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General Business

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APRC 1997-1998

section 1 of 1

97-98

General Business
Program Evaluation
November 5, 1997

Section One: Overview of the General Business Program

The General Business associate degree program was initially offered in 1994 when Ferris changed from the quarter to the semester system. The purpose of the program was to offer a two year degree program for career exploration for students interested in the business area but uncertain as to a specific major. It was expected that most students would transfer to a four year program in business after their career objectives were clarified. It was also expected that this program would offer a strong associates degree in business for those students desiring a two year terminal degree in a non-specific business area.

The General Business associate degree program includes the business core for the College of Business, thus making this program 100% transferable to any baccalaureate degree in the College of Business. It also means that there is not one course being specifically offered to the students in this program. While this makes for a challenging program, it serves its purpose well.

Prior to 1994 an associates in Diversified Business was offered which served the same purpose. However, the Diversified Business Degree offered under the quarter system was substantially revised under the semester system and was given the new name of General Business to reflect that change.

Presently, it has been the experience of academic advisors that students are using this program for the following purposes:

1. career exploration and clarification
2. as a strong terminal degree in a non-specific business program
3. for financial aid purposes
4. as an additional degree.

Section two: Graduate Follow up Survey of the General Business Program

Due to the low number of graduates at this time (8 graduates as of June 1997), no survey was done.

Section three: Employer Follow up Survey of the General Business Program

Due to the low number of graduates and the even lower number who immediately enter the workforce, none was done.

Section Four: Student Evaluation of the General Business Program

Student evaluation of the program shows consistently high marks in most areas surveyed. Especially high was the global question (number 18) of "Overall, does the General Business program meet your needs?" The average score on this question was 9.13 out of 10, with 97.5% of all respondents scoring 8 out of 10 or higher.

Although still scoring 8 out of 10 or more on the average, the questions with the lowest scores were 7, 8, and 9. Number 7 with an overall average score of 8.2, asks "Are the classes available as needed?". It is not surprising that part-time students scored this question slightly lower with a 7.5. What is surprising is that according to one student comment, a strength of the General Business Program is that second year General Business students may register before most third year baccalaureate students.

Questions 8 and 9 deals with academic advising. Question #8 asks if advisors are well informed about the General Business Program. While still scoring quite high, question 8 scored comparatively low with an average of 8 out of 10. From one comment, it was suggested that her academic advisor was not aware that the 2 year General Business Program qualified for financial aid under the TIP program. Her implication was that this was advising that was done before she entered the College of Business, perhaps in orientation or while in the College Arts and Sciences. ^S

Question #9 asked if advisors were well informed about other business programs. It again scored a relatively low average of 8 out of a possible 10. What is surprising about this score is that a number of comments referred to the "helpful advisors".

Scoring the absolute lowest, at 5.2 out of 10 was question 17, "Are books available at a reasonable cost?". Since no other financial questions were asked, we have no question to legitimately compare this to. While it the lowest scoring question, we cannot tell if this is unreasonably low.

Among student comments reference was most frequently made to computers and the library. It was felt that the library and at least one computer lab should be made available 24 hours per day. It was also felt that electives should be eliminated and required courses on computers added.

The biggest problem with this survey was contacting students who never share one class together. Written surveys were mailed out in May of 1997, but only three were returned and one of those was not usable. Phone surveys were made in the fall of 1997. However the problem here is the need to simplify the survey for phone use, the lack of time for students to think about and reply to the request for comments, and finding the students at home to answer the questions.

Section five: Faculty Perceptions of the General Business Program

Section six: Advisory Committee Perception of the General Business Program

Due to the fact that the General Business Program is based on the College of Business core, there is no advisory committee to survey.

Section seven: Labor Market Analysis for General Business Graduates

A study of the placement of General Business graduates in the labor market would be difficult at best, and more than likely impossible due to the small number of graduates and the high number that continue their education with a baccalaureate degree. The placement of these students would not truly reflect the General Business degree, but the baccalaureate degree that they finished after the General Business Program.

