April 2015

To Kelly Haslam, Assistant Dean, Graduate School & Daniel Kleinman, Associate Dean, Graduate School
From: Mary Louise Gomez, Professor, Curriculum & Instruction

I was asked by the Graduate Program Executive Committee to revisit the self-study produced by the Business School as there was not a Graduate Program Faculty Committee member on the review committee.

I contacted the Business School and subsequently met with Ruth Joyce, Director of Academic Affairs in the Business School and Professor Stephen Malpezzi. We then met with 4 faculty and staff members and I alone met with 2 graduate students enrolled in the certificate.

My findings are below:

- The certificate is available to any student who currently is enrolled in a graduate program at UW-Madison. Several enrolled students are earning degrees in the Nelson Institute and the College of Engineering.

- There are two tenure track faculty and two lecturers teaching in the program: Associate Professor Ann Terlaak and Associate Professor Mark Finster teach in the program. Staff members Jim Swanke and Tom Landgraf are lecturers teaching in the program. Professor Terlaak is the certificate director.

- Requirements include: that students enroll in one required foundations course (MHR 765 Sustainable Enterprise Management), choose 3 additional credits from a list of Wisconsin School of Business advanced business sustainability courses, and select from up to 6 credits of additional elective course work (12 total credits).

- Typically, there are 12-15 students in each course. Currently, by faculty and staff report, women may be as many as 50% of those enrolled in the certificate.

- As reported by the Business School, there were 14 students being awarded the certificate in 2012-2013 (with 15 graduate students enrolled). There has been an annual graduation of certificate holders between 5 (the year it began) and 14 finishing in 2012-2013.
The two graduate students I spoke with were very well satisfied with their course work and instructors. They believed that the certificate would enhance their job prospects and were enthusiastic about the program of study.

It has been a small certificate program for some time; however, I see it as vital to forward thinking on architectural building and sustainability. I think over time it may grow further as the need develops across the nation.

Program weaknesses:

While there are specific program goals, a self-identified program weakness from the Business School is no “systemic way for comprehensively assessing whether the program’s overall leaning outcomes are achieved” (Self-study report, 2013, p. 2). I concur with this and encourage an overall plan to assess if the certificate is achieving its perceived goals.

The graduate students believed that any amount of advertising would be helpful for recruitment. They were extremely satisfied with their certificate and I encourage more electronic and networked communication of all sorts across campus around its advertisement.
MEMORANDUM

TO: Graduate Faculty Executive Committee

FROM: Chip Hunter, Senior Associate Dean, Wisconsin School of Business

RE: Graduate Certificate in Business, Environment and Social Responsibility

DATE: March 28, 2013

In 2012, the BESR Oversight Committee in the School of Business reviewed the Graduate Certificate in Business, Environment and Social Responsibility (BESR). The committee articulated intended learning outcomes for students in the certificate. As a result of these activities, the BESR Oversight Committee recommended that the changes below be made to the certificate. These recommendations were approved by the WSoB Masters Curriculum Committee and then by the Faculty.

1. To ensure that all certificate students gain a set of fundamental knowledge and skills in business sustainability, the certificate should include a required 3 credit class. This required class will be offered as a Management and Human Resources 765 class starting in Spring 2014 (s), and if suitable converted to a permanent class thereafter. This will replace the MHR 765/365 (Environmental Business Strategy) which was an optional BESR class offered Spring 2012.

2. To enable students to assemble individually suited course paths for achieving the certificate’s learning outcomes, and to facilitate participation in the certificate by non-Business school students, the list of electives should be broadened to include non-Business school classes that convey relevant knowledge and skills. A broadened list was developed by the oversight committee in consultation with relevant units from across campus.

3. To delineate more clearly the certificate as a graduate certificate, the redesigned certificate focuses on assembling graduate level courses. This was achieved by adding the (above) 700-level required class, reducing the number of 600-level classes available in the set of advanced business sustainability classes, and focusing the set of electives on graduate courses.

These recommended changes are intended to ensure that each student who earns the certificate has achieving learning outcomes consistent with graduate-level work. Furthermore, undertaking these changes will result in a certificate structure that is aligned with the structures of the recently created graduate certificates in Strategic Innovation and in Entrepreneurship.

We also provide the proposed new certificate requirements and the current requirements as separate documents, and would be happy to provide further information if that would be helpful.

