

Ongoing transformation at UPM Business School: Role of AACSB accreditation process

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Introduction

- I do not work for AACSB. I work for UPM
- This is not a marketing campaign for AACSB or any other accreditation

Introduction

- Structure of UPM Business School
- Recognition of GSM as one of the top two business schools in Malaysia by MOHE (Ministry of Higher Education)
- Vision of MOHE to make Malaysia as an educational hub of this region
 - Mandate to attract more foreign students, funds and outstanding faculty members
- Status of accreditation process at UPM
 - Accreditation Plan already accepted by PAC and IAC. In the process of implementation of accreditation plan

Introduction

- Accreditation does
 - enhance reputation
 - attract students
 - attract qualified faculty members
 - attract funds and projects
- In this paper, we address an important issue:
 - Role of accreditation in transforming/improving the internal processes within the business school

Some interesting debates on accreditation

- A provocative critique of accreditation by Julian & Ofori-Dankwa (2006) and Trank & Rynes (2003)
 - Accreditation is a flawed process because by asking the applicants to meet a set of prescribed standards, accreditation necessarily reduces for flexible change and this is incongruent with today's dynamic environment
 - A trend towards “accreditocracy”
 - A school that places accreditation criteria ahead of its local strategic imperatives risks losing its way

Some interesting debates on accreditation

- Accreditation, done well, can actually assist business schools meet their strategic and operational objectives (Ashkanasy, 2008)
- Some interesting remarks by Romero (2008)
 - A major role for AACSB is assisting schools in strategic management to facilitate long-term success
 - Strategic leadership is encouraged by way of initial accreditation and maintenance processes that evaluate the school's strategy implementation and mission integrity

Some interesting debates on accreditation

- Some interesting remarks by Romero (2008) – continued
 - One major competitive advantage that accreditation schools enjoy is quality and the standards promote continuously improving quality
 - AACSB encourages flexibility and creativity
 - Evidence of performance required by AACSB is consistent with strategy implementation process used in industry
 - AACSB provides a general baseline of quality that encourages innovation and continuous improvement in a global environment

Some interesting debates on accreditation

- Some interesting remarks by Zammuto (2008)
 - Accreditation processes require a clear articulation of purpose and strategy
 - Value of accreditation as a quality differentiator appears to be rising in the markets (full-time / part-time / international students)

Some prefatory remarks on AACSB

- It is mission-driven
 - Treats mission as a living document
- Helps to build a scholarship culture
- Focuses on quality of educational activities
- Standards are grouped under three categories:
 - Strategic management standards
 - Participants standards – students, faculty, and staff
 - Assurance of learning standards

Areas of major improvement at UPM

- Treatment of mission statement
- Portfolio of intellectual contributions
- Classification of faculty members into AQ/PQ/Others
- Better qualification of part-time faculty members
- Handling of external programs
- Assurance of learning standards
- Faculty of Economics and Management (undergraduate programs) and Graduate School of Management – working as a single unit

Treatment of mission statement

- Being practical
 - In line with the resources, research output, and the reach
- Involvement of stakeholders in the formulation
 - All faculty members
 - Students
 - Alumni
 - Advisory board members

Portfolio of intellectual contributions

- Awareness among faculty members
- About 3 years ago, the contribution was more toward discipline-based research
- Now the faculty members publish in other categories as well: learning and pedagogy and contributions to practice

AQ/PQ/Others

- More transparent
- Benchmarks set based on discussions with the deans of schools from different parts of the world
- Faculty members motivated to do research and publish
- Research outputs of the school have increased consistently
- AQ/PQ increased within the last two years
 - 58% to 77% at the UG level
 - 74% to 81% at the PG level

Qualification of part-time faculty members

- Business school puts more emphasis on the academic qualification / professional experience of part-time faculty members
 - Impact on AQ/PQ/Others
 - Improvement in the quality of delivery

Handling of external programs

- More faculty participation in course delivery
- Use of technology to provide UPM classroom experience at external colleges
 - Teleconferencing (trial)
 - Recording the sessions and posting on virtual class

