This report presents our statement of mission, department goals tied to learning standards, assignments and evaluation related to student learning outcomes, and relevant data and its interpretation related to assessment work over the 2008-09 academic year. It also provides a timeline with benchmarks for progress on assessment projected over the 2009-10 academic year. During 2008-09, the department faculty met seven times to develop the specific manner in which we would apply the college-wide learning standards in particular courses taught during this period. In addition, we needed to make adjustments to bring our part-time faculty into this process as we absorbed the pedagogical and workload challenges due to the sudden resignation of our fourth full-time faculty member very early in the Fall 2008 semester. Thus this report reflects some ongoing transition in the Economics and Business department as we continue the ongoing process of assessment.

I. MISSION STATEMENT, GOALS, LEARNING OUTCOMES

1.0 Mission

The Economics and Business Department equips students to serve and lead in dynamic settings, with a major that is distinctively broad – integrating the essential components of economics and business, and deeply engaging – challenging students to address contemporary issues with critical thinking, personal conviction, and a Christian perspective.

2.0 Goals – Learning Standards

The department has adopted the college’s six learning standards as the goals of our curriculum:

1. we want students to be actively engaged intellectually throughout contemporary society
2. we want students to understand issues related to the research process, and the thoughtful and appropriate use of various technologies and research methods to support that endeavor.
3. we want students to demonstrate strong writing and oral communication skills
4. we want students think critically from disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives
5. we want students to think and act within a distinctly Christian orientation
6. we value students to value diversity across a range of perspectives in their dialogues

2.1 Active Societal Engagement (ASE)

The EB Department wants its students be lifelong learners, demonstrating the skills, attitudes, commitments, and sense of Christian vocation that enable them to be active thinkers, engaged creatively in the particular societal contexts and communities they enter upon graduating from Westmont.

During the past year, ASE was assessed in various written and oral assignments using this 3-part rubric.
1. How well did the assignment INTRODUCE ideas about how a given issue or topic might be viewed or relate to specific communities and/or constituents in society at-large?

_____ It was clearly introduced, well-articulated, and specific to the group(s).
_____ It was somewhat introduced, but needs better clarity and specificity.
_____ It was not introduced at all, was unclear, and not specifically defined.

2. How well were CHRISTIAN VALUES applied/associated/linked to the topic or issue?

_____ Values were well thought-out, specific, and appropriate for the topic or issue.
_____ Values were only initially utilized, and need to be better developed or thought-out.
_____ Values were NOT used at all, or were simply casual clichés out of context.

3. How well were the range of topics and controversies about this topic or issue SYNTHESIZED by the student, drawing upon both the introduction’s breadth + depth, and the values perspective?

_____ The synthesis was thoughtful, direct, specific, and comprehensive in scope.
_____ The synthesis had some good starting points, but needs more work.
_____ There was NO demonstrated synthesis of the societal and values dimensions.

2.2 Research + Technology (RT)

The EB Department wants students to demonstrate consistently thoughtful reflection on the content-value and process of research, and the ethical issues associated with executing original research and the relative appropriateness of sources.

During the past year, RT was assessed by requiring students to provide a “Research Rationale” (RR) for all projects, writing assignments, and oral presentations that include outside research sources and methodologies. The RR is becoming a common element of all student-researched assignments. Faculty prime student thinking about the RR component by class discussions on fundamental differences between wikipedia.com, related blogs, and online-community postings, compared to true news sources, refereed journals, books, edited articles, and other professionally-edited information.

The RT learning standard is being assessed through the RR using this 4-part rubric:

1. How well did the one-sentence INTENTION address the given research and sources utilized?

_____ The intention clearly addressed models, processes, and data/sources.
The intention somewhat addressed the research and sources, but needs work.

The intention did not address the basic issues of the research and sources.

2. How well did the students cover the RELIABILITY and VALIDITY of the research?

BOTH validity and reliability were well-covered and understood.

Validity and/or reliability were touched on, but need better synthesis.

Understanding of BOTH validity and reliability is seriously lacking.

3. How well did students demonstrate understanding about the ETHICAL ISSUES involved in the research, including: privacy issues, over-reliance on one or a small number of citations, veracity of given sources and/or citations, and the differences between primary vs. secondary data/sources?

The ethical issues are well-articulated, broad in scope, and understood.

The ethical issues are NOT well-articulated, sufficiently broad, and understood.

4. How well did students understand the LIMITATIONS of the research methods and sources?

The limitations were clearly enumerated, and ideas for remedies were clear.

Some limitations were introduced, but the full scope was not addressed.

The limitations were NOT addressed at all.

