

Master of Organization Development
Program Assessment Report
January 2007

Faculty Review of MOD Program

The behavioral faculty of the Department of Management conducted a review of both the Executive Master of Organization Development and the full-time Master of Organization Development programs, which culminated in decisions to revise the Executive MOD program and to suspend admissions to the full-time program. The changes to the Executive MOD program are discussed in greater detail later in this report. The faculty recommended suspension of admission to the full-time program for the following reasons:

- Changes in the characteristics of students seeking admission to the full-time program since its advent in 1985
- Concerns over the quality and appropriateness of placement of full-time program graduates
- Inadequate financial resources to promote, administer, and operate both the executive and full-time programs

The review of the Executive MOD program resulted in significant changes in program focus, delivery, curriculum, and assessment strategy. The program's focus had evolved to an emphasis upon preparing graduates to be organization development consultants, either internal or external to an organization. The economic situation in the region demanded a change in focus in order to enhance program viability. Preparing organization development consultants is a very narrow program niche, and the declining economic situation in the region had seriously eroded that niche. The focus of the program was expanded to emphasize the preparation of graduates for leadership roles as managers as well as consultants in change initiatives.

The declining economic situation in the region also indicated that a successful program had to reach beyond the tri-state region for enrollment. Consequently, delivery of the program was changed to web-centric, i.e., approximately fifty percent of the course material was to be delivered through the use of distance education technologies. On-campus, face-to-face classes were reduced to three weekends per semester. Extensive use of Blackboard became integral to the program. Course shells with shared design elements and features were developed for all courses, and Blackboard communities were developed for both students and faculty members. The students' community provided program information, tutorials, and links to technology and other critical resources. The community also is used for orientation purposes. The faculty community provides a wide variety of on-line educational resources for use in the program's courses.

The curriculum modifications reflected a change in focus that placed greater emphasis upon preparing organizational leaders for change-related roles. Learning packages in five key business functions were added for students without formal educational preparation in business. Basic backgrounds in accounting, finance, marketing, statistics, and operations management are necessary to understand the functioning and language of business

organizations. The change in focus also appeared in topics such as statistics, which emphasized the use and interpretation of data and analyses rather than the execution of data analysis.

The faculty defined five critical foundations that underlie effective organization development:

- Emphasis upon both individual and organizational effectiveness: Successful development must recognize the inherent interdependence of individual and organizational effectiveness.
- Theoretically based: Organization development should be based upon the theories and concepts from fields related to organizational change.
- Behaviorally sound: The methods and techniques used in organization development should have demonstrated relevance to achieving the desired results.
- Empirically verified: Both organizational diagnosis and intervention effectiveness should be based upon quantitative and qualitative data.
- Social and ethical responsibility: Change leaders must act with regard for the social and ethical responsibilities associated with intervening in organizations, which in turn might affect people's lives and work.

Empirical analysis, including the topics of organizational diagnosis and statistical analysis, became the transition between the courses that provide the conceptual and theoretical foundations of organization development and the courses that cover the variety of interventions utilized in organization development. Organizational diagnosis became a specific focus of the program in recognition of its critical role in effective organization development. Previously, diagnosis had received considerably less attention with greater attention having been placed upon operational topics such as survey design and data collection.

The courses on interventions were divided into three broad categories: individual and group, operations and quality improvement, and system-wide, strategic change. Although the first and last categories had been covered in previous versions of the program, interventions aimed at improving operations and quality had been ignored. Such interventions have been major forces in organizational change but have suffered from a lack of attention to OD principles in their implementation. Consequently, problems of sustainability of such interventions have emerged.

As a result of these changes, the new curriculum was developed (see attached description of the curriculum) and implemented in January 2007. The curriculum is divided into four components:

- Conceptual and theoretical underpinnings
- Empirical analysis
- Intervention strategies
- Integration and culmination

Implementation of the revised program required extensive development efforts involving the staff from IDEAL as well as ongoing meetings among the implementing faculty

members during academic year 2006-2007. These meetings have continued monthly throughout fall semester 2007.

