

ABAC GSB Freshmen's Perceptions on Expected Performance Dimensions and Learning Preferences: Implications to Curriculum, Instruction, and Institution Development

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Abstract

This research aims to build comprehensive student profiles to identify perceptions and expectations of the students enrolled in the Master programs of the Graduate School of Business (GSB) at Assumption University of Thailand. The main purpose is to establish curriculum and instructional links between what is offered and what students perceived as relevant learning experiences in the program and contribute towards increased student satisfaction in their master degree education. Self-administered questionnaires were collected from 379 incoming freshmen MBA students from February to August, 2015. The findings of the study revealed that among the performance dimensions expected by the industry from MBA graduates, the dimensions on English proficiency, ethical behavior, and effective use of IT obtained the highest means. Interestingly, timely achievement and responsibility as well as entrepreneurial spirit scored lowest while based on their profiles, the majority of the freshmen are self-employed. Likewise, the overall students' preferences on the learning processes, modalities, and learning styles indicated no marked differences of preferences of one or two of these modalities and activities. This indicates that choices are generalized and would imply the need for a variety of teaching strategies to respond to the variety of learning processes and modalities that would require appropriate learning activities. To conclude on the interface of the three areas of the study namely: the demographic profiles, the expected performance dimensions, and preferred learning processes to areas of development in graduate education - curriculum, instruction, and institution development, certain initiatives for development were recommended such as: the inclusion of a module or course on the entrepreneurship as a basic foundational course for all students enrolled at GSB to support the third dimension of the Unique Identities of an ABAC graduate which is entrepreneurial spirit and leadership; the adoption and utilization of a brain-based holistic and integrative model of the experiential learning cycle by all lecturers to provide for the use of a variety of teaching modalities and learning activities in all courses. Further it is concluded that Quality Education at any level must come from the interface of quality curriculum, quality instruction, and quality organization. These three areas are intimately interactive and interrelated to achieve the desired outcomes of higher education and realize the vision of AU in "educating intelligences and active minds to change the world."