



Key Learning Outcomes for Business Programs

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PREFACE

The International Accreditation Council for Business Education (IACBE) was founded in 1997 in response to the expressed needs of presidents, chief academic officers, and business deans and chairs who wanted an accreditation process that was mission-driven and outcomes-based. The IACBE provides specialized accreditation to the business programs of hundreds of institutions of higher education throughout the world whose primary purpose is excellence in teaching and learning. The IACBE’s innovative approach to specialized business accreditation is based on the assessment of educational outcomes and the characteristics of excellence in business education.

This document outlines the “Key Learning Outcomes for Business Programs” as identified by the IACBE. The document is organized by the following degree levels and specifies key intended student learning outcomes for each level:

- Associate-Level Programs
- Bachelor’s-Level Programs
- Master’s-Level Programs
- Doctoral-Level Programs

These key learning outcomes are associated with those content- and skills-related areas that comprise typical programs in business. While academic business units are not required to use these particular outcomes or the specific wording in these outcomes, they may prove to be useful to the business unit as a set of guidelines, a framework, or as the nucleus for conceptualizing, developing, and articulating intended student learning outcomes for their own business programs.

KEY LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR BUSINESS PROGRAMS

In developing intended student learning outcomes, an academic business unit may want to consider the following “Key Learning Outcomes for Business Programs” as identified by the IACBE. These learning outcomes are defined for each degree level (i.e., for associate-, bachelor’s-, master’s-, and doctoral-level programs) and are associated with those content- and skills-related areas that comprise typical programs in business. While academic business units are not required to use these particular outcomes or the specific wording in these outcomes, they may prove to be useful to the business unit as a set of guidelines, a framework, or as the nucleus for conceptualizing, developing, and articulating intended student learning outcomes for their own business programs.

Key learning outcomes for:

Associate-Level Programs

Graduates of associate-level programs in business should be able to:

1. Describe the introductory concepts of accounting, economics, management, and marketing
2. Use decision-support tools
3. Communicate effectively in oral and written forms

Bachelor’s-Level Programs

Graduates of bachelor’s-level programs in business should be able to:

1. Explain the major concepts in the functional areas of accounting, marketing, finance, and management
2. Evaluate the legal, social, and economic environments of business
3. Describe the global environment of business
4. Describe and explain the ethical obligations and responsibilities of business
5. Apply decision-support tools to business decision making
6. Construct and present effective oral and written forms of professional communication
7. Apply knowledge of business concepts and functions in an integrated manner

Master's-Level Programs

In master's-level programs, knowledge of the key content areas and functional disciplines of business is assumed. Graduates of master's-level programs should acquire a depth of knowledge in these areas that exceeds that of the typical bachelor's degree graduate. Graduates of master's-level programs in business should be able to:

1. Recognize problems
2. Integrate theory and practice for the purpose of strategic analysis
3. Employ and apply quantitative techniques and methods in the analysis of real-world business situations
4. Communicate to relevant audiences; graduates should be able to:
 - a. Compose clear, consistent, and effective written forms of communication
 - b. Compose and present effective oral business presentations
5. Work effectively with a team of colleagues on diverse projects
6. Identify and analyze the ethical obligations and responsibilities of business

Doctoral-Level Programs

Graduates of doctoral-level programs in business should be able to:

1. Demonstrate effective research skills; graduates should be able to:
 - a. Formulate a research problem
 - b. Integrate previous literature into an appropriate literature review
 - c. Design a research study
 - d. Analyze data
 - e. Summarize and present research results
 - f. Discuss research results
2. Demonstrate advanced knowledge and competencies in a major field of study in business
3. Create and present advanced forms of oral and written communication
4. Evaluate and assess the ethical obligations and responsibilities of business for the purpose of responsible management