Program Learning Outcomes

As noted previously, the program is organized into four distinct but interrelated components. The components and the associated learning outcomes are as follows:

- Conceptual and Theoretical Underpinnings
 - Students will acquire a fundamental understanding of the steps in the organization development process, the roles of consultants and change leaders in the organization development process, and the ethical issues associated with organization development.
 - Students will have a fundamental knowledge of key concepts from the fields of organization behavior, human resource management, and organization theory and strategy that underlie effective organization development efforts and know how to seek sources of additional conceptual and theoretical knowledge as needed.
- Empirical Analysis
 - Students will understand the primary forms of organizational diagnosis and be able to choose the diagnosis method that is most appropriate for analyzing an organization's situation.
 - Students will be able to formulate testable hypotheses describing an organization's situation and identify appropriate methods for testing those hypotheses.
 - Students will understand the role of data in organization development (both diagnosis and assessment) and be prepared to be a knowledgeable consumer of data and data analysis.
- Intervention Strategies
 - Students will develop a fundamental understanding of select intervention strategies associated with individual/team, quality and process improvement, and large-scale change efforts.
 - Students will be able to determine which intervention strategy is appropriate to an organizational diagnosis.
- Integration and Culmination
 - Students will demonstrate an understanding of the overall process of organization development.
 - Students will demonstrate an understanding of the ethical and social implications of organization development.
 - Students will demonstrate the ability to utilize conceptual and theoretical knowledge, empirical analysis, and intervention selection with regard to an organizational issue.

Learning Outcome Assessment

Learning outcome assessment is divided into two broad categories. The first category is knowledge and understanding of the concepts and theories taught in the courses and is assessed with assignments, papers, and examinations in each of the courses. The second category is integration and application of that knowledge. The design of the program

lends itself to two natural points for assessing integration and application, i.e., following the empirical analysis phase midway through the program and during the integration and culmination phase at the end of the program.

For the first assessment of integration and application, students were assigned an organizational diagnosis project (see attached) that required them to apply material from the first two components of the program (i.e., conceptual and theoretical underpinnings and empirical analysis) to diagnose a problem within an organization, e.g., their employing organizations or other organizations with which they are associated. The project required students to integrate conceptual and theoretical knowledge derived from the first four courses with the diagnosis process to do a preliminary diagnosis of an organizational issue, to formulate a preliminary diagnosis that includes a testable statement of the issue at hand, and to design (and if possible conduct) a formal diagnostic process for the organization. The grading rubric assessed their performance of the diagnosis, their utilization of appropriate theories and concepts, and their written communication skills (organization, style, and mechanics). This exercise was piloted in fall 2007.

The pilot assessment indicated that performance on the project was quite satisfactory overall, ranging from 82 to 100 points out of a possible total of 100 points. The assessment rubric (see attached) assigned weights of 30% each for response to the assignment (i.e., the diagnosis) and the use of theories and concepts; 20% to the organization and coherence of the paper; and 10% each to the writing style and mechanics. The tabulation of scores appears below.

Criterion	Low Score	High Score	Mean Score
Response to assignment	23	30	27.9
Use of theories and concepts	23	30	27.7
Organization and coherence	14	20	17.6
Writing style	6	10	8.2
Writing mechanics	6	10	7.8

As might be expected, performance on the different aspects of the project varied somewhat widely. The majority of the students, however, performed satisfactorily across all five criteria. As the mean scores suggest, the quality of written communication generally was weaker than the diagnostic efforts. Both the project and the assessment rubric will be reviewed and refined. Particular attention will be given to refining the “response to assignment” criterion to make it less generic and more specific to the diagnosis process.

The second opportunity assessment of integration and application occurs at the end of the program when students will be engaged in an applied project that requires them to work with a client organization to diagnose that organization’s situation and to propose an intervention strategy for addressing the situation. The client organizations most likely will be not-for-profit service organizations in order to avoid the ethical complications of having students work with organizations that might be associated with or competitors of

the students' employing organizations. The project is to be patterned after a project piloted with executive students during the summer of 2007 by Dr. O'Neil. The pilot implementation of the assessment will be during the 2008 summer semester. Consequently, no results for this learning assessment can be reported at this time.

