The Chair of the Department of Legal Studies/International Business prepared a self-study. A two-person external review team visited the campus. They met with members of the Program Review Committee (PRC), Department faculty members, University administrators, and Wood County business leaders. The PRC reviewed the self-study and the report of the external review team. A member of the PRC met with the Department faculty to discuss the external report and to obtain additional information. The PRC then met with the Dean of the College of Business Administration. The observations and recommendations of the PRC are summarized in the report that follows.

**SUMMARY OF THE SELF-STUDY**

**History and Mission**

The Department is one of seven departments in the College of Business Administration. Legal Studies was established in 1966. In the 1970s, the current Department Chair was appointed Director of the Health Care Administration program, and the legal studies-health care administration connection was thus established. In 1997, the international business faculty moved from the Department of Economics to the Legal Studies Department at the request of the international business faculty and the Legal Studies Department, and the Department became Legal Studies and International Business. In 1998, the Business Communications faculty moved into the Department from the Department of Business Education, which was relocating within the College of Education and Allied Professions. Although the combination of legal studies, international business, and business communications into one academic unit was carefully planned, the self-study notes that the results are mixed. In the spring of 2001, the four legal studies faculty, all of whom are tenured, requested that the two international business faculty be located in another department. The self-study mentions departmental "problems" but does not elaborate on the nature of those problems.

The Department shares the mission of the College. The self-study identifies education as the primary mission of the Department and the area where the Department can make the greatest contribution. In their teaching, faculty strive to foster "critical
thinking, ethical behavior, and an understanding of the cultural implications of managing in a pluralistic society and in an international environment."
(from the CBA mission)

Description of the Unit

**Major/Minor programs.** The College offers one undergraduate major, the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA). Specific academic disciplines take the form of academic specializations, consisting of 15-24 semester hours each. The Department offers three specializations for BSBA students: Business Pre-Law, Health Care Administration, and International Business. A minor in International Business is offered to students outside the BSBA program. An international business faculty member coordinates an inter-unit CBA program, the annual student exchange program with Nantes, France.

**Structure and governance.** The Department Chair reports to the Dean of the College. The Coordinator of Business Communication reports to the Department Chair. The Directors of the Nantes program, the Health Care Administration program, and the International Business program report to the Associate Dean of the College. The Department does not have an extensive committee structure; rather, they operate as a committee of the whole. The Chair is recommended by the faculty and appointed by the Dean. The current Chair has occupied that position since 1989.

Resources

**Faculty.** In fall 2001, the Department had ten full-time faculty (including two instructors and one visiting professor) and four part-time faculty. Additionally six adjunct faculty, both external and internal to the University, teach courses in one or more of the Department’s specializations. In 1995, the College received a large bequest to endow the James R. Good Chair in International Business. After three failed searches to fill the position, the Dean has decided to move the position into the policy area located in the Department of Management. A search will begin in Summer 2002.

Most faculty teach six courses per year. First-year faculty receive a one-course reduction for research per year. Instructors teach eight courses per year. The International Business Director and the Business Communication Coordinator receive a one-course reduction, and the Chair receives a four-course reduction. The Department has a Reduced Teaching Load Policy and a Differential Teaching Load Policy, but student demand for their courses has precluded the implementation of these policies. Moreover, Department faculty have taught courses in other departments for no additional compensation.

At the undergraduate level, Department faculty teach three courses required in the BSBA major: BA 203 Business Communications, LEGS 301 Legal Environment of Business, and BA 390 Multinational Business. Additionally, they offer two required courses in the MBA program (MBA 607 Ethics and Law and MBA 610 International Business and Management) and one required course in the Masters of Accountancy program (GBA 672 International Business Operations and Strategy).
**Graduate assistants/staff.** In 2000-2001, Departmental faculty had access to the services of ten graduate Research Assistants, six of whom were provided by the Masters of Business Administration and Masters of Accountancy programs. Three Graduate Assistants are funded by the Business and International Education (BIE) grant, and one GA is assigned to the Nantes program. One secretary serves as administrative assistant to the Chair and secretary to all faculty members. The graduate students are not prepared to assist with legal research, so they typically grade projects, proctor exams, and grade exams. They are given more research assignments as their skills improve.

