, and scholarship of the faculty appropriate for providing first-rate academic programs?	18
5.2. Are research facilities and library resources sufficiently supportive of faculty research?	19
5.3. Are faculty generating external funding up to their full potential?	19
5.4. What role are faculty playing in the University research centers, interdisciplinary research groups and external partnerships?	19
5.5. Do faculty engage in regional, national and international organizations?	19
6. Faculty and Staff	
6.1. How well are faculty and staff resources being used?	20
6.2. Are promotion and tenure policies appropriate to the unit's mission and aspirations?	21
6.3. How successful is the unit in implementing University employment equity policies?	21
6.4. Are faculty and staff workloads equitable and appropriate to the unit's missions?	21
6.5. Are administrative decisions made and administrative tasks carried out efficiently and effectively?	21
6.6. How does the unit rank among those in similar institutions regarding research productivity and quality, external funding, academic programs and teaching loads?	22
7. Community Service	
7.1. Is the unit fulfilling opportunities to serve the community?	22
7.2. Is the unit, where appropriate, effectively introducing students to professional community service opportunities?	23
8. University Citizenship	
8.1. Does the unit effectively reinforce the goals of other units?	23
8.2. Do its members encourage and contribute to interdisciplinary activities?	23
8.3. Should it apply its efforts and resources in new or different ways in order to enhance its role within the university?	23
9. University Support	
9.1. Is the unit receiving adequate resources from the University at large?	24
9.2. Are its facilities adequate? Attention should be paid to space, equipment computing, laboratory and library resources.	24
9.3. Is it adequately staffed?	24
9.4. Does the reporting structure ensure managerial efficiency and administrative effectiveness within the unit?	25
10. Plans, Goals and Resource Allocation	
10.1. Are the objectives of the unit appropriate to the University mission?	25
10.2. Is the unit trying to do too much?	25
10.3. If the unit has made requests for additional resources, which requests does the Panel support and why?	26
10.4. How might the unit's resources be redistributed to realize its Goals and those of the University?	26

1. The Review Procedure

The Academic Program Review (APR) Panel was appointed by the Vice-President (Academic) in accordance with the guidelines for the review of academic programs. Prior to a site visit by the Panel, the Faculty of Business Administration (FBA) prepared a comprehensive self-study document touching on all aspects of vision, mission, programs, priorities, research and teaching. That document provided the foundation which prepared the Panel for its challenging task.

The site visit took place from May 13-16, 2007. It began with a meeting of the Panel on the evening of May 13 which provided an opportunity for general discussion of the Faculty and its place within Memorial University. At that meeting, Panel members were able to voice their individual views of the self-study document and collectively identify issues that they might usefully consider during their meetings with members of the Department.

Over the next two days, the Panel toured the Faculty's facilities and held a series of meetings with:

- 1) The Vice-President (Academic) and Associate Vice-President (Academic) (Dr. Doreen Neville)
- 2) The Dean of the Faculty and the Faculty's management group.
- 3) Organizational Behaviour/Theory, Labour Relations, and Human Resource Management faculty
- 4) Finance, Accounting and Law faculty
- 5) Marketing and Communications faculty
- 6) Information Systems, Operations Management, and Management Science (Operational Research) faculty
- 7) Strategy, International Business, Small Business, and Entrepreneurship faculty
- 8) Staff members
- 9) Per-course instructors
- 10) Representatives of the Faculty of Business Administration Advisory Board
- 11) Representatives of the Undergraduate Students
- 12) The Undergraduate Studies Committee
- 13) The Graduate Studies Committee
- 14) The Dean of Graduate Studies
- 15) The Associate Dean, Research (Jeffery Parsons) [this meeting was held separately to accommodate Dr. Parsons' travel schedule]

Meetings with faculty, student and staff groups followed a similar format. After welcoming comments and introduction of the panel, the Chair invited each visitor to introduce him or her self, identify their role in the Faculty, and tell us one key outcome they wished to see as a result of the review. The ensuing discussion augmented the information in the self-study review and allowed the Panel to home in on issues raised in the self-study or during the meetings. A planned meeting with graduate student representatives was unfortunately cancelled when no graduate students were able to attend.

Despite the hectic pace, the meetings ran smoothly and the Panel commends the cooperation received from all groups. In particular, we congratulate the students who met with us for the commitment, enthusiasm and professionalism they exhibited. Robyn Saunders also deserves special mention for looking after the details of the arrangements so well, and allowing the Panel to focus on its task so effectively.

2. Key Issues

By its nature, an APR will of necessity focus on areas where there is room for improvement and identify remedies for existing problems. We would be remiss, however, in not commenting on the positive aspects of the Faculty of Business Administration first. We were impressed with the co-op students, who are clearly receiving an exemplary education, with the bright new faculty members who are being attracted to Memorial, with the highly commendable record of success in a variety of student competitions, and with the knowledge and commitment of so many of the department members with whom we met. That is not to say everything is perfect, but it is clear that the members of the department are ready and able to address the issues raised in this report.

This summary will address, briefly, key issues that surfaced during the site visit. Those issues are then dealt with in more detail, and additional minor issues raised, in the following sections.

2.1. Expectations for Growth

The enrolment targets set by the University's Strategic Plan are ambitious, and there is an expectation that the FBA's contribution to meeting those targets would require doubling student numbers to 2000. That expectation, voiced without articulation of how the unit is to accommodate such numbers, is a source of stress for faculty and staff, and adds to a perceived disconnect between the Senior Executive of the University and the FBA. Even in the most optimistic climate, the infrastructure to accommodate such large numbers could not be in place for many years.

2.2. Physical and Human Resources

The physical plant of the FBA is at capacity, although there may be some possibility for improvement. In particular, the FBA follows a model, not unusual in schools of business, of not scheduling classes on Fridays, which are then free for case work meetings, group assignments, research and independent study. However, that makes it more difficult for business students to accommodate courses from outside business in their programs, and for non-business students to take FBA courses. The use of a different timetable also means that the FBA cannot readily access teaching rooms in other buildings, as those rooms are scheduled on a 'regular' timetable. Making better use of Friday would free up additional teaching space.