Section eight: Evaluation of Facilities and Equipment

The majority of General Business Program courses are housed in the College of Business. The building itself is modern and well kept. Equipment used in the program is consists of computers, overheads, films, videos and the library..

Students rate the instructional equipment at 8.35 out of a possible 10. This placed the rating of facilities slightly below the average rating of 8.38. Comments that the students made were more enlightening. Students complain that some of the computers in the labs are to slow and that at least one computer lab should be open 24 hours a day. It is also suggested that the library should be open 24 hours each day.

Faculty have had to limit assignments and instruction due to lack of equipment. Rooms are not permanently set up to use computer presentations received "free" from publishers. Arranging for portable units to be sent to classrooms is time consuming and difficult as software and computers must coordinated to assure efficient use of the programs. These arrangements often need updated as equipment and software constantly change. This "free" software contributes to the high cost of textbooks that the students complain about.

Access to Internet for faculty and students is slow, at best, and many times impossible. Asking students to use the internet for research often makes the cost outweigh the benefits due to excessive amount of time needed to do the assignment.

Section nine: Curriculum Evaluation of the General Business Program

Section Ten: Enrollment Trends of the General Business Program

Enrollment in the General Business Program in 1992/93 and 1993/94 was low. But 1994/95 saw a dramatic increase in enrollment which has grown steadily ever since. According to the Ferris State University Fact Book 1996-97 and the Office of Institutional Studies enrollment figures for the years 1992 through 1997 are as follows:

1993/94	---	12 students
1994/95	---	83 students
1995/96	---	119 students
1996/97	---	123 students
1997/98	---	148 students

These figures do not include those students that were previously enrolled in the Diversified Business Program, the forerunner of the General Business Program. These figures are as follows:

1992/93	---	28 students
1993/94	---	13 students
1994/95	---	5 students
1995/96	---	1 student

There is limited information available on student retention in the General Business Program. What is available examines first time college students. Of these students it appears that about 50% of all first time General Business students re-enroll at Ferris for their second year. Of the students who re-enroll for the second year, approximately 70% stay in the General Business Program. The rest transfer to other programs at Ferris. The following figures give the exact numbers according to the Office of Institutional Studies.

First Time, Full Time Students in General Business

	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96
Fall Enrollment	7	52	49
Total retained at Ferris	5	24	25
Retained in General Business	3	18	17
Retained in other programs	2	6	8

Enrollment in the General Business Program is expected to increase as the percentage of high school students who enroll in colleges increase. Two year programs are a logical choice of not only the undecided student who is being forced into college because the job market requires a higher education but also the open enrollment student who is uncertain of their chances for success. This program offers a degree with out the stress of four years of academic study, thus giving the marginal student more hope of success while still providing an effective building block to a four year degree in business. Thus, as more education is required in the job market we can expect more students to start their college careers in two year degree programs.

Section Eleven: General Business Program Productivity and Costs

Cost for the General Business Program are one of the lowest in the Department of Management. According to the Office of Institutional Studies, average cost per student credit hour in this program in 1995/96 was \$93.83. This is due to the fact that this program requires so many introductory courses which are often taught by low cost, part-time instructors.

Since the state of Michigan resident tuition is \$160.00 per credit hour or \$1904.00 for full time tuition per semester, student tuition covers the entire cost of the program with tuition money to spare. Elimination of this program would actually cost Ferris State University money.

In addition to tuition revenues, Ferris State University and the College of Business also receive money from the state of Michigan to spend on College of Business because the program has many minority students in the General Business Program.

Section Twelve: Conclusions of the General Business Evaluation

The mission of Ferris State University is to "be a national leader in providing opportunities for innovative teaching and learning in career-oriented, technological and professional education." The General Business Program was developed "to offer a two year degree program for *career exploration*" and to "offer a strong associates degree in business for those students desiring a *two year terminal degree* in a non-specific business area." Both purposes of the General Business Program are career oriented, require technological knowledge in computers, accounting and statistics, and lead to a profession in business. Programs like the General Business Program are the basis of what Ferris State University has been built.