**Students.** A total of 231 students are enrolled in the specializations and minor offered by the Department: Business pre-law (72), Health Care Administration specialization (34), International Business specialization (116), International Business minor (9). Enrollments have fluctuated somewhat over the past seven years. Pre-law decreased between 1994 and 1997 but then rose to a new high in 2000. Health Care Administration dropped from 62 in 1994 to 29 in 1999, then rose to 34 in 2000. The self-study notes that the reason for this drop is unclear. International Business has also dropped, from 189 in 1994 to 174 in 1999 and 116 in 2000. The self-study ties this decline to the introduction of more rigorous requirements for the specialization and suggests that the number will decline even more after the new standards are fully implemented (p. 16).

According to the self-study, the SCH/FTE production (3449/18.39) of the Department is the highest of all departments in the College that do not offer pre-professional core courses with large lectures.

**Advising/recruitment/retention.** Four faculty members serve as undergraduate advisors. In 1997, an international business advisor received the Marie Hodge Advising Award. The Department sponsors various career-related activities such as the Law Caravan (law school representatives come to campus) and career days (potential employers come to campus and interview international business students).

To recruit students, Department faculty members participate in University Preview Days, Presidents' Days, and College career forums. Additionally, they go to area high schools to discuss careers in international business and the international business specialization at the University. Retention efforts involve serving as advisors to student organizations related to specializations offered by the Department.

**Physical/informational/financial resources.** The Department is housed in the Business Administration Building. Each full-time faculty member has an office; the part-time faculty and grad assistants are in shared offices. All faculty members and the secretary have desktop computers. The Department also has a photocopy machine, a laser printer, and five ink jet printers. The library materials appear adequate.

The 2000-2001 operating budget was $21,000 ($1,600 per faculty member). The Department also received two grants from the U.S. Department of Education. One grant
is designed to strengthen the study, teaching, and practice of international business in northwest Ohio ($172,236), and the other is to develop College resources in the field of managing risks in international businesses ($159,000). A faculty member receives a three-course reduction for serving as the administrator of these grants. The same individual also receives a one-course reduction to administer the international business program (116 students in the specialization, 9 in the minor) (p. 11).

Self Evaluation

Faculty/teaching/student learning outcomes. The Department uses student evaluations and peer evaluations to assess teaching effectiveness. In the three courses required for the BSBA, the mean of student evaluations for the past two years was ~3.0 on a 4-point scale (4 = excellent). Teaching effectiveness is also measured through peer evaluations, which are not reported in sufficient detail to allow for interpretation.

The self-study reports that the Department has not established student learning outcomes nor have they designed a student achievement assessment plan. They have been waiting for their national academy to adopt a national assessment tool and hoping that the Good Chair in International Business would take the lead in assessment (p. 29).

In fall 2001, the Department surveyed graduates of the Business Pre-Law ($N = 220$) and the Health Care Administration ($N = 295$) specializations. With respect to Pre-Law, the self-study indicated that the 81 respondents (37%) identified the curriculum and the faculty as strengths of the program. Approximately 67% of the respondents had attended law school, with 91% of those attendees graduating. With respect to Health Care Administration, the 86 respondents (29%) indicated that the curriculum and the dedication of the faculty were strengths of the program and that a weakness was the existence of only one regular faculty member teaching the health care administration courses. Seventy-one percent of the respondents had obtained a position in the health care field within one year of graduation. The self-study acknowledged the sampling bias inherent in mailed surveys.

Research. Research is identified as a commitment. Since 1994, however, only two to three faculty per year have published refereed articles (p. 31). The rationale for the lack of scholarly productivity is the amount of service provided by the faculty and the number of administrative positions they hold (p. 30).

Service. One of the legal studies faculty is incoming President of the Academy of Legal Studies of Business; an international business faculty is President of the Toledo Area International Trade Association; another legal studies faculty won the College of Business Administration Service Award; and faculty in health care administration won the Outstanding Service Award from the Tri-State Academy of Legal Studies in Business. The international business program received the 2001 Governor's Excellence in Exporting Award. A more complete record of service contributions is presented in Appendix E.
Goals/Plans for the Future

The introduction section on page 1 of the self-study indicates that the third section of the report will set forth the unit's goals and plans for the future. The planning section is not, in fact, included in the report. The Vice Provost for Academic Programs queried the Chair of the Department about the absence of the section and was informed that the unit is currently in a state of flux. The plan reported is for the international business faculty to merge with business policy and be housed in the Department of Management. Legal studies faculty may merge with another, as yet unidentified, department. The specializations in international business, business pre-law, and health care administration are being reviewed by the College for possible elimination. No timetable is presented for this reorganization (e-mail from the Department Chair to the Vice Provost for Academic Programs, Feb. 2, 2002).