Of particular concern was the information that while the FBA has a donor willing to provide a very significant contribution to new infrastructure on condition that the donation be

matched by other funds, the provincial government has elected not to provide that matching money. The University must do everything in its power to change that decision.

Human resources are also at capacity. The staff are uniformly supportive and not complaining, but did make a number of constructive comments. They were unanimous in their conviction that the Academic Program Manager, is overburdened and doing the work of at least two people. They also cited examples of the ineffective or inappropriate use of staff that impinge on the effective support of academic programs.

2.3. Faculty Recruitment

Dean Gorman has done a very good job of attracting bright, new faculty members. However, recruitment is also required at senior levels to provide more mentors for new faculty and to provide leadership in the new Ph.D. program. Recruitment must be targeted and in line with FBA strategic goals, and the FBA should also consider the option of bringing intellectual leaders to campus for brief (2-3 weeks) periods, perhaps engaging them in giving short or accelerated courses, or components of existing courses. Another option might be to use an 'executive-in-residence' to bring in 'real world' business expertise.

2.4. The Use of Contractual Appointments and Per-course Teaching

Over 50% of course offerings are by other than full-time tenure-track faculty members. That is not an unusual proportion in comparison with other Canadian schools of business, but Dean Gorman noted concern that such a high proportion might be detrimental to accreditation, and indicated his intent to reduce it. In addition to a reduction in the proportion of courses offered by contractual or per-course appointees, the FBA should formalize and make more efficient the way in which those appointees are supported and mentored.

2.5. Prospects for the New Ph.D. Program

Our initial view of the new Ph.D. program was not positive. Only one member of the Graduate Studies Committee was able to meet with us. Unfortunately, she was a relatively new member unfamiliar with the history of the program. Hence she was understandably unable to address our reservations about a lack of knowledge and engagement, particularly among faculty who will be dealing with the students being admitted for September. When we met later with Jeffrey Parsons, Associate Dean Research, he was able to address our concerns directly and our comfort level regarding the program rose considerably. Nevertheless, we are concerned that most of the knowledge of this new and challenging program appears to reside with one person, and that many faculty members appear to be unfamiliar with the details of the program.

3. Undergraduate Program:

3.1. How well is the unit performing its undergraduate teaching function?

The Faculty of Business Administration (FBA) is performing its undergraduate teaching function very well. The students interviewed (B.Comm. (Co-Op)) are extremely satisfied with the quality of their undergraduate education and very proud of the fact that their degree is from the FBA at MUN. One indicator of how well FBA undergraduate students are educated (compared to other business schools) is the students' performance at national and international competitions. The Panel noted the success of FBA undergraduate students at competitions such as the Queen's University Intercollegiate Business Competition (ICBC) and especially at the Advancing Canadian Entrepreneurship (ACE) National Competition where FBA undergraduate students took first place in 2007.

3.2. Is the curriculum sufficiently comprehensive and rigorous?

Bachelor of Commerce (Co-Op) and Bachelor of Business Administration:

The undergraduate curriculum is undergoing a comprehensive review and the FBA's Faculty Council has passed many changes in the Bachelor of Commerce (Co-Op) (B.Comm. (Co-Op)) and Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degrees. These two undergraduate degrees cater to very different clientele but with the new changes have a common slate of required core courses¹. Both programs offer courses that are quite standard in other business degree programs across Canada. While the B.Comm. (Co-Op) program is an integrated, lock-step program with required work terms, the BBA has no work placement requirements and offers more flexibility for students since it can be taken on a part-time basis. Recent changes to the core program now allow students in the BBA to specialize in functional areas of business to gain more in-depth knowledge and skills in those areas.

With an acceptance rate of just over 60% (acceptances to applications) since the 2003-04 academic year, the B.Comm. (Co-Op) is definitely the "flagship" undergraduate program. Over the last five years, the attrition rate in the program has been about 24% (range 30.3% - 16.2%). Although it is difficult to ascertain the reasons behind this attrition, it could be viewed as one indicator of the rigor of the program. Another indicator is the percentage of students graduating with Honours. On average, over the last five years, over 22% of the B.Comm. (Co-Op) graduates have achieved that standard.

Five B.Comm. (Co-Op) students participated in the interviews during the on-site visit. These were likely above average and motivated students; however, the students considered their opinions to be representative of others in that program. While the students were extremely positive about their experience and the quality of their education, they did express concerns about particular courses in the B.Comm. (Co-Op) program. Three courses in particular were flagged. The Introduction to Computing for Business (Comp 2801) and the Introductory

¹ The general Bachelor of Commerce is being phased out and is not considered in this APR.

Information Systems (I.S.) (Busi 3700) courses do not seem to be relevant to the needs of the students in today's business world. In particular, the I.S. course is not taught in a computer laboratory, resulting in a difficult learning environment. Additionally, it was reported that the Organizational Strategy (Busi 7000) course, which is a cap-stone, integration course, required too much memorization and regurgitation of lists rather than integration and application of the knowledge students had learned throughout out their program.

It is recommended that:

- *Consultation with the Department of Computer Science be carried out to ensure the content of Comp 2801 taught to FBA undergraduates meets their educational needs.*
- *A review of the content and delivery method of Busi 3700 be undertaken, and that a proper facility be built in which to teach the course.*
- *The FBA review the content and delivery method of Busi 7000 to ensure that it truly integrates the skills learned in previous courses.*

Business Ethics, a course required at many Canadian business schools, does not seem to be a required course in the B.Comm. (Co-Op) program, although Business in Society (Busi 1000) is proposed to have an ethics focus. Students suggested that either the revised Busi 1000 or a course in Ethics should be taken before the first work placement so that they have some skill base from which to draw when they encounter ethical problems (e.g., acceptable behaviour in a work environment, culturally-based ethical issues in the work place...).