Ferris State University's General Business Program offers a very "visible" entry level program that many high school guidance counselors can enthusiastically recommend to the unsure or marginal student. Unlike the community colleges, Ferris' General Business Program's credits are 100% transferable to any baccalaureate program in Ferris' College of Business.

The quality of the program is unquestionable, as these courses must not only satisfy the needs of the General Business Program, but also every other program in the College of Business. As a result these courses are constantly monitored by program evaluations of every other program in the College of Business.

Demand for this program, as illustrated by "Section Ten: Enrollment Trends", has rapidly developed and continues to grow. The General Business Program serves the needs of a growing number of students from the state of Michigan and the nation. It is especially important program for those who are unsure of the career path they wish to choose. It is also important to Ferris State University, as many of these students continue on to a baccalaureate in a more specialized area.

Any productivity analysis should include costs and benefits. The only cost to Ferris State University for the General Business Program is one of opportunity. Could these resources be used in a better manner? A comparison with other programs in the College of Business shows that the General Business Program is an efficient use of resources.

The benefits to our students is immeasurable. Not only does the General Business Program offer career related courses, but a chance for exploration while still earning a degree!

Section Thirteen: Recommendations

The General Business Program is an excellent addition to the programs at Ferris State University and should not only be maintained, but promoted, so that students from the state of Michigan know of the opportunity for education and exploration.

The improvements that are needed for ^{the} General Business Program are those that are needed by all the programs in the College of Business and for Ferris State University. As new technology becomes available for business, we need it at Ferris. What the students would like to see is easier access to the technology we presently have. They would like the hours our computer labs and library to be open longer hours.

The weakness of the General Business Program is in the student's perception of their advisor's knowledge of the General Business Program and other programs in the College of Business. For those that are already enrolled in the program, a special section of Introduction to Business with team teaching and extra counseling is being offered.

Appendices

Student Evaluation of the General Business Program

- _____ 1. When did you first enroll at Ferris State University?
- _____ 2. Are you presently a full time student or a part time student?
- _____ 3. Were you originally enrolled in General Business?
- _____ 4. Why did you enroll in General Business?

On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the best

- _____ 5. Would you say that the courses in the GB program apply to your career search?
- _____ 6. Do the courses have realistic prerequisites?
- _____ 7. Are the classes available as needed?
- _____ 8. Are academic advisors well informed about the GB program?
- _____ 9. Are they well informed about other business programs?
- _____ 10. Are the classes conveniently located?
- _____ 11. Are the teaching methods appropriate and teachers knowledgeable?
- _____ 12. Is tutoring available as needed?
- _____ 13. Are library resources available as needed?
- _____ 14. Is instructional equipment current and in good condition?
- _____ 15. Are textbooks and other instructional materials current?
- _____ 16. Are they conveniently available?
- _____ 17. Are they available at a reasonable cost?
- _____ 18. Overall does the GB program meets your needs?
19. Strengths of GB?
20. Needed improvements?
21. Comments?

***Student Evaluation of the General Business Program
Average Scores of All Respondents***

- _____ 1. When did you first enroll at Ferris State University?
96- 95- 94- 91- ?-
- _____ 2. Are you presently a full time student or a part time student?
full-time- 95% *part-time- 5%*
- _____ 3. Were you originally enrolled in General Business?
yes- 65% *no- 35%*
- _____ 4. Why did you enroll in General Business?
Wanted a two year nonspecific degree program - 45%
Was unsure of desired major - 22.5%
For financial aid purposes - 22.5%

On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the best

- 8.29 5. Would you say that the courses in the GB program apply to your career search?
- 8.76 6. Do the courses have realistic prerequisites?
- 8.20 7. Are the classes available as needed?
- 8.00 8. Are academic advisors well informed about the GB program?
- 8.00 9. Are they well informed about other business programs?
- 8.64 10. Are the classes conveniently located?
- 8.48 11. Are the teaching methods appropriate and teachers knowledgeable?
- 8.77 12. Is tutoring available as needed?
- 8.47 13. Are library resources available as needed?
- 8.35 14. Is instructional equipment current and in good condition?
- 8.98 15. Are textbooks and other instructional materials current?
- 9.13 16. Are they conveniently available?
- 5.2 17. Are they available at a reasonable cost?
- 9.13 18. Overall does the GB program meets your needs?
19. Strengths of GB? 20. Needed improvements? 21. Comments?