SUMMARY OF EXTERNAL REPORT

The external reviewers stated that they had received the self-study and the appendices in a timely manner. The reviewers noted three significant omissions in the self-study: (a) lack of a seven-year plan; (b) lack of course and enrollment data; and (c) lack of information on the impending change in Departmental leadership (i.e., Department Chair). While the reviewers were on campus, the Department Chair provided them with a statement of goals for the current academic year (2001-2002).

Strengths Noted by the External Reviewers

**Teaching.** The Department's activities reflect breadth and depth as well as a diverse array of faculty and educational missions. The faculty possess sufficient expertise to address these areas adequately (i.e., legal studies, business ethics, business communications, and international business).

The external reviewers found the degree of innovation in teaching approaches and creativity in research and program building to be commendable. The unit's success in these endeavors is reflected in faculty teaching evaluations and, for some, in research productivity.

The Department is very productive in terms of SCH/FTE generation. The faculty are enthusiastic about teaching and strong in teaching quality. According to the fall 2001 survey data, pre-law students have been successful in law school.

**Research.** The external reviewers find the overall research productivity of the Department is commendable, averaging almost ten refereed publications per faculty member per year. Two faculty members have been extremely productive.

**Service.** Service within the college, the University, and the community, is the unit's strongest aspect. Several faculty, as well as the International Business program, have been recognized for noteworthy accomplishments.
Leadership. The external team found that the Department is well administered. Furthermore, they report that the atmosphere is collegial, cooperative, and supportive.

Weaknesses/Concerns Noted by the External Reviewers

Teaching. The reviewers concluded that there is a shortage of human resources such that some faculty carry an inordinate teaching burden, particularly in international business. The merging of legal studies with international business produced an uncomfortable union that is recognized as problematic by the faculty and administration alike. The reviewers speculated that one cause of the tension can be attributed to disparities in teaching loads. The four tenured law professors have various administrative duties, thus creating a need for adjunct faculty to cover the law courses. These courses have relatively low enrollments. On the other hand, the international business courses are taught by two assistant professors, one of whom has administrative duties. These courses are comparatively large.

Research. Research productivity is uneven, with 33% of the faculty accounting for 85% of the refereed publications in the past seven years.

Leadership. Tensions between the legal studies faculty and the international business faculty have created "administrative fatigue." The searches to fill the Good Chair of International Business and to provide guidance for international business have been stressful.

Recommendations Made by the External Reviewers

1) Teaching loads should be examined for disparities and fairness, particularly with respect to assistant professors in international business and any faculty who are hired in the future.
2) Administrative responsibilities are creating staffing pressures, thus affecting workloads, productivity of other faculty, and the availability of courses for the students. Therefore, administrative loads should be examined, particularly with respect to the law professors.
3) The unit needs to improve its research productivity. The College may wish to provide more support, both financial and mentoring, for research, particularly for unproductive faculty.
4) The Department needs to reorganize/relocate. Reorganization/relocation plans must include a planning element. These plans should address the following concerns: a) the need for additional tenure track faculty in legal studies, thus stabilizing it and allowing it to remain as a separate department in the College; b) the compatibility of legal studies with business ethics and communication, thus the need for the areas to remain together; c) the need for additional tenure track faculty in business ethics and communication;
d) the need for greater synergy between the health care administration program and health-related areas located in other units, such as the College of Health and Human Services;

e) the enhancement of relationships with health care administration alumnae/i for the purpose of providing internships and job placement, as well as implementing fund raising activities;

f) an examination of the role of the International Business program and an establishment of a clearly defined vision/mission for international business; and

g) the need to retain the Good Chair with the International Business program and to refocus the search process to ensure success in finding a senior faculty member who will provide leadership to this area.


6) New faculty should be carefully monitored and supported.

PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE FINDINGS

The PRC finds that the Department did not prepare the self-study report in a timely fashion. The visit from the external reviewers was delayed to give the Department additional time to complete the self-study. Even with the additional time, the self-study did not include a section on planning, which is intended to be a focus of the program review process. Furthermore, the Department did not provide its statement of goals to the PRC, although they did provide a goals document to the external reviewers. Similarly, they did not provide information from the AACSB review process that was relevant to program review until very late in the program review process, nor did they report on plans for reorganization, which were apparently known to Department and College personnel.