2.3 Written + Oral Communication (WOC)

The EB Department wants students to be able to organize and formulate a well-defined process by which to think critically about a wide range of issues within the various fields of economics and business, and to be able to draw upon and bring to this process a decidedly interdisciplinary perspective.

During the past year, WOC was assessed using the I-M-A-C heuristic (an example is provided in Appendix 1) as a 4-part rubric:

1. How well did the student clearly define and articulate the core ISSUE and why it is relevant?

The issue is very clearly presented.

The issue is NOT clear.

2. How well did the student articulate the MODEL for this issue and thesis-evaluation?

The model is very well-articulated.
The model is NOT well-articulated.

3. How well did the student perform the requisite qualitative and quantitative ANALYSIS?
   _____ The analysis was detailed, comprehensive, appropriate, and synthesized.
   _____ The analysis had some good components, but needs additional work.
   _____ The analysis was poorly performed and unacceptable.

4. How well did the student develop a CONCLUSION, implications of such, and the logical extensions of the conclusion, and any subsequent decision(s) as a result of the process?
   _____ The conclusion was very strong, well-developed, with good extensions.
   _____ The conclusion had some good points, but must be further developed with extensions.
   _____ The conclusion was entirely lacking, poorly-developed, and must be re-worked.

2.4 Critical Thinking (CT)

The EB Department wants students to combine a variety of discipline-specific reasoning abilities in attempts to address issues or answer questions, to frame appropriate questions, think abstractly, test key terms and categories of analysis, understand the epistemological orientations of the discipline, examine one’s own assumptions, and present personal judgments in light of all these factors.

During the past year, CT was assessed using two distinct components: articulation and process, clearly delineated in course syllabi, and discussed in class in the context of assignments. Following is the 2-part rubric for CT:

1. How well do students ARTICULATE relevant theory and principles relating to E+B, by identifying, summarizing, and explaining?
   _____ Students articulate ALL of these.
   _____ Students articulate MOST of these.
   _____ Students articulate SOME of these.
   _____ Students articulate FEW of these.
   _____ Students articulate NONE of these.
2. How well do students PROCESS theory and principles through synthesis, critique, context, evidence, evaluation, and application?

_____ Students process these VERY WELL.

_____ Students process these WELL.

_____ Students process these in a PASSABLE manner.

_____ Students process these POORLY.

_____ Students DO NOT process these AT ALL.

One area of particular focus during the 2009-10 year will be developing similar rubrics for measuring student outcomes with respect to the two remaining learning standards, Christian Orientation (CO) and Diversity of Perspectives (DP).

3.0 Student Learning Outcomes

3.1 ASE Outcomes

Various written assignments have been reviewed from Fall-2007, Spring-2008, Mayterm-2008, China-2008, and Fall-2008 re: a) outside speakers, b) a provocative/controversial articles in various classes, and/or c) site-visits to a company, agency, or other organization. These were reviewed and discussed among faculty using the 3-part ASE rubric. In addition, the Spring-2008 and Spring-2009 Senior Seminar papers continue to be reviewed using the 3-part rubric, and discussed by faculty as a benchmark for student competency in ASE. Through a written assignment in the Senior Seminar, an initial assessment was made of student attitudes and commitments to a Christian calling to the realm of E+B and their understanding of corporate social responsibility. The papers done at the end of the course are being assessed for progress in their societal and intellectual engagement within the ASE rubric.

3.2 RT Outcomes

While no formal “Research Rationale” (RR) was in place during this past academic year, various student research papers were reviewed and discussed re: students’ understanding of the RR-oriented issues related to research and technology. Many summary statements in existing student work do reflect on ethical issues about data, analysis, and inferences drawn from research and the use of various technologies. Numerous examples came from EB-17 Business Research & Forecasting, where nearly 60 students wrote 1-page synopses for regression analysis on each of six unique data-sets. The “Inferences” sections will become supplemented with the RR in the upcoming Spring-2009 term. Similar research “synthesis” by students was reviewed and discussed from other research assignments during the past academic year. EB faculty are discussing the best places to incorporate the 4-point RR rubric within EB courses.
3.3 WOC Outcomes

A wide range of writing, presentation, and debate assignments were reviewed in light of the “IMAC” 4-point WOC rubric. In addition, general organization and structure of the finished product for student written work was reviewed and discussed. The expected outcomes include both substantive content of student work, and the overall quality of the physical product (paper, presentation with/without slides, debate processes).