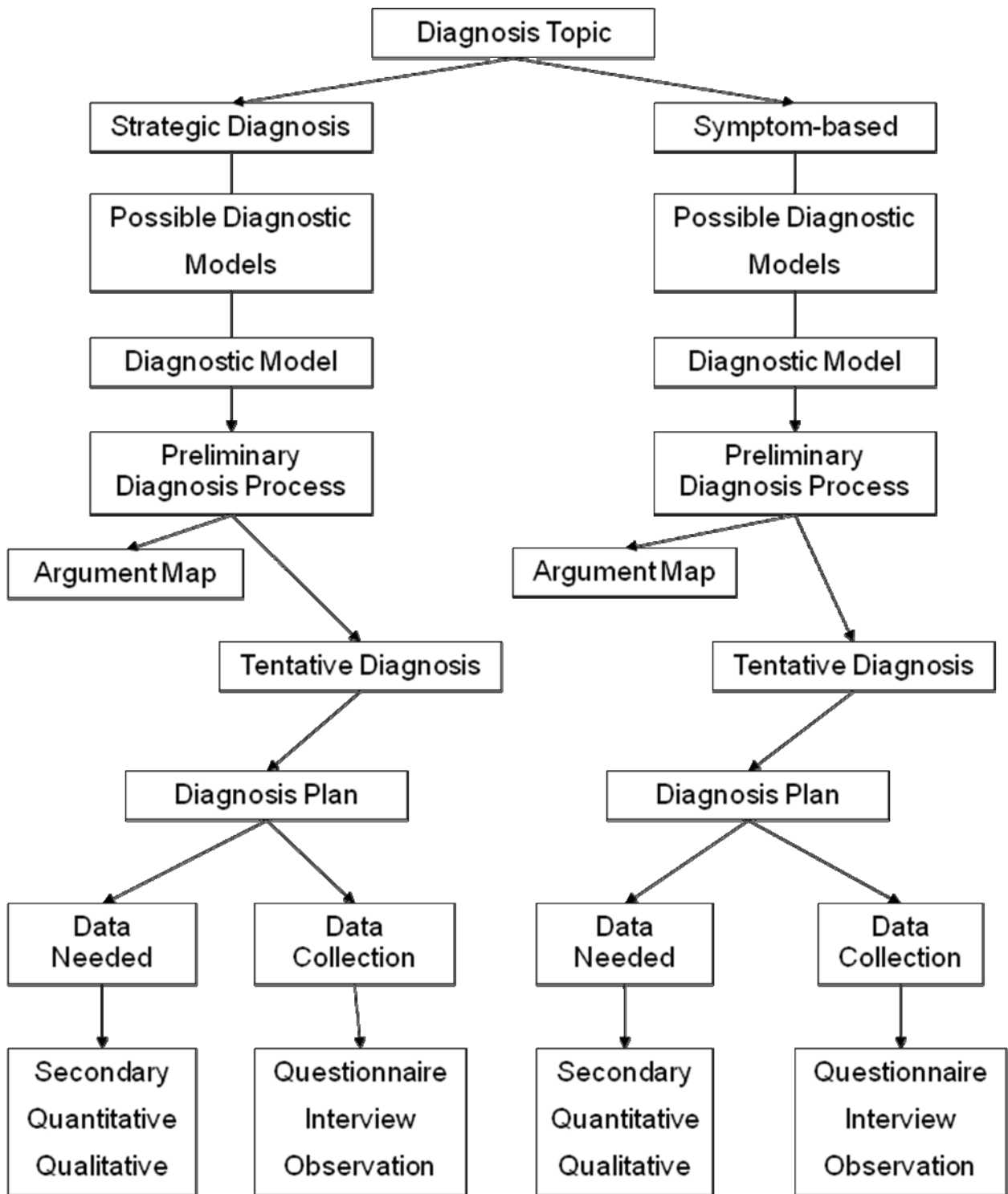
The results of outcome assessment are fed back to two groups: the faculty members directly involved in the delivery of the Executive MOD courses and the Organization Development Graduate Advisory Committee. The instructional faculty meets monthly during the academic year to discuss the progress of the program, the deployment of teaching technologies, and the progress of students in the program. Issues raised by the instructional faculty as well as the assessment results are reviewed and discussed by the Organization Development Graduate Advisory Committee. Any necessary actions are implemented by that committee or, if additional approvals are required for implementation (e.g., for changes in curriculum), recommendations are forwarded through appropriate channels for approval.

Other Feedback Processes

After launching the new EMOD curriculum in January 2007, an online, anonymous survey was conducted following the completion of the first four courses, i.e., following completion of the conceptual and theoretical foundations component of the program. The survey assessed student reactions to the content, instruction, and technologies associated with the first four courses. Combined with feedback from monthly meetings of the program faculty, the information resulted in three actions:

- Greater emphasis upon building the conceptual foundations required for organization development as opposed to developing the managerial applications of the topics covered by the initial four courses.
- Reduction in the number of technologies used to deliver the program so as to permit more effective training for and utilization of those technologies.
- Change in the sequence of delivery of the first four courses so that organizational behavior is delivered before rather than after human resource management.