Student Comments

Strengths:

-- classroom size

--computer labs

--help in registering

The helpful advisors and the techniques of the teachers.

Being able to register for classes before most juniors in ???yr Bus. programs, getting a general overview of???? business programs before making a definite decision for a 4 yr. degree, at least getting some kind of degree if you have to drop out before you can finish your bachalors, and having a degree. To market yourself to get a summer job before your 4 yr.

Good program - glad to be in the program.

Very satisfied.

SLAs are a good idea, but need better SLA instructors.

Weakness:

--availability of office hours

Better communication between administrator's and students.

Computer are the future of business, I think electives should be replaced with CIS courses so as to get a CIS minr certificate.

Academic advisor didn't know that the General Business Program qualified for financial aid.

Burned out overhead

Losing credits when transferring to other programs.

Some computers in one of the labs is kind of slow.

All tutoring is by appointment, need a crisis center for tutoring.

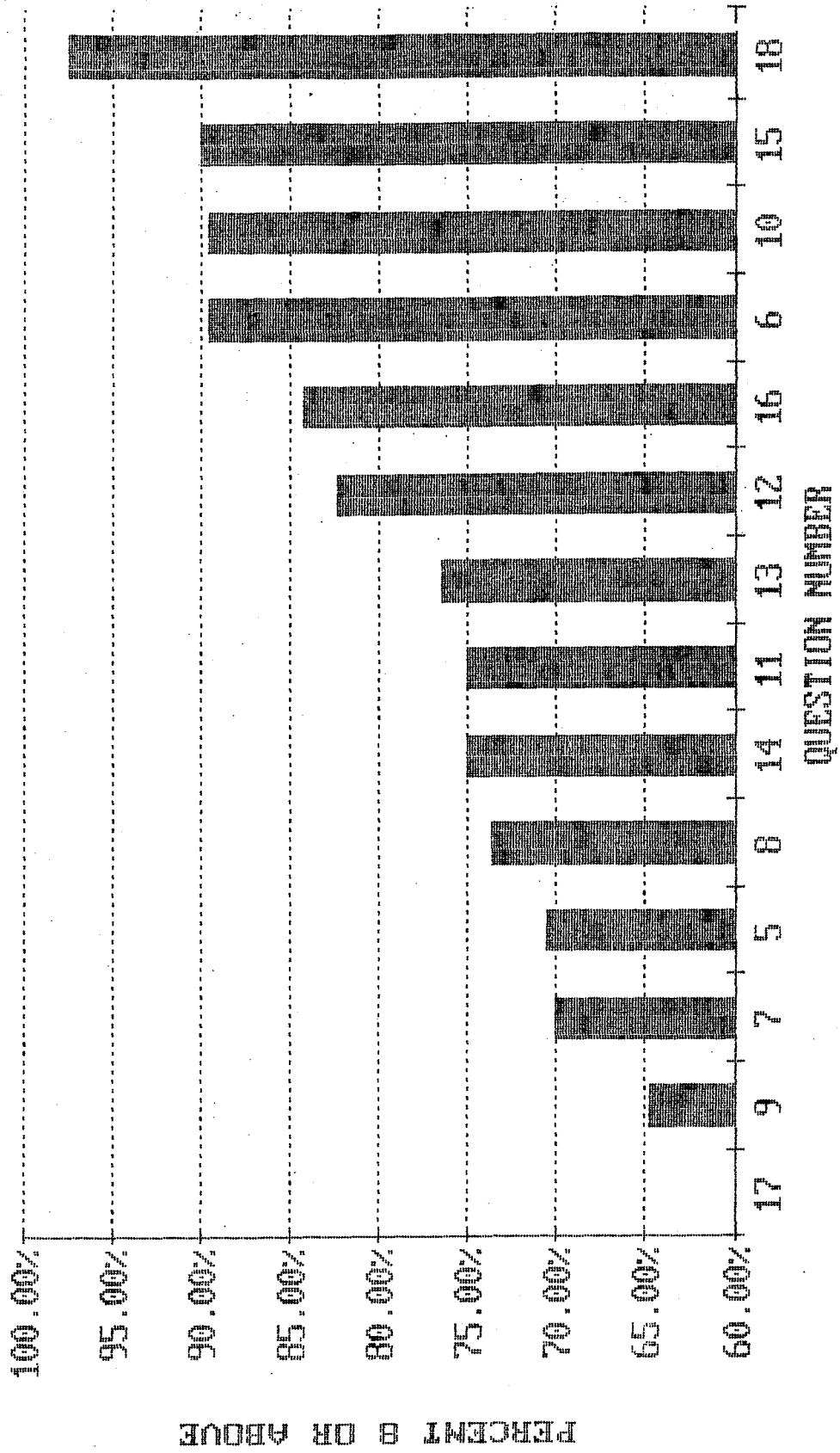
Did not have a real experienced SLA instructor in Economics. Need more SLAa in Accounting.