It is recommended that:

- *The FBA add a course totally devoted to business ethics to the curriculum and deliver it early in the program.*

Although revisions to the B.Comm. (Co-Op) program have reduced the number of required courses in each of Term 1 and Term 2 from six to five, the students expressed a strong preference that it be left at six. They indicated that it helped them quickly develop time management skills required to be successful in the remainder of their program. However, the faculty justified this reduction, stating that requiring five courses would allow a more in-depth and rigorous coverage of the courses taken. The students claimed that some of their classmates were not able to perform basic business skills when they were in upper-year courses (e.g., performing basic accounting ratios, preparing pro-forma income statement, etc.). Faculty members stated that reducing the number of required courses in Term 1 and 2 should alleviate the problem of students not recalling some necessary business skills needed in upper-level courses. However, care must be taken to ensure that the students move on to the upper-year courses with the necessary skill set.

It is recommended that:

- *The FBA monitor the competencies of the undergraduate students in basic business skills after year 1 of the program. This could be carried out by ensuring that these skills are tested in final exams.*

Several large undergraduate courses offered in multiple sections are not coordinated at the present time. This can result in variable standards and deliverables (assignments, exams, presentations, etc.) across sections for which students all receive the same credit.

It is recommended that:

- *The FBA review the co-ordination of all multi-section courses, and that, in particular, a senior faculty member teaching a multi-section course be assigned to co-ordinate course syllabi and requirements across all sections.*

Coupled with the issue of coordination is the issue of integration of course content. Concern was expressed about the fact that there was considerable overlap in content between courses, especially in the Organizational Behaviour, Organizational Theory, and Human Resource Management classes. Not only is co-ordination between sections of the same course required, but so is integration of course content among courses.

It is recommended that:

- *The FBA review the content of courses (especially in the OB/T, LR and HRM area) to ensure that overlap in course content is kept to a minimum.*

International Bachelor of Business Administration:

The new International Bachelor of Business Administration (iBBA) is an innovative program with high admission standards and small class sizes. The curriculum should provide students with the basic business skills necessary to operate in an international environment. Because the first class has just completed its first year of the program, no assessment of the success of this program can be offered.

3.3. Are the grading norms consistent with those used in similar programs in Canada and elsewhere?

The grading norms seem in line with those in other Canadian business Schools.

3.4. Is the unit properly staffed to fulfill its undergraduate responsibilities?

Just under 50% of undergraduate courses (Self Report, p.28), are taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty. While this figure seems to alarm some faculty members, it is not far from the norm for other business schools in Canada. In fact, when considering the teaching coverage by tenured and tenure-track faculty with those hired on a contractual basis, this figure increases to over 64%. Many of the full-time faculty expressed concern that they did not have the human resources to cover “the basic” courses adequately, which hindered their ability to offer more advanced, upper-year courses in their functional areas. If the University expects to reach its targeted growth goals in the next five years, resources to hire more faculty will be required. However, care must be taken to keep within the AACSB guidelines for the full-time to part-time ratio of faculty members.

It is recommended that:

- *To meet the projected growth goals, a faculty recruiting plan be developed and implemented.*
- *Resources be allocated to hire terminally-qualified faculty to serve the teaching needs of the undergraduate programs adequately.*

3.5. Are classes the appropriate size to accomplish its teaching goals?

Class sizes, on average, are comparable to other mid-sized business programs in Canada. The number of students per class is limited by classroom capacity (the largest is 65) and there are no “mega-classes” such as those found at some of the leading Canadian business schools.

3.6. Is there sufficient demand from students for the program?

The demand for the B.Comm. (Co-Op) and the BBA is quite high. For instance, the acceptance rate for the B.Comm. (Co-Op) has been just over 60% in the last five years and only 185 students are admitted each year to this program. The demand for the BBA program is also very strong and this program presently has more students enrolled than in the B.Comm. (Co-Op).

Most of the undergraduate students are from the province of Newfoundland and Labrador and many are from the Avalon Peninsula. Indications are that the provincial pool of young adults from which the undergraduate students are drawn is shrinking; therefore, local demand very well may be in decline.

Growth Issues:

The goal of doubling the student body in the FBA in the next five years to meet the University’s growth target will be a challenge, requiring nearly 1,000 new students. While the overall new growth at MUN is expected to come mainly from graduate students, there is a lack of clarity as to what percentage of the “new” student body will be undergraduates in the FBA. It is vital that the breakdown of the expected ratio of undergraduate to graduate students is specified so that planning can take place.

It is recommended that:

- *The projected ratio of undergraduate-to-graduate students in the FBA required to meet the growth goals of the University be clearly stated.*
- *Additional analysis be undertaken by the University to substantiate the growth projections such that appropriate planning and commitment to necessary resources can be carried out with confidence.*

The Panel has made the assumption that most of the new growth in FBA enrolments will come from undergraduate students.

The ACOA Fellow on contract with the FBA has done an admirable job in developing an international student recruitment strategy (especially from China). Estimates supplied to the Panel project that over the next five years a maximum of 25% of the student body each year (up from approximately 4% of the present undergraduate student body) could be composed of international students. While this influx of international students will add to the diversity of the student body, the Panel noted that quality assurance must be in place to guarantee that student standards are not sacrificed.

The influx of international students will potentially only fill 25% of the new growth goal of the FBA. The question remains, “Where will the other students come from?” Faculty members expressed concern that quality of students may be sacrificed for quantity. While the Dean has been meeting with various Community Colleges in Ontario to see if opportunities exist to recruit students, there does not seem to be a solid student recruiting plan in place to attract the remaining quota of students.

