

Enlightenment of Learning and Teaching of AACSB Accreditation Standards on Business Education

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Abstract: AACSB accreditation is one of the three international quality accreditation systems on business education. The new AACSB accreditation standard promulgated in 2013 highlights the thoughts and standards of the “Teaching and Learning” module, which provides some valuable inspiration for the learning and teaching reform of business programs. Based on the AACSB accreditation standards, we can receive the overall thinking of the reform of business majors from the four aspects of objectives, process, curriculum content and effectiveness.

1. Introduction

At present, AACSB (The Association to Advanced Collegiate School of Business), EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System) and AMBA (Association of MBA) are the three major international accreditation systems of business education. Among the three accreditations, AACSB accreditation requirements are the most stringent, which may take 5-7 years for accreditation. AACSB not only attaches importance to quantitative indicators, but also pays more attention to quality assessment, emphasizing all-round evaluations such as teaching, teachers, research, management, etc. It has received a high evaluation and is recognized as the premier accreditation of business schools around the world.

Founded in 1916, AACSB is a non-profit corporation of business schools, accounting programs, corporations and other organizations devoted to improving and promoting the level of higher education in business administration and accounting. In order to ensure the continuous improvement of the quality of university business education, AACSB has continuously revised the content of the standard. Since it established its first standards for degree programs in business administration in 1919, the standards have been revised in 1991, 2003 and 2013. In addition, AACSB will update the accreditation standards and processes every year. The 2013 edition of the accreditation standard highlights the core modules of Learning and Teaching. From the perspective of AACSB accreditation, this paper provides some valuable inspirations for business education by interpreting the thoughts and standards of the teaching and learning.

2. Structure of AACSB Accreditation Standards

In April 2013, AACSB officially promulgated new accreditation standards and made major revisions and improvements to the original standards. The 15 standards are organized into four categories: strategic management and innovation; participants-students, faculty, and professional staff; learning and teaching; and academic and professional engagement. The new standard integrates and simplifies “Strategic Management”, increases the requirements for innovation, and sets up a separate module for “Learning and Teaching”, adding “academic “Academic and Professional Engagement” module, which expands the original three module standards into four module standards, namely Strategic Management and Innovation, as shown in Table 1.

Compared with the old standards, the new standards reflect the importance of learning and teaching. [2] In the process, on the one hand, students are encouraged to increase their knowledge through academic study, and on the other hand, they participate in professional practice to help students apply the knowledge acquired in the classroom and accumulate work experience. Students need to have good theoretical knowledge and strong ability to participate in management practice,

creating more opportunities for future career development.

Table 1 Structure of AACSB Accreditation Standards

Categories	Standards
Strategic Management and Innovation	STD1: Mission, Impact, Innovation STD 2: Intellectual Contributions, Impact, and Alignment with Mission STD 3: Financial Strategies and Allocation of Resources
Participants – Students, Faculty, and Professional Staff	STD 4: Student Admissions, Progression, and Career Development STD 5: Faculty Sufficiency and Deployment STD 6: Faculty Management and Support STD 7: Professional Staff Sufficiency and Deployment
Learning and Teaching	STD 8: Curricula Management and Assurance of Learning STD 9: Curriculum Content STD 10: Student-Faculty Interactions STD 11: Degree Program Educational Level, Structure, and Equivalence STD 12: Teaching Effectiveness
Academic and Professional Engagement	STD 13: Student Academic and Professional Engagement STD 14: Executive Education STD 15: Faculty Qualifications and Engagement

Source: AACSB accreditation standards(2013)

3. AACSB accreditation standards for Learning and Teaching

The AACSB accreditation standards for Learning and Teaching address the following five aspects.

3.1 Curricula Management and Assurance of Learning

The academic goal of the degree program is the fundamental starting point for learning effectiveness and curriculum management. The college should develop, update and improve its professional learning objectives through a complex and systematic process. Then, by designing the course content, improving the teaching methods, and improving the quality of the courses, the college can meet the learning objectives and finally evaluate whether professional learning has been achieved. Goals and manage and improve based on the results of the assessment.