I concur with the faculty decision to make the recommended changes to the BESR certificate. Thank you for your consideration.
Learning Goals. The graduate certificate in Business, Environment and Social Responsibility (BESR) is a 12 credit certificate program housed within the Wisconsin School of Business. The certificate provides students with knowledge of (i) causes of environmental and social challenges as relating to business, and respective policy and business responses, (ii) frameworks and measurement systems for incorporating sustainability concerns into business analysis and decision-making, and (iii) domains in which business activities and sustainability concerns intersect, and the management of these intersections. Students further acquire fundamental skills to (i) analyze the causes of and responses to environmental and social problems, as well as develop and implement solutions to these problems as managers and policymakers, (ii) identify and apply frameworks for effectively incorporating sustainability considerations into the analysis and decision-making of managers and policymakers, and (iii) analyze where and how environmental and social issues intersect with business, as well as develop and implement solutions for managing these intersections. As determined by each student’s individual course path, students will acquire additional deeper knowledge and skills in select domains such as systems designs, risk management, “green” real estate, and more.

Certificate students will also (i) develop and be able to articulate their view of the role that business plays in the pursuit of sustainability; (ii) be inspired to use their knowledge and skills in business to strengthen sustainability, and to use their knowledge and skills in sustainability to strengthen business; (iii) develop a network of likeminded professionals, students, and academics, acquire the ability to engage with professionals outside of their fields, and grow an appreciation of how different professions contribute to business sustainability.

Certificate Requirements. Completion of the certificate requires that students 1) take one required foundation course (MHR 765 – Sustainable Enterprise Management, 2) choose at least three additional credits from a list of Wisconsin School of Business advanced business sustainability coursework, and 3) select up to six credits of additional courses from other elective coursework. Certificate students are also encouraged, but not required, to engage in extracurricular activities that enhance the certificate’s learning outcome such as speaker events, Sustainable Business Plan Competitions, and suitable conferences.

Target Population & Recruitment. The certificate is open to any student who is currently enrolled in a graduate program at UW-Madison. To date, the majority of interest has come from business students. Non-business school students participating in the certificate consist primarily of students from the Nelson Institute and the College of Engineering. It is expected that the interest of the various students groups in BESR becomes more balanced as recent changes in the certificate’s required course structure have sought to equalize the hurdles for participation for business versus non-business students.
Certificate students are primarily recruited through (i) representation of the BESR certificate at incoming graduate student orientation sessions (e.g., in sessions at the Nelson Institute, La Follette School of Public Affairs, and the Wisconsin School of Business), (ii) the certificate’s web presence, and (iii) email announcements to relevant graduate student coordinators across campus.

**Program Administration.** The certificate is led by a dean appointed director (currently professor Ann Terlaak) who provides administrative and curriculum oversight to the certificate, and is responsible for managing its day-to-day operations including student advising. The director appoints an oversight committee that has an advisory function (currently consisting of Business School Professors Greg DeCroix, Mark Finster, Joan Schmit, Ann Terlaak, and student representatives Seth Block (Nelson Institute) and John McKenna (Business).

Enrollment occurs on a rolling basis, and works electronically via the BESR webpage. Complete and valid applications trigger declaration at the Office of the Registrar. Students notify the certificate director upon completing all certificate requirements, triggering in a turn a verification process and subsequent notification at the Registrar’s Office.

**Faculty and Staff Participants.** Business School tenure track faculty members that currently teach in the BESR certificate are Mark Finster and Ann Terlaak. Business School lecturers currently teaching are Tom Landgraf and Jim Swanke. Because students are permitted to count up to six credits of selected Business and non-Business school classes towards the certificate, other (partially non-business school) faculty members and instructional staff from across campus also teach “indirectly” in the certificate program. Currently, there is no administrative staff associated with the BESR certificate.

**Student Enrollment & Completion.** As of November 11th 2013, there are 15 students that are officially enrolled in the certificate. This number may however be underestimating total current activity because enrollment occurs on a rolling basis. Since the certificate started in spring 2008, 16 students have enrolled without completing the certificate. A total of 66 students has completed the certificate since its inception.

**Recommendations.** The business school’s internal BESR review throughout 2011 resulted in a number of major improvements to the certificate, including improvements in the certificate’s curriculum, governance, and administrative processes. However, two areas may be considered for further improvements. First, the certificate as of yet lacks a systematic way for comprehensively assessing whether the program’s overall learning outcomes are achieved. The school of business is in the midst of designing frameworks and processes for assessing learning outcomes, especially at program and unit levels. The BESR certificate will be included in this effort, suggesting that this area of improvement will be addressed in the near future. Second, while there a number of efforts and activities targeted at ensuring that BESR meets its learning outcomes along the “Being”, “Inspiring”, and “Networking” dimensions, there so far is no systematic and coordinated approach to these activities. A more integrated approach may further enhance learning outcomes in these “BIN” dimensions.

**Review Committee consists of:**

Ann Terlaak (Chair), Associate Professor, Wisconsin School of Business  
Gregory DeCroix, Professor, Wisconsin School of Business  
Mark Finster, Associate Professor, Wisconsin School of Business  
Joan Schmit, Professor, Wisconsin School of Business
John McKenna, MBA Student Representative
Seth Block, Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies Student Representative