It is recommended that:

- *An undergraduate recruiting plan be developed for recruiting students to the FBA from within and outside the Province.*

The influx of international students will have resource implications for the FBA, especially in staffing for support personnel, so that required services (including academic and social) for these students can be delivered. Additionally, with the increase in international students, resources will be required to ensure that faculty members are trained to be sensitive to cultural differences that are likely to occur during interaction with these students. Before this growth begins, the University must ensure that these issues are dealt with.

It is recommended that:

- *Given that 25% of the undergraduate student body will be comprised of international students in the near future, a plan be developed and implemented to hire and train sufficient support staff to handle academic and social issues directly related to international students.*
- *Intercultural training for faculty be provided so that they are equipped to handle cultural differences in student behaviour.*

3.7. How competitive are the unit’s undergraduate programs nationally and regionally in attracting qualified students and placing graduates in suitable positions?

When B.Comm. (Co-Op) students graduate, they already have the equivalent of one year of relevant work experience, which makes them highly attractive to potential employers. While the students interviewed wished that they could remain in Newfoundland after graduation, many intend to move to other parts of the country for employment since entry-level management positions are not readily available in the local economy. They are, however, planning to return to Newfoundland later in their career. Some students interviewed felt that many local companies were not knowledgeable about the Co-Op program.

It is recommended that:

- *Resources be allocated to promote and to build awareness of the Co-Op Program within the provincial business community with the goal of increasing the number of Co-Op students hired within the Province immediately after graduation.*

Many of the BBA students are already employed and pursuing this degree on a part-time/distance basis.

3.8. Are recruiting and retention opportunities being maximized, both by the unit and the university?

Tenure-Track Faculty:

Dean Gorman has done a commendable job in recent years recruiting faculty at the Assistant Professor level in a very competitive hiring environment. Other business schools have “deep pockets” and pay extremely high salaries for freshly-minted Ph.D.s. To meet the future teaching requirements, more full-time faculty (junior and senior) will need to be hired and resources to accomplish this will be required.

It is recommended that:

- *The FBA develop and implement a faculty recruiting strategy for both junior and senior faculty due to the projected growth of the FBA.*
- *Resources to hire these faculty members be allocated to the FBA by the Vice-President (Academic).*

The Dean noted that there has been turnover of tenured and/or tenure-track faculty due to a variety of reasons. He also explained the availability of “extraordinary salary increases” should it be required to retain a faculty member. Resources will be required not only to attract but also to retain good faculty members who are frequently wooed by other schools.

It is recommended that:

- *A faculty retention strategy be developed and implemented by the FBA.*

Contractual, Sessional and Per-Course Instructors:

Duties of hiring per-course instructors are left to the Manager of Finance and Administration (a staff person) once applicants’ CVs have been vetted by full-time faculty. There seems to be little guidance given to first-time instructors – especially Per-Course Instructors. For instance, it was reported that no orientation is offered for these personnel before the academic term begins. The Manager of Finance and Administration has, however, developed a “Guideline for Instructors” handbook which is a step in the right direction.

It is recommended that:

- *An orientation session be offered before the beginning of the academic term to familiarize non-tenure track instructors with the FBA's procedures, preparation of courses, pertinent full-time faculty contacts in their areas, etc.*

3.9. Does the University supply the library resources, computing and laboratory facilities, and other resources necessary to support the undergraduate program?

Library resources seem reasonable and in line with those same resources at comparable Canadian business Schools.

The introductory I.S. course (Busi 3700) is currently taught in an unacceptable teaching environment, without the use of computers in the classroom. A computer laboratory classroom is the ideal environment for such a course.

It is recommended that:

- *Resources be allocated for a computer-equipped classroom in which to teach courses such as Busi 3700.*

Although the Business Administration Building is wireless, there are not enough electrical outlets for all laptop computers. This is but one indication that the FBA building is not adequately equipped to handle some aspects of new technology.

It is recommended that:

- *The FBA develop an Information Technology strategy that addresses hardware and software needs of the building.*

Both students and faculty gave high praise to the administrative staff who support the undergraduate program. However, the staff are currently stretched to the limit. It would seem that the Academic Program office is vastly under staffed for the volume of work it is required to perform. However, it is not known at this time what the normal ratio of such support staff to students is at other Canadian business schools:

It is recommended that:

- *A benchmarking exercise be carried out to assess the ratio of support staff to undergraduate students at other Canadian business schools to ascertain normal levels. Should the ratio in the FBA be determined to be greatly lower than the norm, additional human resources should be utilized to decrease the work load per individual.*

With the planned growth in the number of student bodies in the FBA over the next five years, the present complement of support staff will not suffice. Resources will be required to add additional staff to handle the workload.

It is recommended that:

- *If the student numbers increase as expected, additional resources be allocated to hire support staff to adequately carry the required workload.*

3.10. Is the unit fulfilling its service responsibilities to the other units?

The FBA services a large number of Memorial students not directly pursuing a B.Comm. (Co-Op) or BBA degree. Many students minor in business or take a few undergraduate courses for interest's sake. While providing courses for non-FBA students is part of being a good University citizen, there are resource implications for the FBA. Given the scarcity of resources (financial, human, and physical), the FBA should seriously assess its responsibility to provide courses to students outside the Faculty. By limiting out-of-faculty student enrollment in FBA courses to those pursuing a minor or limiting out-of-faculty students to a certain maximum number of FBA courses, the FBA could reduce its need for part-time and contractual instructors.

It is recommended that:

- *The FBA consider reducing the maximum number of courses that can be taken by non-FBA students.*

4. Graduate Programs:

The self-study guide documented the background and status of the graduate programs and provided a tentative overview of plans for the future. Postponing for the moment the new Ph.D. program, we note that the MBA program is relatively small and essentially tailored to the local market. At any one time, approximately 120 students are in the program, with graduation rates of approximately 40 per year (spread over two graduation points). We assume such a flow is consistent with the (essentially) St. John's market. Roughly half the students take the program part time, whereas the other half are full time. Faculty report that part time students, being in the workforce, bring more experience into the classroom discussions, as would be expected.

