DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE

Staff/Student Committee Meeting

Wednesday 3rd March 2010

Present:

Yazid Alaoui Bouhamid 1st Year Finance Rep
Alexandra Fortmuller 1st Year Finance Rep
Aishah Hamid 2nd Year Accounting Rep
Eldos Karimov 2nd Year Finance Rep
Mihail Calinescu 3rd Year Finance Rep
Christopher Sliman 3rd Year Accounting and Finance Rep
Lesley McCann Honours Finance Rep
Laura Kirkpatrick Honours Finance Rep
John Dunn Staff (Chair)
Susan Jackson Staff
Yvonne Joyce Staff Representative
Juliane Thamm Staff Representative
William Finlay Tutor Representative

Apologies:

Chloe Fraser 1st Year Accounting and Finance Rep
Fiona Young Honours Accounting Rep

Reports from Year representatives

HONOURS YEAR

ACCOUNTING
It was noted that the student reps did not receive much feedback.

AG411 Auditing Theory & Practice
The primary feedback was that students found the group discussions helpful to the understanding of the papers and particularly liked the papers that were chosen. Students felt that providing handouts of the slides would be beneficial and would prefer more mixed learning and not just group discussions.

40422 Developments in Financial Accounting and 40423 Accounting Classics
Students felt that these classes would benefit from having groups present of different papers as they become very repetitive. Although students felt that presentations were a good idea as it encourages them to read the paper.
FINANCE

40438 Case Studies (Corporate Finance)
Students felt that the lecturer was very approachable and found the question and answer mini lectures useful. Students would prefer to have more teaching content or handouts available on LearnOnline. Students did not welcome the change from 2 assignments to 3 assignments considering the already hectic workload. Some students found Case 1 to be too vague and not clear on what was required for the assignment.

40415 Management of Investments
The students thought the course notes were good but poorly structured. There were some mixed reviews to the amount of breaks in the lectures – some felt it made the lecture drag whereas other felt that they were effective.

40437 Empirical Projects in Security Analysis
The majority of students felt that running excel labs for this class would be extremely useful as it is difficult to understand complex excel processes without seeing them in action. Workshops would be seen as valuable as they would allow you to see whether you have understood the excel process or not. Students also felt they would benefit from worked answers online.

40434 Corporate Investment Theory & Policy
Students found the lecture notes to be useful and by completing the notes in class rewards those students who show up. They also found the practical examples with numbers useful.

AG405 Finance Dissertation
Students felt that the level of feedback between supervisors differs as some students are given deadlines when others don’t. Students find some supervisors to be more helpful and approachable than others. Students feel that having deadlines near the dissertation is unfair as this seems to differ to other courses in the Business School who can have up to 1 month off from other deadlines.

Response from John Dunn: students should approach their individual supervisors on these issues.

Response from Patrick McColgan: It is made clear in the finance honours guidance notes that students are expected to receive feedback from supervisors within 2 weeks. An email was sent to all finance dissertation students four weeks prior to the submission deadline to reaffirm this. This email applies to all students consistently. Thereafter, I do not plan to ask individual supervisors to be any more consistent in their feedback and deadlines. Some supervisors prefer to set a deadline to receive a draft of the whole dissertation up to a month in advance but will still feedback if received prior to 2 weeks, while others prefer to receive draft chapters as they are completed. This is set out to supervisees by their supervisor. The only deadlines for the dissertation are the final submission deadline of 31st March, and 2 weeks before this to be certain of receiving feedback on draft materials submitted.

Regarding the issue of timing of dissertations relative to other assessments, this is unavoidable. The department makes great effort to notify students of continuous assessment deadlines well in advance such that they are able to plan in advance and manage their time appropriately. Since dissertation submission deadlines are not consistent across departments it is not possible to avoid clashes with all forms of assessment. At the same time, postponing
assignments to a later date or bringing them forward to earlier times does not reduce a person's workload; it simply shifts it to a point where it could interfere with exam revision and/or other assignment deadlines.

Without wishing to reject or ignore the suggestion of students receiving better feedback from some supervisors than others, we often find that such differences are perceived rather than actual, particularly as the tension of submitting the final dissertation comes closer and closer. Ultimately the dissertation is the student's responsibility and not the supervisors. However, any student who does not feel that they have received appropriate feedback from their supervisors should contact myself as honours coordinator to discuss their concerns.

FIRST YEAR
AG151 Introduction to Finance and Accounting
Students like having the printed lecture slides and enjoy having use of examples. The students find the lectures to be enthusiastic, have a clear method and they like having calculations explained. The students noted that they would prefer if the lecturer references. In the tutorials the students liked the small classes with use of questions and answers. Student would prefer to have additional practice tasks on LearnOnline.

AG111 Accounting Technologies
As in semester one the lecturer received very positive feedback. The elements that students found most helpful were the PowerPoint presentations as they were easy to follow and understand, working through example questions, accounts and financial statements and being provided notes in lectures and filling in the blanks as this helped to keep everybody at the same pace and helps them focus and keep up with the lectures. It was noted from a few students that with worked examples students would prefer to have an explanation as to why certain steps were being taken. The class received very positive feedback on tutorials and noted that the questions selected for tutorials were relevant to the topics covered in lectures. This was something that the students last semester felt was not the case therefore the students were happy with the improvement.