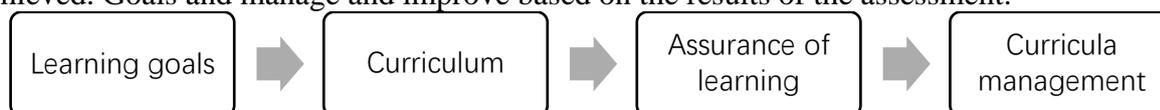


Figure 1 the process of Curricula Management and Assurance of Learning

Figure 1 depicts the process of implementing this standard. The learning objective describes the educational expectations of the degree major and defines the knowledge and abilities that can be acquired through professional study. Learning objectives are set and aligned with the mission of the college. The course management process aligns all professional programs with the mission of the college. The curriculum includes three aspects: content (theory, concept, skill, etc.), pedagogy (teaching method, teaching mode) and structure (referring to how to organize the content to create a systematic plan of teaching and learning). The course is as detailed as possible about how to promote professional learning objectives and is influenced by the mission, values and culture of the college. Based on the new development of knowledge, teachers continuously improve and revise the content, teaching method and structure of the curriculum to achieve the learning objectives. Learning effectiveness assurance is the process by which students achieve their learning objectives in their major. The college USES learning effectiveness assurance to demonstrate to outsiders, such as potential students, trustees, public officials, funders, and accrediting organizations, that the college has met its goals. Learning effectiveness assurance also helps colleges and teachers improve their majors and curricula, evaluate student achievement in achieving learning goals, and take steps

to improve their work, providing feedback and guidance to individual students. Curriculum management refers to the process and organization of the development, design and implementation of degree professional structure, organization, content, achievement evaluation, teaching method, etc. Curriculum management is conducted by gathering information on key stakeholders of the business school and considering the impact of learning outcomes, new developments in business practices and issues, and revision of missions.

3.2 Curriculum Content

The content of professional courses should be adapted to the educational mission and learning objectives of degree majors. The degree content produced through effective course management should provide a universally applicable set of learning experiences for graduates' business and management careers. The course content includes general knowledge and ability, as shown in Table 2. Combining the learning objectives with the student's situation, the major transforms these general knowledge and abilities into the desired abilities in line with the learning objectives.

Table 2 General skill areas and general business and management skill areas

Categories	Contents
General Skill Areas	Written and oral communication; Analytical thinking; Information technology; Interpersonal relations and teamwork; Diverse and multicultural work environments; Reflective thinking; Application of knowledge
General Business and Management Knowledge Areas	Economic, political, regulatory, legal, technological, and social contexts of organizations in a global society; Social responsibility, including sustainability, and ethical behavior and approaches to management ;Financial theories, analysis, reporting, and markets; Systems and processes in organizations, including planning and design, production/operations, supply chains, marketing, and distribution; Group and individual behaviors in organizations and society; Information technology and statistics/quantitative methods impacts on business practices to include data creation, data sharing, data analytics, data mining, data reporting, and storage between and across organizations including related ethical issues; Other specified areas of study related to concentrations, majors, or emphasis areas

Source: AACSB accreditation standards(2013)

3.3 Student-Faculty Interactions

To achieve learning objectives, courses should promote teacher-student and student-student interaction appropriate to the profession. Interaction between students means that students have the opportunity to complete learning tasks together and learn from each other. Teacher-student interaction means that students have opportunities to interact with teachers, especially those who are responsible for professional development, curriculum development, teaching and evaluation, and can communicate with teachers in class and after class to get guidance from teachers.

3.4 Degree Program Educational Level, Structure, and Equivalence

The structure and design of the degree program, including the time required to complete the program, is appropriate to the professional level and ensures high quality learning outcomes. The professional structure and setting of the same degree level shall be of the same gender. The school shall define and widely disseminate its policies of evaluating, rewarding and accepting transfer credits or courses from other institutions to facilitate student mobility. These policies are consistent with the mission, expected outcomes, strategies and degree programs.