As noted in the self-study, the structure of the MBA program appears dated. The program has maintained its four-semester, 20 course structure, but recognizes the need for change consistent with more innovative and responsive structures appearing across Canada and internationally.

Such changes might provide particularly advantageous opportunities for Memorial, given its unique market situation. Traditional thirteen week formats constrain both demand for and supply to the program. On demand, such a structure limits the ability to be attractive to segments of the business/industry interests around the Province. More flexible delivery modes (e.g. shorter one- or two-week modules, once a month weekends, etc.) clearly provide the greater accessibility needed for managers/executives. Similarly expanded use of on-line capability, albeit expensive to develop, can be attractive to other potential segments.

It is recommended that:

- *The FBA review the structure of the MBA program to develop innovative and responsive structures comparable to, or better than, those elsewhere.*
- *The FBA explore a variety of delivery modes for courses in the MBA program, providing greater accessibility for clients.*

On the supply side, limitations in the existing complement constrain the FBA from investing in and servicing new opportunities. More flexible delivery modes could allow accessing highly qualified external faculty to assist in delivery. Such blended capacity is increasingly commonplace and provides cross-fertilization benefits of value both to the local faculty and the local community as the FBA goes through its longer term strategy of expanding, as well as replacing, its complement of highly qualified faculty.

It is recommended that:

- *The FBA incorporate external instructors by innovative initiatives such as visiting scholars who could deliver short segments of courses and be available for mentoring students.*

At the graduate level, the FBA has begun to develop some innovative new programs to appeal to their market. In particular, the Master of Employment Relations (MER) has met with some success. A predominantly part-time program, it has relatively low flow through and is limited in its revenue contributions to support the needs of the FBA. Nonetheless, it seems well crafted and appears to provide important value to those interested in this arena.

Overall, we gained little additional insight into specific issues either current or future as a result of our site visit. The scheduled interview with graduate students did not take place as no students appeared to be available. As a consequence, we are not aware of any specific issues on the part of MBA/graduate students. A meeting with the Graduate Studies Committee disappointingly was attended by only a single representative, a relatively new member. We will not overextend the inferences from this, and recognize at least that the MBA is undergoing redesign. We encourage this process; more comprehensive and engaged discussions will certainly ensue as it unfolds.

We also note that the tuition of this MBA program (and the other Masters offerings) is considerably lower than for comparable MBA programs in Canada. Recognizing that local market conditions should impact tuition, nonetheless it appears low and clearly impacts the ability of the FBA to provide important investments in the program to ensure participants are receiving a leading-edge degree. It could also be argued that the low tuition creates an incorrect perception of low quality among students outside of Newfoundland and Labrador who are comparing schools.

Considerable discussion during the site visit centered on the University's plan to expand by approximately 3500 seats, with roughly 1000 of those occurring within the FBA. If graduate Business programs are to assume any reasonable portion of this intended growth, then more detailed planning becomes critical. As yet, the sources of this growth are not clear. We assume that this would entail expansion of graduate, and in particular MBA/Masters, student numbers.

It is recommended that:

- *Discussions be initiated with the Senior Executive to clarify the extent to which the FBA is expected to absorb the proposed increases in graduate student numbers.*
- *The FBA develop a plan and strategy to meet the target student numbers.*

We encourage vigorous exploration of new opportunities. Flexibility in tuition structure will be important for proper market positioning of these programs and to provide much needed revenues for the FBA. The Panel could not ascertain explicit revenue-sharing structures between the University administration and the FBA. We encourage the development of such structures to provide a framework for planning and motivating the FBA to develop much needed new opportunities. We were encouraged in discussions with the Vice-President (Academic) of the importance of moving into this more innovative environment.

It is recommended that:

- *The FBA explore options for flexible tuition structures associated with new opportunities, and seek agreement from the Senior Executive on a mutually-agreeable revenue sharing structure.*

An important new initiative of the FBA is the launch of a Ph.D. program in September 2007. This program will clearly provide a boost to the research environment. The staged development, with the first cohort being in the OM/MIS group, seems a sound approach to growing this program slowly.

We have some concern that the planned growth to 20 students is very high given the faculty complement. While there are many highly-qualified, albeit early-stage, faculty, not all areas seem to have the academic depth to support the level of senior supervision required of a Ph.D. program. The reputation of the new program will hinge on success in placing well-trained graduates. In growing this program, some supporting strategies might aid in ensuring its ultimate strength and success.

It is recommended that:

- *The new Ph.D. program be monitored closely, and growth in student numbers not be allowed to exceed the capacity of the FBA to provide mentoring and guidance to those students.*

First, focus should be put on hiring a few key, senior faculty members who can provide experience in supervision and related program matters. Second, as a bridging measure, some thought should be given to targeting visiting scholars to work with both the Ph.D. students and the young faculty. We appreciate that resources are needed to execute such a strategy. Finally, in conjunction with redesign and development of programs, more innovative delivery approaches would permit the invitation of visiting faculty and yield important cross-fertilization opportunities.

It is recommended that:

- *The Vice-President (Academic) approve the hiring of a small number of senior faculty members to strengthen the FBA's ability to implement and grow the Ph.D. program.*
- *New hires should be augmented by visiting scholars, as noted previously.*

4.1. How effective is the unit in its graduate and supervision responsibilities?

The import of this question is in relation to the emerging Ph.D. program. Despite a targeted OM/MIS launch in September 2007, the FBA does not appear to have good capacity to ensure adequate Ph.D. supervision. As the program expands into other areas, as noted above, care needs to be taken in having senior supervisory capacity available.