Final Paper for ORGD 604



Diagnosis Paper Evaluation

	F (0-17)	D (18-20)	C (21-23)	B (24-26)	A (27-30)	Points
Response to Assignment	Does not respond to the assignment, lacks a central idea/thesis, and might neglect to use sources and references where necessary. Discussion basically irrelevant to assignment.	Lacks a clear central thesis or does not respond adequately to the assignment. Thesis might be too vague to be developed effectively. Paper might misunderstand, misstate or misuse sources relevant to the topic or depend primarily upon personal opinion rather than independent sources and references.	Adequate but less effective paper, possibly responding less well to assignment or with <u>critical</u> lapses in development. Presents central idea in broad, general terms, perhaps limiting topic development. Limited if any acknowledgement of other views. Shows basic comprehension of sources and references, perhaps with lapses in understanding. If it defines terms, often depends on dictionary definitions.	A solid paper, responding to assignment. Clearly states a central thesis, but with <u>minor</u> lapses in development. Begins to acknowledge the complexity of central idea and the possibility of other points of view. Shows careful reading of sources, but might not evaluate them critically. Attempts to define terms beyond a dictionary definition, but not always successfully.	Excels on assignment. Holds interest; demonstrates sophistication of thought. Central thesis is clearly communicated, worth developing; focused enough to be manageable. Paper recognizes some complexity of its topic; usually acknowledges its limits and contradictions and explores their logical implications. Understands and critically evaluates its sources. Limits and defines its terms appropriately.	
Use of Theories, Concepts, and Evidence as Support	Uses irrelevant theories, concepts, or evidence or lacks supporting theories, concepts, or evidence entirely. Might be too brief to provide adequate support for topic.	Depends on clichés or overgeneralizations for support, or offers little support of any kind other than personal opinion. Might be personal narrative rather than research paper, or summary rather than analysis. Generally reveals poor choices regarding theories and concepts applied to topic.	Often uses generalizations to support its points. Depends on unsupported opinion or personal experience or assumes that evidence speaks for itself and needs no further application to the point being discussed. Theories and concepts often are misapplied and/or lack relevance. Reveals frequent lapses in logic.	Offers some but limited support for its points, perhaps using varied kinds of theories, concepts, and evidence. Might misapply some theories and concepts but they bear some relevance to subject. Begins to interpret the support and explain connections between that support and main ideas.	Uses theories, concepts and evidence appropriately and effectively, providing sufficient support and explanation to convince the reader.	

	F (0-11)	D (12-13)	C (14-15)	B (16-17)	A (18-20)	Points
Organization and Coherence of Writing	No appreciable organization; lacks transitions and coherence.	Has random organization, lacks internal paragraph coherence, and/or uses few or inappropriate transitions. Paragraphs might lack topic sentences or main ideas, or might be too general or too specific to be effective. Paragraphs might not all relate to paper's central thesis.	Might list ideas or arrange them without any apparent logical structure. Transitions are likely to be sequential (first, second, third) rather than logic-based. Although each paragraph typically relates to central topic, logic is not always clear. Paragraphs have topic sentences, but might be overly general; arrangement of sentences within paragraphs might lack coherence.	Shows a logical progression of ideas and uses fairly sophisticated transitional devices, e.g., might move from least to more important idea. Some logical links might be faulty, but each paragraph clearly relates to paper's central idea.	Uses a logical structure appropriate to paper's subject, purpose, audience, thesis, and disciplinary field. Sophisticated transitional sentences often develop one idea from the previous one or identify their logical relations. Guides the reader through the chain of reasoning or progression of ideas.	
	F (0-5)	D (6)	C (7)	B (8)	A (9-10)	Points
Style: wording & sentence structure	Contains many awkward sentences, misuses words, and employs inappropriate wording.	Wording either is too vague and abstract, or very personal and specific. Contains awkward or ungrammatical sentences; sentence structure is simple or monotonous.	Uses relatively vague and general words, might use some inappropriate wording. Sentence structure is generally correct, but sentences might be wordy, unfocused, repetitive, or confusing.	Generally uses words accurately and effectively, but wording might sometimes be too general or vague. Sentences generally clear, well structured, and focused, though some might be awkward or ineffective.	Chooses words for their precise meaning and uses an appropriate level of specificity. Sentence style fits paper's audience and purpose. Sentences are varied, yet clearly structured and carefully focused, not long and rambling.	
Mechanics: spelling, punctuation, & grammar	Contains so many errors that the reader finds it nearly impossible to follow the thinking from sentence to sentence.	Contains either many mechanical errors or a few important errors that impede reader's understanding and ability to follow connections between thoughts.	Contains several errors, which might temporarily confuse the reader but not impede overall understanding of topic.	Contains a few errors, which might annoy reader but not impede understanding.	Almost entirely free of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.	

Total Points

Comments:

Executive MOD Assessment Process