3.5 Teaching Effectiveness

The college has a clear system and process to ensure the teaching effect, including the curriculum, teaching methods and so on. The college has a systematic quality assessment system, and the assessment results are part of the performance assessment of teachers and professionals. Evaluation of teaching effect includes not only student evaluation, but also continuous improvement

process. Teachers and professionals actively participate in various teaching reform projects or activities.

4. The enlightenment to the Learning and Teaching of business education

4.1 Define professional training objectives

The establishment of professional training objectives should be guided by the mission of the college. The AACSB makes it clear that high-quality business schools need to have a clear mission and put it into practice. The business schools or management schools that have been proved in clearly illustrate their university functions in their missions and reflect distinct disciplinary characteristics. This has certain reference significance to the business education of local ordinary colleges and universities. The setting and structure of professional courses should be adapted to the educational mission and learning objectives of degree majors. Combining learning objectives and students' personality differences, the major transforms the general knowledge and abilities involved in the course content into the expected abilities consistent with the learning objectives. The college should fully publicize its mission and professional training objectives to stakeholders such as teachers, students, alumni and investors, and take this as the basis for decision-making and strategy. Teachers and students should have a clear understanding of professional training objectives and combine ordinary teaching activities with professional training objectives and course learning objectives.

4.2 Strengthen the teacher-student interaction in the teaching process

The teacher-student interaction in the teaching process is an important means to achieve the learning objectives of the course. The AACSB standards require business schools to be student-centric, focused on the dynamic learning experience and engagement of students. Chinese universities are traditionally “teacher-centered”, and the teaching mode is generally dominated by the mode of teacher speaking and student listening. Business teachers should pay more attention to “learning-centered” teaching, and fully mobilize students' initiative to study independently through the flexible use of heuristic, participatory and other teaching methods, improve students' participation in the classroom, encourage interaction and sharing, and change the traditional learning mode that is well-spoken and memorized. Teachers can take students to participate in classroom discussions, assign homework that requires students to form teams to complete, etc., improve students' self-learning ability, expression and communication skills, as well as tolerance, respect, cooperation and other professional spirits.

4.3 Attach importance to the cultivation of practical ability

At present, there are still many problems in the training of business majors in China, which are more oriented to theory and less oriented to practical application. As a result, students' practical ability training is not enough, which also deviates from the training goal and positioning of business majors. The training of business professionals is mainly for commercial enterprises, which requires high practical ability. Practice ability oriented business talents to serve the regional economic development as own duty, by national and local regional economic development on the basis of the need for talent, combined with the student individuality difference, highlight the characteristics of the school and the professional ability, strengthen the dock with the enterprise, industry, joint training business, strong ability in order to cultivate the practice of elite talent..

4.4 Continuous improvement of teaching effect

The school encourages teachers to take an active part in the teaching reform, and explores the reform of teaching methods, teaching means, teaching mode and other aspects to improve the teaching effect through the cooperation of professional teachers in scientific research projects related to the teaching reform. The AACSB standards require business schools to emphasize both the use of direct teaching assessment methods and the use of indirect assessment methods (such as surveys of alumni and employers) to ensure that AACSB accrediting organizations or schools look

at and improve their educational quality management system from multiple perspectives and scientifically. Business schools need to establish an effective evaluation system and regularly collect the evidence of each link in the teaching management process. These evidences are the description and statistics of the teaching quality management process of business schools, and provide the basis for the self-review and analysis of schools. Through these evidences, learning effects are analyzed and improvement measures are formulated. In addition, the business school for teaching need to establish a complete process control and information feedback system, and in a timely manner according to the feedback from teachers and students, professional training goal and course target is reasonable, the teachers and the teaching conditions are in place, adjust the teaching plan, etc., through the process management system, guarantee to ensure the quality to complete the whole teaching to achieve the target of profession fostering.

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