Had problem with Accounting instructor.

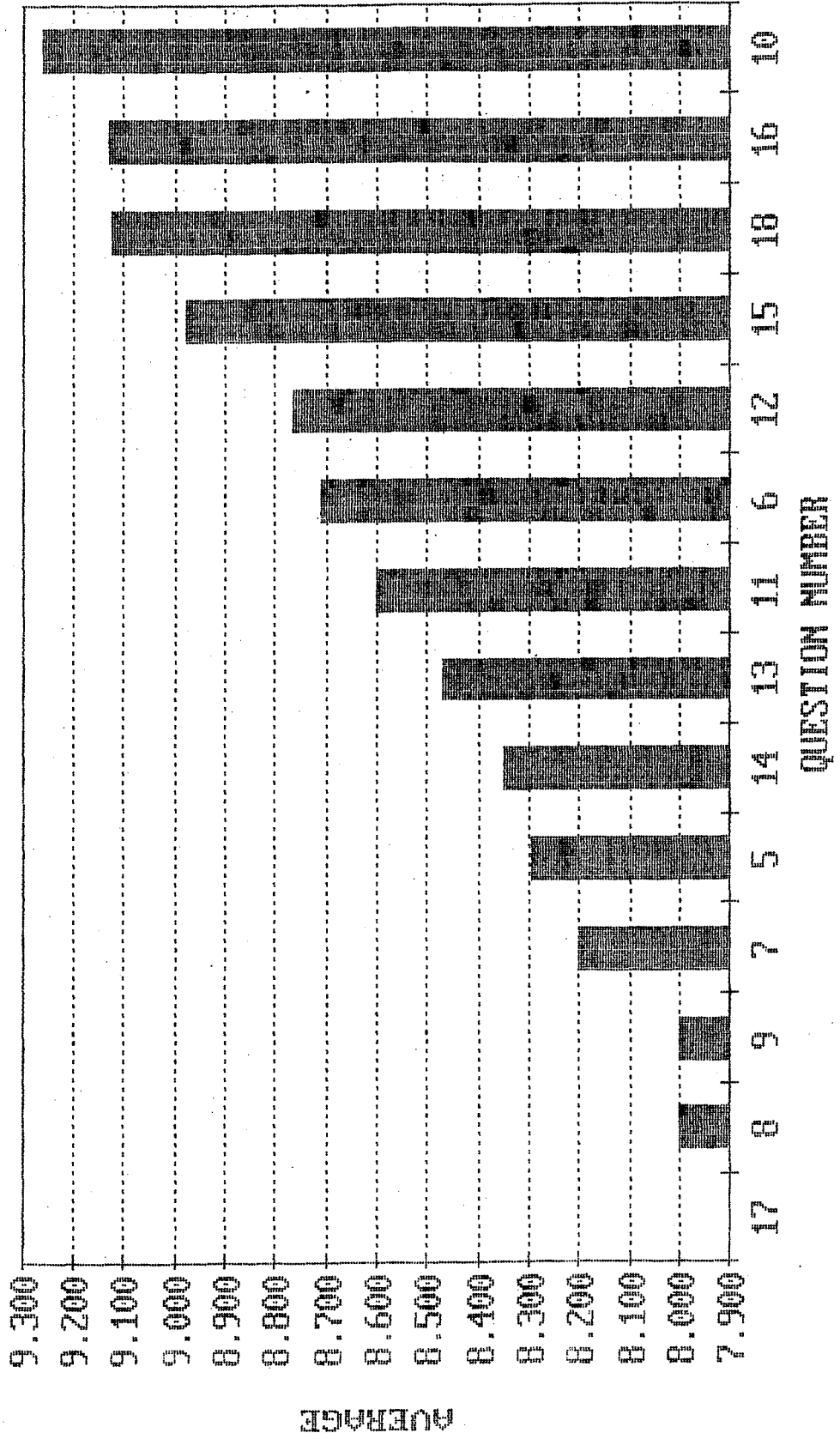
Additional Comments:

overall I am pleased with the program

**% OF ANSWERS 8 OR ABOVE
on student evaluation**



AVERAGE SCORES
on student evaluations



Ferris State University - College of Business
ASSOCIATE IN APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE

GENERAL BUSINESS - 63/64 Credits

NAME: _____ **SS#:** _____

REQUIRED	COURSE TITLE - PREREQUISITES SHOWN IN BRACKETS ()		S.H.	GRADE
COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE - 9 Credits Required				
COMM		COMM 105 Interpersonal Comm. or COMM 121 Fund. of Public Speaking - (Both require none)	3	
ENGL	150	English 1 - (None)	3	
ENGL	250	English 2 - (ENGL 150 or equivalent)	3	
SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING - 3-4 Credits Required				
Select one course from the following subject areas: ASTR, BIOL, CHEM, GEOG 111, GEOG 121, GEOL, PHSC, PHYS				
			3-4	
QUANTITATIVE SKILLS - 3 Credits Required				
MATH	115	Inter. Algebra - (MATH 110) - If MATH ACT score is 24 or higher, substitute a free elective.	3	
CULTURAL ENRICHMENT - 3 Credits Required				
Select one course from the following subject areas: ARTH, ARTS, FREN, GERM, HIST, HUMN, LITR, MUSI, SPAN, THTR				
			3	
SOCIAL AWARENESS - 9 Credits Required				
ECON	221	Principles of Economics 1 - (MATH 110 or proficiency)	3	
ECON	222	Principles of Economics 2 - (ECON 221)	3	
SOCY	121	Introductory Sociology - (SSCI 100 or satisfactory verbal score on ACT or C or above UNIV 106)	3	
GENERAL BUSINESS MAJOR - 27 Credits Required				
ACCT	201	Principles of Accounting 1 - (MATH 110 with a grade of C- or better)	3	
ACCT	202	Principles of Accounting 2 - (ACCT 201 with a grade of C- or better)	3	
BUSN	122	Introduction to Business - (None)	3	
BLAW		BLAW 301 Legal Environment of Bus. or BLAW 321 Contracts and Sales - (Both require none)	3	
ISYS	105	Microcomputer Applications - (None)	3	
ISYS	202	Principles of Information System - (None)	3	
MGMT	301	Applied Management - (Junior standing or permission of professor)	3	
MKTG	321	Principles of Marketing - (ECON 221)	3	
STQM	260	Introduction to Statistics - (MATH 115)	3	
RELATED COURSES - 9 Credits Required				
		Directed Elective - Career related course chosen in conjunction with your academic advisor.	3	
		Directed Elective - Career related course chosen in conjunction with your academic advisor.	3	
		Directed Elective - Career related course chosen in conjunction with your academic advisor.	3	
NOTICE REGARDING WITHDRAWAL, RE-ADMISSION AND INTERRUPTION OF STUDIES				
Students who return to the university after an interrupted enrollment (not including summer semester) must normally meet the requirements of the curriculum which are in effect at the time of their return, not the requirements which were in effect when they were originally admitted.				

NOTE: A 2.00 GPA is required for the major and a 2.00 cumulative GPA is required for completion of the General Business degree.