4.2. Is the research and scholarly productivity of the unit's faculty appropriate to its graduate responsibilities?

The faculty is developing its research/productivity profile with the successful hiring of a new group of emerging scholars. It does take time and a supportive environment to ensure that these new faculty build their own research programs on which to integrate new Ph.D. students. We are confident this will happen, but in the meantime strategies to bridge supervision, as suggested above, are encouraged.

4.3. Are the graduate program's admission criteria appropriate?

Our meeting with the Associate Dean (Research)/Ph.D. Committee Chair clarified some questions regarding program implementation, including admissions. The structures appear to be sound and ensure a good start to the program.

4.4. How successful are the unit's graduate programs nationally and regionally in attracting qualified graduate students and placing graduate degree holders in professional employment?

At the full-time MBA/Masters level, neither attracting students nor placing them appears to be an issue. The admission standards are rigorous and comparable to those of other Canadian schools. For part-time students, placement is not a vital issue, and entrance requirements are consistent with those for full-time students. The nascent Ph.D. program has rigorous admission criteria, and (to date) only three of a very large (approximately 100 inquiries) applicant pool have been accepted.

4.5. How competitive are the unit's graduate programs nationally and regionally in attracting qualified graduate students and placing graduate degree holders in professional employment?

See 4.4 above

4.6. Is the curriculum sufficiently comprehensive and rigorous?

While the MBA program is in need of redesign to bring it in line with competitive programs across the country, this is an issue of pedagogy not comprehension or rigor of content. The Memorial MBA students have consistently been successful in National Case Competitions, a good measure of competitive strength and a rigorous program.

The strong interdisciplinary design of the MER program appears to be well received.

A rigorous design is also in place for the Ph.D. program, with three research methods courses and eight courses of specialization, summer research projects, and a thesis.

4.7. Are the assessment standards consistent with those used in graduate programs in Canada and elsewhere?

Yes, no concerns regarding evaluation standards were raised. Further, the Ph.D. program includes a comprehensive examination prior to entry to thesis stage; a framework consistently used in Ph.D. programs in Business.

4.8. Is financial support for students at a level appropriate for the scope of graduate education activities desired within the unit?

This question bears directly on the Ph.D. program. The design includes a well-articulated plan for research support involving research fellowships from the School of Graduate Studies, FBA support, and, finally, individual faculty/grant support. Combined, this guarantees approximately \$15,000 annually for Business Ph.D. students, which is competitive with other programs in Canada. The tuition/supplemental fee structure appears sufficient to permit this level of financial support for each incoming candidate.

MBA/Masters programs are (in effect) course-based not research-based. As such, financial support for research, consistent with other Canadian schools, does not form a part of such programs.

4.9. Does the University supply the library resources, computing and laboratory facilities, and other resources necessary to support the graduate program?

The University does appear to have in place adequate resources for the delivery of the programs. This includes the new Ph.D. program, as the approval of this program would have necessitated an analysis of the adequacy of such needs.

5. Faculty Research and Scholarship

5.1. Are the research, creative activity, and scholarship of the faculty appropriate for providing first-rate academic programs?

Student achievement and exemplary performances in national and international competitions would suggest this is the case. As noted elsewhere, however, there may be a lack of senior leadership and mentorship for bright, young faculty. This is particularly the case for the new Ph.D. program.

It is recommended that:

- *As noted elsewhere, the FBA should, with support from the Vice-President (Academic), bring senior scholars to Memorial to help mentor young faculty as well as to ensure success of the Ph.D. program. Those scholars could be senior faculty appointments, but could equally be visiting scholars or perhaps and 'executive in residence'.*

5.2. Are research facilities and library resources sufficiently supportive of faculty research?

See 4.9 above. No complaints were raised regarding research support services.

5.3. Are faculty generating external funding up to their full potential?

Fewer than half the faculty members appear to be funded (total of 19 research awards for 41 faculty members in 2004/05, c.f. 648 awards for 548 FT faculty across all units). New faculty members are beginning to improve that ratio, but mentoring and bringing in some more senior, research-active, faculty would help.

Other Universities (utilizing Indirect Research Funds by the major granting councils) have moved to providing 'Grant's Facilitators' in each of the Faculties (with some Faculties having multiple Facilitators needed for workload). Grants Facilitators can have a marked effect both on the number of grants being pursued but more importantly on the success rate. In understanding the research competencies of their own faculty, well-trained Grants Facilitators are able to recognize the need and facilitate the development of (inter-Faculty and intra-University) collaboration to strengthen applications.

It is recommended that:

- *The University, through the Vice-President (Research), work with the Dean to establish a Grant's Facilitator in the FBA.*

5.4. What role are faculty playing in the University research centres, interdisciplinary research groups and external partnerships?

While we saw little direct evidence of collaboration by individual faculty members, that may be the result of meeting with groups rather than individuals. The P.J. Gardiner Institute of the FBA has considerable expertise that can be tapped into by other members of the University community. Similarly, the Centre for Management Development offers programs and courses that are available both within the university and to the community at large.

5.5. Do faculty engage in regional, national and international organizations?

The level of activity appears to be comparable to that of other Canadian schools.

6. Faculty and Staff

6.1. How well are faculty and staff resources being used?

Existing tenured and tenure track faculty members appear fully and productively deployed in the current research and teaching demands of the Faculty. Some concern was expressed over the teaching ratio of part-time to full-time faculty, especially in respect of accreditation criteria to be met by 2011. Students do not appear to share this concern, and report the quality of teaching is quite high aside from specific concerns over content and/or delivery of two or three courses. But the Panel notes the current faculty complement does not allow adequate coverage of all core offerings required by current programs, and makes it difficult to offer the range of electives required if students are to pursue specific issues in depth. There is, therefore, a resource challenge to be met to service current program demands.