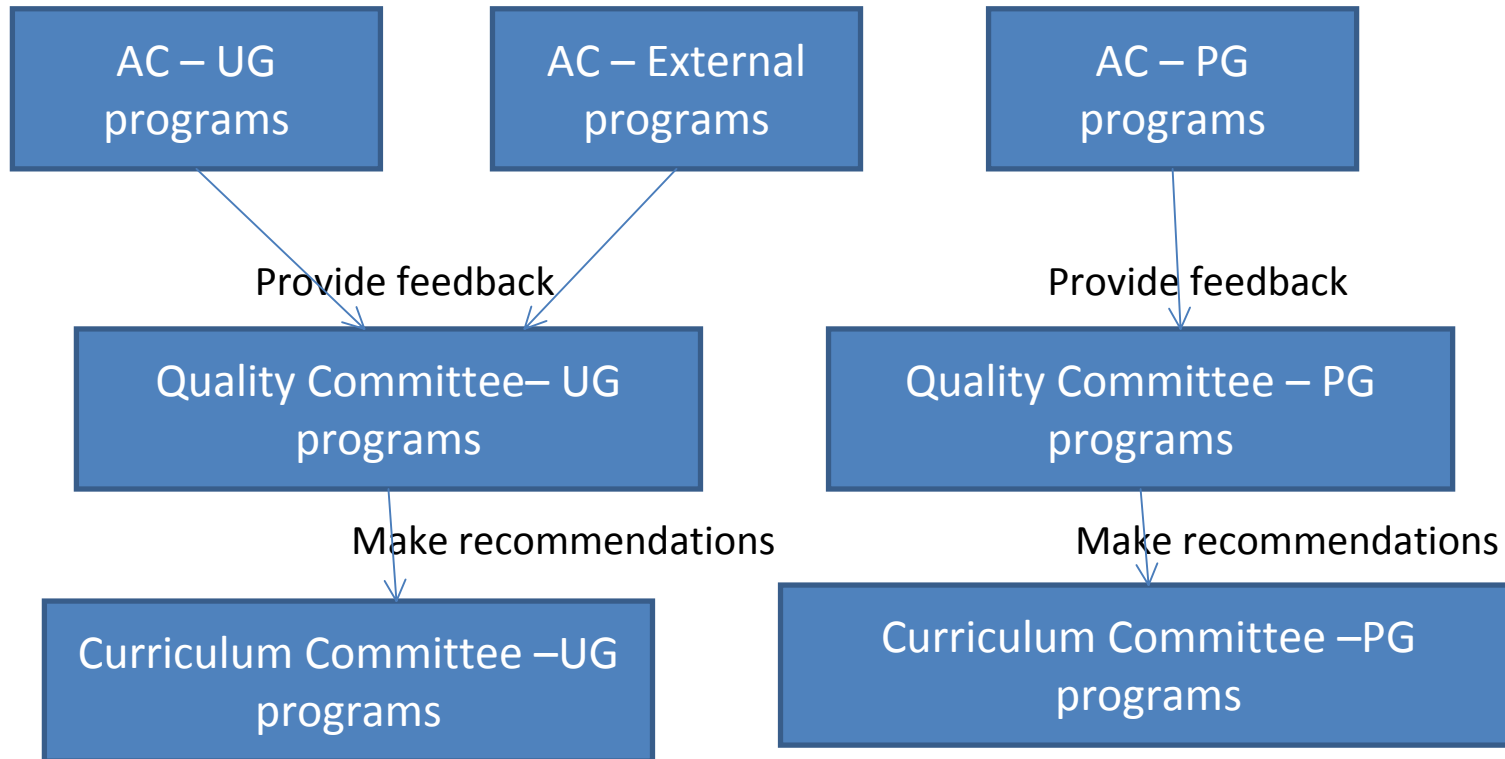
Assurance of learning standards

- This has been an area of substantial improvement
- Formulating learning goals and learning objectives for all programs (undergraduate and postgraduate)
 - Being practical
 - In line with MQA (Malaysian Qualification Agency) requirements
- Identifying the avenues to assess the achievement of learning goals

Assurance of learning standards

- Designing the assessment rubrics based on the learning objectives
- Designing the complete assurance of learning system
 - Learning goals and objectives – assessment rubrics – actual assessment – using assessment to improve curriculum, course delivery
- Pilot implementation completed successfully

Assurance of learning standards



FEP and GSM working as a single unit

- Faculty members are shared between FEP and GSM
- For all practical purposes, they were separate units with little interaction
- In the last three years (after becoming a member of AACSB), the management of FEP and GSM have designed processes that enable close interaction between FEP and GSM

Conclusion

- AACSB has helped UPM Business School make significant improvements
- Faculty members know clearly what is expected of them in terms of research and other responsibilities
- Assurance of Learning assessment process enable the Business School to ensure that the learning goals are achieved
- Business School is mission driven

THANK YOU