Given the lack of seriousness with which the Department seemed to view the preparation of the self-study and review process, the PRC questions the efficacy of College and Department leadership in the program review process.

The faculty provide a large amount of service, both internal and external to the University. Several faculty provide significant regional and national leadership for their disciplines.

The survey data indicate that graduates of the programs appear to be pleased with the preparation they received and are experiencing success in their fields.

Since fall 1998, the gender composition of the faculty has been balanced at 50/50. Given that males typically constitute the large majority of faculty members in Colleges of Business Administration, this balance is commendable.

The PRC finds that confusion exists regarding the SCH/FTE ratio per LS/IB faculty member. The self-study reported the SCH/FTE ratio for the Department as a whole, not for individual faculty members. The external reviewers, however, reported that the international business faculty generate more SCHs (i.e., teach more students)
than the legal studies and business communication faculty and suggested that teaching loads should be examined and possibly adjusted. The legal studies and business communication faculty disputed this claim, providing additional SCH/FTE data as well as data from the AACSB accreditation report.

The PRC notes that the external report contains inappropriate comments about the ages of faculty members in the Department. Furthermore, the faculty reported that the reviewers made inappropriate comments in person to more than one faculty member. The external reviewers also made an inappropriate comment to two PRC members, although that comment was not directed at us personally. The PRC, therefore, receives the report of the external team with appropriate skepticism.

Findings Requiring Action

1. Investment. Given the lack of planning and the lack of serious involvement in the program review process, the PRC finds that the Department is ill-prepared to continue to operate as currently configured, and is a poor choice for investment by the College or University.

2. Configuration of programs. Discussions are being held in the College of Business Administration regarding possible reconfiguration involving the programs in the Department. The Dean indicated that international business faculty and the Good Chair will be relocated in the Department of Management. The PRC finds, therefore, that the future of the Department as currently constituted is uncertain.

Three legal studies faculty members have retired since 1994. None have been replaced, thus raising a question about the amount of college-level support for the Legal Studies program. The legal studies-international business union has not worked out well. The PRC finds this fragmentation to be a barrier for the faculty in establishing a niche or achieving national distinction.

In health care administration and international business, there are only one or two faculty members associated with the specialization. This structure renders the specializations vulnerable to elimination when those faculty members are reassigned, retire, or resign. This vulnerability is not in the best interests of students or other faculty.

The impending retirement of the Department Chair places the future of the health care administration program in jeopardy. The PRC finds that this area might benefit through cooperation with other units offering health-related programs at the University. Alliances forged through such cooperation could result in the creation of more stable academic programs related to the delivery of health care services. Moreover, locating health-related programs within the same department or college would enhance the ease with which prospective students could discover the programs, thus improving recruitment and retention rates.
3. Purposes and focus of program review. In their meeting with the PRC representative, Department faculty suggested that they had not observed any consequences to other departments that had received either very positive or very negative review. They concluded that program review was not an important exercise. The PRC finds a need for education about the purposes and implications of program review in the College of Business Administration.

The PRC finds that information about the structure, function, and purposes of the Department was difficult to obtain from a review focused on that department, alone. The Department, like all the departments in the college, contributes to the BSBA and the MBA degrees, which are not the sole province of any individual department. Furthermore, the specializations gathered in the Department are in some cases shared enterprises, also making it difficult to gather all necessary information when the program review is focused on a single department. These impressions are reinforced by faculty reactions, reported above, that the purposes and implications of program review are unclear. The PRC’s understanding is that greater clarity and efficacy of program review could be achieved by organizing program reviews in the College of Business Administration at both the department and college levels.

4. Research productivity. The scholarly productivity of the faculty is less than should be reasonably expected. In each year since 1994, they have published an average of one to two refereed papers per faculty member, either in journals or proceedings. Closer examination reveals, however, that only two faculty members have been active researchers between 1994 and 1998, with one new faculty member beginning to contribute to the average in 1998. The combined publications of the two faculty members constituted 83-90% of the Department's total publications between 1994 and 1998. Since 1998, three of the six to seven tenured/tenure-track faculty members have been responsible for 100% of the Department's refereed publications.