EB faculty agreed to several additional organization-structure outcomes for the upcoming academic year:

- Students will utilize a standardized MEMO format for shorter 1-2 page assignments
- Students will complete assignments in clearly-defined, reviewable stages (where applicable)
- Students will not use “first person” language in writing assignments
- Students will employ creativity in addressing the assignment’s topic/issues
- Students will utilize bold face headings to show clear flow from topic to topic

Numerous written assignments were reviewed and discussed among faculty, noting student work that demonstrated little of these criteria, some of these criteria, and most/all of these facets throughout. Written assignment examples from students over the last few years now serve as the basis for moving forward with student demonstrations of WOC competency. In addition, the Spring-2008 and Spring-2009 Senior Seminar papers will continue to be reviewed as a benchmark for how well graduating students write and present.

Targeted outcomes for student presentations and debates include:

- utilize the standard opening Overview-Introduction format
- have good eye contact and stand still, demonstrating poise and confidence
- not using “first person” in their monologue
- employing creativity in addressing the assignment’s topics/issues
- varying intonation and expression appropriate to the topic-flow
- specifically noting from where they are drawing upon outside sources

Oral presentation and debate assignments will continue to be reviewed and discussed among faculty, noting student work that demonstrates little of these criteria, some of these criteria, and most/all of these facets throughout. In certain cases (e.g.: new venture business-plan presentations) student presentations will be video-recorded for review by the faculty, and also for review with the students to develop a systematic feedback process. Presentation examples from students over the last few years will continue to serve as the basis for existing student demonstrations of competency. In addition, the Spring-2008 Senior Seminar presentations will continue to be reviewed and discussed as a good benchmark for student competency.

3.4 CT Outcomes

Various written assignments from numerous classes were reviewed relative to the 2-point CT rubric. The on-going focus will be on students demonstrating understanding of how different
approaches to issues and different methodologies are configured and utilized, along with the role of making assumptions and identifying issues. Faculty will continue to use the 2-point rubric to assess how well students can then articulate these in the CT thought-process.

II. DATA and INTERPRETATION

1.0 Overview

The EB faculty met seven times during the 2008-2009 academic year to review and discuss student work, and to further refine the department-wide rubrics for assessing the learning standards. Meetings also included efforts to further hone the rubrics, and to review and discuss examples of student work presented by faculty.

The focus included:
- Noell leading a review of ASE from various student papers, including Spring-2008 Senior Seminar, noting the relative scale of student competency. As a consequence, for the Spring 2009 Senior Seminar course, students were supplied with more explicit guidelines for their topics paper. As a result, the papers reflected more of what we had envisioned and anticipated.
- Newton leading a review of RT from Business Research + Forecasting, Corporate Finance, Investments + Portfolio Mgmt, and Applied Mgmt Science, all of which explicitly deal with the role of quantitative student research, including the "Conclusion", "Inferences", and "Ideas for Further Research" sections of student work, as the current transition into the formal "Research Rationale" in the upcoming academic year
- Morgan leading review of the practical application of the WOC rubrics for EB 012 and EB 104
- MacCulloch leading additional review of the WOC rubric for both written work and oral discussions-presentations and CT in Business Law
- Odell noted the formatting and structure of existing homework/case studies in Accounting Principles and upper division Accounting electives, and his moving students toward more standardized organization and structure for written assignments in the upcoming academic year, including use of the MEMO for short 1-page summaries
- The Spring-2008 Senior Seminar papers and numerous initial editorial papers were reviewed for WOC and CT
- Noell reviewed EB 103 research papers for CT
- Newton reviewed the EB-017 case assignments for CT, RT, and WOC; and Memo format and the EB-131 papers for WOC and RT; and Memo format
- Stone reviewed EB-180 projects (online community group) and case studies for WOC and CT
- Bradford reviewed initial work in EB-160 for WOC and CT
- Newton reviewed EB-192 industry-team projects, EB-191 venture-team business plans, and EB-138 papers for WOC and RT
- Noell reviewed EB-135 research papers for CT and ASE
- Newton reviewed EB-018 forecast models for RT and CT and Memo format
- Noell reviewed EB-011 book review papers for ASE and CT
- Morgan reviewed pre-post test (TUCE) items for EB-012 for CT and ASE
Morgan reviewed progress on CT based on describing and applying macro models in EB-137

2.0 Other Assessment Data

The department is excited about continuing to develop and maintain a valuable cache of both qualitative and quantitative data on these common assessment methods, and meeting regularly to discuss the effectiveness of various aspects of the program in light of both the qualitative and quantitative data analysis. In addition, the department will review and discuss its existing cache of assessment-related data, including:

- 1994 alumni survey
- 2002 alumni survey
- Numerous E+B student awards for external competitions and events
- Dozens of top graduate schools/programs completed by E+B alumni
- Exit data from China Mayterm-2008 program
- 17 start-up business plans screened + invited to national events (1990-present)
- F-2003 student business plan awarded 1st place in national MECC event, Indianapolis
- More than 55 successful start-up businesses launched by E+B alumni
- Student journals and readings-commentaries from Senior Seminar courses
- Student journals and readings-commentaries from student Practicum placements
- Dozens of service-learning projects and outreach initiatives involving E+B students
- Newton utilized a standardized assessment survey in EB-18 and EB-132 Spring-2008 classes

3.0 2009 Alumni Survey

The March 2009 EB alumni survey provides the department with a rich database of more than 50 variables from over 400 alums spanning the 1960s through the class of 2008. A comprehensive multivariate analysis summary was prepared for the Westmont Board of Advisors in April 2008. There are numerous strong indicators that the EB program has consistently accomplished significant components of its departmental learning standards, as alumni responded favorably to multiple questions addressing issues of well-developed critical thinking skills, the integration of a distinctive Christian perspective in business decision making, a passion for life-long learning in their professional development, and a continued pursuit of being actively engaged in a wide range of societal topics, related to, and outside of, their chosen EB fields.

Four areas where alumni wanted to see further development of the EB department included:

- stronger/better/more formal connections between the EB department and EB alums
- stronger/better/more formal connections between EB alums worldwide
- more hands-on use of information technology, computers, software in courses, and
- more “case-study” direct applications of course content to contemporary issues.

These four areas serve as an excellent benchmark for the department to implement updates to its strategic plan, aimed at strengthening student experiences in these four areas during their time at Westmont, and in the years after graduation. The EB department will focus on specific strategies
to address these areas, with a target of seeing measurable improvement in student/alum responses in these areas over the next 4 years.

### III. TIMELINE AND BENCHMARKS

The EB timeline begins with the current Fall-2008 semester and includes Spring-2009. The second stage goes from Summer-2009 through to the start of Fall-2010, adding in the remaining two standards. The following matrix of faculty, courses, and emphasized learning standards began with EB reviews and discussion during Spring-2008. The timeline includes very specific discussion with students about the department’s learning standards and the expected outcomes unique to the targeted assignments within each course. At the midterm of each semester, faculty meet to review: a) the process of dissemination of the EB learning standards with students in all courses, and b) initial midterm examples of student work.

#### 1.0 First Stage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Learning Standards</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Start Spring 2008</strong></td>
<td>Noell</td>
<td>EB 195</td>
<td>CT, ASE</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Morgan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newton</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crockett</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newton</td>
<td>EB 17-18</td>
<td>WC, RT</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Noell</td>
<td>EB 150</td>
<td>ASE</td>
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</table>

**End of Spring 2008**

Faculty met to assess student outcomes and discuss use of such.

**Summer 2008**

Faculty met twice to continue discussions and review of student work.

**Fall 2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Learning Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Odell</td>
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<td>Morgan</td>
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<td>EB 104</td>
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<td>Newton</td>
<td>EB 191</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EB 131</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EB 138</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Fall 2008**
EB faculty met four times to discuss assessment of student work.

**Start Spring 2009**

<table>
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<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Stone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morgan</td>
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<td>CT, ASE, WC</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Spring 2009**
EB faculty met three times to discuss assessment of student work and implementation processes with students.

2.0 Second Stage

The prior matrix of faculty, courses, and emphasized learning standards will be updated for Fall-2009 and Spring-2010 to include the addition of the two remaining EB learning standards. The timeline will reflect those courses that faculty will not only continue Stage-1 assessment, but also those courses that will be specifically focused on Christian Orientation, and the Diversity of Perspectives.

**Fall 2009**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
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<td>191</td>
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<td>MacCulloch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morgan</td>
<td>EB 011</td>
<td>CO</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EB 012</td>
<td>ASE, CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EB 104</td>
<td>ASE</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 1: Example of the IMAC-Memo format

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 11, 2008
FROM: Mary R. Student mstudent@westmont.edu
TO: Dr. Newton

Issue: Big companies are all betting that interest rates are near the bottom. Firms like A.T. & T. and Westinghouse are offering medium to long-term new bonds now that he range in yields in so wide. Last week $10 Billion in new corporate financing was issued, which is more than had been offered in some previous years. Many firms, like McDonald's, see it as a great way to fill the company coffers with inexpensive cash reserves. A.T.&T.'s decision was to retire debt with a return of principal, or roll the debt over again while rates remain low.

Method Rationale: Etc ....

Analysis-Application: Etc ....

Conclusion-Decision: Etc …