AG105 Introduction to Finance and Financial Statistics
The class received positive feedback overall, students praised the slide show presentations as they were detailed and informative and available easily on LearnOnline. Students also liked the extra example questions on LearnOnline with answers and completing worked examples in lectures. However, some students felt that the lectures were very rushed and not enough time was spent going through the presentation and explaining what was being done. Feedback on tutorials was also very positive with students appreciating having the questions set before the tutorial, having the opportunity to go over the questions with the tutor and having smaller groups.

Response from Juliane Thamm: Thank you for your comments. I will adjust the speed of delivery in the lectures.

Response from Patrick McColgan: Thank you for the kind comments on the LearnOnline site and the organisation of tutorials. We will take on board the comments relating to the class lectures when designing this material in the future. If anyone would be willing to provide
further details on specific lectures where this is the case to allow us to address specific issues then please contact either Patrick or Juliane to discuss this further.

SECOND YEAR

ACCOUNTING

AG203 Value Theories
The class received very positive feedback overall, students appreciate the class being discussion based, the small class sizes, the combined lecture/tutorial, group tasks and found it easy to interact with the lecturer.
Students felt they would benefit from being provided more notes and more information on Taxonomy.

AG201 Cost Accounting
This class also received very positive feedback, the students like the lecture handouts and being able to fill in the blanks while following the lecture. Students also praised the small class sizes, pre assigned work, past paper questions and having group discussions before receiving answers.
Students felt they would benefit from more worked examples in the lecture handouts.

FINANCE

40234 Financial Analysis
Students are enjoying the class and noted that the presentations are good. The students like how the lecturer interacts with the class as it makes the lectures interesting.

AG204 Portfolio Theory
Students are enjoying this class however, they feel that the notes may be more helpful if they were in a different format such as slideshow including screen prints of the excel material. The students would prefer the lecturer to engage more with the students such as asking questions. The students felt that the use of laptops in the lectures would help when working on the excel material.

Previous students of the class explained that the class will be running labs in later weeks which will better explain the excel material.

THIRD YEAR

ACCOUNTING

AG301 Advanced Financial Accounting
The lecturer for this class received praise for the group discussions, lecture notes and extra readings that were provided.
Students would prefer to have class material available on LearnOnline and having answers to tutorial questions. Some students mentioned that there was no class textbook.

Response from Committee: to confirm to the students that there is a free textbook for each student which was donated by Deliotte and is available from the Departmental Office.
40311 Taxation
Students like the reading pack that is available for the class and the real life examples that are used. There is mixed feelings on the lecture notes as some students like them while others feel they are cluttered with many errors. Students like having printed solutions available. Students would prefer to have a break in the lecture. The students enjoy the group discussions in tutorials and being able to discuss answers in groups. Some students find the notes for the tutorials unclear as they are unsure of where to start in some weeks. Students also find that there are too many questions in the tutorials. The students would prefer not to be singled out to answer questions.

40318 Accounting Systems
The class received very positive feedback, students enjoy the interactive learning and find the notes easy to understand and well explained by the lecturer. Other features that were praised were the excellent use of electronic resources, good depths of topics with plenty of optional reading, online discussions and online accounts and that the material is up to date so always relevant. Students would prefer to have clearer information of what need to be done for the following class and clearer information on the coursework.

FINANCE
40335 Topics in Corporate Finance
The class received positive feedback; students are enjoying the wide variety of references, and ‘make sure you know’ section. The students like the slides and being able to write your own notes and find the examples useful for studying. The tutor for the class received very positive feedback as students find her helpful and they enjoyed being able to work through examples with clear workings and explanations. The students complained that the lecture room was too cold and that they feel they would benefit from a Business Finance revision lecture before starting this class.

Response from Susan Jackson; the temperature of the room has been reported to Learning Services.

Response from Yvonne Joyce: students are advised on lecture 1 that the class is progressive from business finance and if they feel they are struggling with that material, they are advised to revise the relevant parts of that course. Unfortunately there is no time to offer a revision lecture as part of 40335.

40361 Treasury Management
All the students like the lecturer for the class and are enjoying the interactive lectures and using real life examples. The students like having the workshop before the lecture as it acts as a refresher before the lecture starts. Some students mentioned that there are some spelling and formatting mistakes in the handouts which could be corrected for next year. Students would prefer to have the material available on LearnOnline and would benefit from having a reading list provided for each week.

AG303 Empirical Methods in Finance
Students find the handbook useful and like having the lecture sheets. Students find the tutors very helpful and enjoy having the non compulsory labs where help is available only if needed.
Students mentioned that the lecturer’s batteries in his microphone run out every week and find it difficult to hear when this happens. It was also mentioned that the lectures room temperature is unbearable at times.

Response from Susan Jackson; the temperature of the room has been reported to Learning Services.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING
Week 7, Semester 1, 2010-11
(Provisionally: Wednesday 10th November 2010)