It is recommended that:

- *The faculty complement in the FBA should be increased to allow the offering of a better range of electives, and more consistent offering of core courses.*

Current program needs are not the only, or even the most urgent, resource challenge the Faculty faces. The University Strategic plan has set quite dramatic expectations for FBA growth. Resource implications flowing from the Strategic Plan have, in the Panel's view, magnified the perception of resource challenge in that a certain insecurity has developed, and there is some loss of confidence in the University's capacity to deal realistically with existing problems. (Elsewhere in this report the Panel offers some suggestions for strategies in addressing, and even capitalising on, these resource challenges.)

An urgent resource challenge is the new Ph.D. program that starts in Fall 2007. Three international candidates have been approved and a fourth candidate is expected. Funding has been arranged, jointly provided by the Faculty of Business Administration, the School of Graduate Studies and the individual Supervisors. But the Ph.D. program is projected to grow rapidly to a group of 20. It is clear that this will require new hiring. Senior appointments would seem the most appropriate both to ensure the availability of grant funding, and to provide the essential experience base and mentoring that will sustain the program especially through the launch of the second phase (See 4, 5.1).

Staff members are very clearly operating a high level of efficiency and productivity. The Panel feels, however, that there is a need to benchmark the workloads of the senior administrative staff. The Ph.D. program will impose new demands, and attention to the staff workload problem is urgent. If the Strategic Plan's growth expectations are to materialise it will be crucial to anticipate the associated increase in workloads across the entire staff.

It is recommended that:

- *The FBA undertake an exercise to benchmark the workloads of senior administrative staff with respect to comparable business schools in Canada.*
- *If the benchmarking shows that current staff levels are insufficient, new staff positions be created and integrated into the management structure of the FBA.*

6.2. Are promotion and tenure policies appropriate to the unit's mission and aspirations?

The Panel was not alerted to any problems associated with promotion and tenure policies. On the contrary, the younger faculty members were pleased with the annual review process and the opportunity it provided for feedback. Nevertheless, a mentoring process linking more experienced faculty members (including external faculty as referenced elsewhere) to tenure-track faculty would be advantageous. In addition, the growth expectations set in the Strategic Plan will likely affect the Faculty's perception and experience of its mission and shape its aspirations.

6.3. How successful is the unit in implementing University employment equity policies?

The Panel was not informed of any issues in this regard.

6.4. Are faculty and staff workloads equitable and appropriate to the unit's missions?

The Panel was not informed of any inequities in faculty workloads; however, the staff clearly is carrying a very heavy workload and there may be some instances of particularly heavy, if not inequitable, loads.

It appears that FBA Mission is well understood and, under Dr. Gorman's leadership, is widely shared across the faculty and staff. It is less clear that the Mission of the FBA is as well understood or appreciated across the University generally. In particular, the cultural and academic needs of international students, a potential growth area for the FBA, must be addressed and, if the expectation of a 25% increase is met, this service area will require special attention and dedicated staffing.

It is recommended that:

- *Recognizing that one of the key growth areas for both graduate and undergraduate students will be international recruiting, and that the FBA can be a major contributor in both areas, the University must review and enhance its mechanisms for dealing with international students. Attention must be paid not just to helping those students adjust and integrate, but to improving the cultural sensitivity of faculty and staff.*

6.5. Are administrative decisions made and administrative tasks carried out efficiently and effectively?

Dr. Gorman's leadership is clearly effective. The Dean's office is marked by its energy, productivity, and welcoming atmosphere. Students particularly commented on the high level of professionalism, and expressed real satisfaction.

Some concerns were raised by staff, however. In particular, the policy and administration of deferred exams and the manner of returning graded papers were noted as needing attention.

The Panel heard, for example, that staff members have been asked to invigilate deferred examinations without clear guidelines on who times the exam or what materials the students can have access to during the exam. Virtually all student papers come to the general office for pickup, including those from some 52 per course instructors, and that creates an additional demand on staff. The Panel also noted that policy and procedures relating to co-ordination and scheduling of part-time instructors, in which the Manager of Finance and Administration plays a key role, is an area of particular pressure.

It is recommended that:

- *Clear policy be established outlining the limits of responsibility of staff members in dealing with student issues such as the invigilation of deferred exams.*
- *The FBA management group review the process of co-ordinating and scheduling part-time instructors, and ensure that the associated workload is fairly distributed between staff and faculty.*

6.6. How does the unit rank among those in similar institutions regarding research productivity and quality, external funding, academic programs and teaching loads?

The Faculty teaching load is practised within the Collective Agreement and is within normal limits for comparable Business schools. The research productivity and funding profile of the faculty has been improving noticeably over the last few years and the Panel has confidence that an even more pronounced improvement in that profile can be expected under current recruitment policies, providing informed senior administrative support is maintained. The Panel notes that an average level of research support of \$28,000 per faculty member is healthy but also that approximately half of the faculty do not currently have grants.

7. Community Service

7.1. Is the unit fulfilling opportunities to serve the community?

No obvious issues were raised either in the self-study report or during our interviews. There are strong links between the FBA and the community, primarily through the P.J. Gardiner Institute, the Centre for Management Development, and the Center for International Business Studies. All three of these entities provide expertise and assistance both within the university and to the broader local business community, and are a considerable asset to the university and the province.

In addition, the FBA Advisory Board provides a direct link to the business community both locally and nationally. Advisory Board members who met with the Panel were thoughtful and committed, but noted that the Board might not be doing as much as it can in support of the FBA.

It is recommended that:

- *The Advisory Board become more proactive in promoting the FBA outside the university, and in working in support of FBA goals within the university.*

7.2. Is the unit, where appropriate, effectively introducing students to professional community service opportunities?

It is not clear if this is the case, although the co-op program places students directly into the workplace and the part-time MBA candidates are typically already working in the community. Hence many students will be in environments where community service opportunities will be available and likely encouraged.

To some extent, however, the focus of the FBA in preparing its best students for a variety of business competitions may reduce the amount of effort spent on introducing students to community service options. We would not, however, recommend that resources and focus be taken away from the student competitions, as they are clearly a vital part of the culture of the FBA and of raising the national and international profile of the Faculty and the University.