The record of refereed presentations is also a concern, with only two to three faculty members making presentations each year since 1994. Only one faculty member consistently makes annual refereed presentations.

5. Differential load policy. Teaching loads seem not to be related to scholarly productivity. Furthermore, a relatively large amount of load credit is allocated for administrative duties of some faculty. Moreover, the line of authority for some of those administrative positions is puzzling: The Business Communications coordinator reports to the Department Chair, while the Nantes Director, the Health Care Administration Director, and the International Business director report to the Associate Dean of the College.

6. Graduate assistants. The provision of six Graduate Research Assistants from the Master's of Business Administration and Master's of Accountancy programs to the Department does not appear to be helping the faculty produce peer-reviewed publications. It would be reasonable to expect that in a situation where each faculty member is assigned a research assistant, all faculty would produce refereed scholarship.
In this case, the research assistants do not help with research; however, the fact that they help grade papers, etc, should provide sufficient relief to the faculty for them to be able to publish or present their scholarship.

7. Assessment. The Department has not established an assessment plan. It may be the case that they contribute to the assessment of the BSBA. The PRC finds that anticipation of establishment of learning outcomes by a national governing body and development of an assessment instrument by a new international business professor is unresponsive to the mandate of the University. The Student Achievement Assessment Committee is available to provide consultation and support for the Department’s assessment efforts.

PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on reviews of the self-study and external review documents, and consistent with the major findings that resulted from these reviews, the PRC makes the following recommendations. For detail about the rationalization of each recommendation, see the finding with the corresponding number, just above.

1) Investment. The PRC recommends no additional resource investment in the Department until the reorganization plans are implemented and strategic plans have been created for the reorganized units.

2) Configuration of programs. The PRC supports the reorganization of the programs in the current Department, and understands that International Business will be relocated in the Department of Management.
   a) The PRC recommends that this reorganization be completed by spring, 2004.
   b) The PRC recognizes and applauds the accomplishments of the three productive faculty members in the Department and recommends that reorganization of the Department should locate these individuals in positions that will facilitate the continuation of their contributions.
   c) The PRC recommends that the reconfiguration of the Department should include the development of seven-year plans for all programs currently in the Department, wherever they are relocated.
   d) The legal studies area could begin to establish a niche by expanding the offering in ethics, which seems to be more compatible with the study of law than was international business.
   e) The Department should immediately undertake discussions with units offering health-related programs through other colleges, to explore the possibility of moving health care administration.

3) Purposes and focus of program review. The undergraduate major (BSBA) and the Masters in Business Administration (MBA) are located in the College; no majors (except Economics) are attached to specific Departments.
   a) The College as a whole should undergo program review in 2004-05, after all the departments have completed a department-level program review.
level review would address: those elements missed by department-level review (e.g. the BSBA and the MBA); those elements that are shared by more than one department (e.g. some specializations); and those decision-making processes and structures that affect multiple departments, programs, and specializations. The college-level review would also address college-level response to the program reviews of the separate departments completed in the preceding seven years. Review of the separate departments scheduled for 2004-05 should be postponed to allow for the college-level review, if necessary.

b) The PRC recommends that the Dean and Vice Provost for Academic Programs meet with the department chairs and faculty to discuss the purposes and consequences of the program review process.

4) **Research productivity.** The Department should establish goals and guidelines for increasing the research productivity of those faculty who have not been active in this area.

5) **Differential load policy.** The Department should develop a differential load policy, which should include provision for assigning full teaching loads (equivalent to those of instructors) to those faculty who are not active in research.
   a) Reduced workloads should not be considered an entitlement; faculty should expect to be awarded reassigned time based on productivity.
   b) Teaching and administrative loads in the Department should be analyzed and, if appropriate, adjusted for fairness.

6) **Graduate assistants.** If the Graduate Assistants in the Department are providing instructional support rather than assistance with faculty research, they should be designated as Teaching Assistants, not Research Assistants. The PRC recommends that the college re-examine the assignment of graduate students to faculty who are not research-active, by fall, 2002.

7) **Assessment.** The PRC recommends that the Department establish student learning outcomes and assessment plans for each of the programs in the reorganized department. These may take the form of contributing to the assessment of the BSBA, if that is appropriate.

*The Department should report annually to the Dean of Business Administration, with a copy to the Provost, on the implementation of these recommendations.*