8. University citizenship

8.1. Does the unit effectively reinforce the goals of other units?

As noted above, the outreach arms of the FBA provide services to other units of the university, including management training and advice on business development. Those services are valuable, but may not be as widely used as they could be. In part, that may be because their abilities and skills are not as well known in other units as they should be.

It is recommended that:

- *The outreach units of the FBA be more proactive in raising awareness of their abilities among the general university community. They might, for example, consider presentations to Faculty Councils, meetings with Heads or Deans, development of web or print material highlighting examples of success stories.*

8.2. Do its members encourage and contribute to interdisciplinary activities?

There are two primary examples of interdisciplinary cooperation in programs – the MER program and the Joint Degree of Bachelor of Science with a Major in Computer Science, and Bachelor of Commerce (Co-op). In addition, various faculty members are involved in interdisciplinary activities, although the full extent was difficult to assess as not all of the faculty C.v.'s addressed this subject.

8.3. Should it apply its efforts and resources in new or different ways in order to enhance its role within the university?

Yes, to the extent that the university community should be made more aware of what the FBA can do for it. However, resource reallocation will be very limited unless additional resources are identified.

9. University Support

9.1. Is the unit receiving adequate resources from the University at large?

The budget of the FBA is barely sufficient for existing programs. Cost per degree awarded (\$18.4K; 2004-05 data) is the lowest of all units except Education. Growth cannot happen without increased resources, including space and personnel. That issue has been addressed earlier with respect to the expectation that the FBA will be able to help the University meet its growth targets.

The Panel recognizes that we have not seen the budgets of other units, all of which may be in similar circumstances. Nevertheless, we recommend:

It is recommended that:

- *The University explore all possible avenues for increasing the funding available to the FBA. Those mechanisms might include premium tuition charges for new or realigned programs and other ways of increasing revenue from external sources.*

9.2. Are its facilities adequate? Attention should be paid to space, equipment, computing, laboratory and library resources.

Space is at a premium, not unlike for other units on campus (and at many other universities). The way in which classes are scheduled is a contributing factor, in that Friday is kept free for unscheduled meetings for group work. While this is not unusual for schools of business, it creates space management problems. Using the normal university timetable would increase teaching capacity by 20%, although it would not address the lack of office space. Using a five-day timetable would also facilitate interaction with other units by making it easier for students from outside business to take business courses and vice-versa. However, the Panel also recognizes the value of having a day in which no regular class activities are scheduled.

It is recommended that:

- *The FBA review its timetabling policy and consider scheduling courses in a manner more consistent with the timetable used in other units. Unscheduled time could still be built in by various mechanisms such as including slots for 'labs' or 'seminars'.*

9.3. Is it adequately staffed?

Issues of staffing have been mentioned elsewhere (6.1, 6.4). The Panel was impressed by the professionalism and commitment shown by staff members, evidenced in part by their high turnout for a meeting with the Panel and their responsiveness to issues raised with them. Staff members articulated clearly and effectively that they are operating at capacity, and are very uneasy about the prospect of being asked to take on more responsibility (i.e. with respect to growth targets) without additional personnel and resources. IT staff are particularly stretched, and unable to keep up with the demands for IT support and training.

Staff members were also unanimous in agreeing that the Manager of Academic Programs, who is doing a stellar job, is overwhelmed by the volume of work directed at her. (see 3.9). The Manager of Finance and Administration may also be carrying a higher load than normal, in part because that position takes considerable responsibility for management of part-time and contractual instructors (e.g. scheduling courses, hiring, orienting...) (see 6.5).

It is recommended that:

- *The benchmarking exercise recommended in 3.9 include the workload associated with the Manager of Finance and Administration.*

9.4. Does the reporting structure ensure managerial efficiency and administrative effectiveness within the unit?

Staff felt generally well informed, and seemed to be working in a collegial environment. No issues were raised with respect to reporting structures. However, the Panel noted evidence of a lag in the work of some committees, arising, we were told, from outstanding pedagogical and methodological issues. Lack of clarity of the mandate of the committees (e.g. the role of the Graduate Studies Committee with respect to the new Ph.D. program) contributed to their slow progress, despite the willingness to collaborate in bringing such debates to well informed closure. Greater efficiency will be increasingly important with the growth pressures the FBA faces. The Panel also recognized that the FBA is quickly moving to an Area Coordinator structure. As the Faculty grows (as per University planning) and extends its mandate (e.g. the new Ph.D. program), an Area Coordinator structure will undoubtedly provide for more effective and responsive planning.

It is recommended that:

- *Clearly articulated guidelines and well-defined mandates be developed for all Committees of the FBA, and that all committee members be made aware of those materials when they join a committee.*

10. Plans, Goals and Resource Allocation:

10.1. Are the objectives of the unit appropriate to the mission of the University?

Yes, particularly with respect to outreach and support of the provincial economy.

10.2. Is the unit trying to do too much?

The FBA is stretched at the moment; however, the only area in which they may be overextended is the new Ph.D. program. However, taking on any additional responsibilities, as has been mentioned elsewhere, might clearly be beyond the unit's current capacity.

10.3. If the unit has made requests for additional resources, which requests does the Panel support and why?

The Panel was interested to hear that the FBA has identified a donor willing to provide a significant part of the cost of building expansion, but that the provincial government has elected not to provide the matching funds necessary to secure the donation. This is an incredible opportunity that must be pursued.

It is recommended that:

- *The University continue to pursue, actively and aggressively, the matching funds necessary to facilitate the building expansion*
- *The FBA Advisory Board become more proactive in working with the University to assist in this process.*

10.4. How might the unit's resources be redistributed to realize its goals and those of the University?

It is not clear that redistribution would have any positive effect. The Panel did not identify any areas where there were surplus or poorly used resources, with the possible exception of the timetabling strategies raised elsewhere.