

INTERNATIONALIZATION OF MBA PROGRAMS: A REVIEW OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL ASPECT OF MASTER'S OF BUSINESS-LEVEL  
PROGRAMS IN TOP DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS

by

David W. Tibbetts

TONY PIZUR, Ph.D., Faculty Mentor and Chair

JUDITH L. FORBES, Ph.D., Committee Member

JOHN WHITLOCK, Ph.D., Committee Member

Barbara Butts Williams, Ph.D., Interim Dean, School of Business and Technology

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## Abstract

This dissertation looks at how well do the institutions support their top ranked IMBA programs, the commitment of the institution to those programs, and their individual level of internationalization of the program. A qualitative interview survey of the deans or directors of individual IMBA programs and a quantitative review of the IMBA program requirements and components are made. The purpose of these tasks is to identify support for the IMBA programs, the content of those programs, the commitment of the institutions, and their individual level of internationalization. The qualitative portion of this study was to develop a method of identifying an institutions position as to internationalization of their program. Mintzberg in his book *Managers not MBAs a hard look at a soft practice of managing and management development*, offers characteristics and descriptions of what he considers necessary for a program to be considered international. The necessary items are diversified students; a truly international faculty; the program should be offered at different geographic locations; and finally, the institution has to be supportive of context, culture and philosophy, as they indicate commitment to internationalization by the institution. It is this item, how the institutions support their program, which is used to explore how international an institution's program is. Interviews with IMBA deans or directors were held to bring out both current and source-level data regarding the institutions focus via the mission and vision type statements and administration of direction of the IMBA program. The data was reviewed and coded to reflect the institutions mission or vision statements, identify actions taken, and discover how they were supported. The second task was to quantitatively identify the academic components of an IMBA education and develop a standardized program

guideline requirements of those requirements unique to an international MBA. The data was dissected into prerequisites for admission and program offerings or curriculum directly related to the international education. By looking at the individual academic requirements one program can be compared to another, conclusions made, and a way to measure each program produced. A matrix of the top IMBA programs and their individual components is created for examination.

## Dedication

I dedicate this effort to my immediate family: wife and life partner – Kathy Tibbetts; our steadfast daughter and son-in-law, June and Mike Connors; and my inspiration to do better our granddaughter, Kellie Connors. Without whose support, time and consistent assistance allowed me the time alone to do this.

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## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

### Premise

Beech (2006), in *Intense, Vigorous, Soft and Fun: Identity Work and the International MBA*, wrote about the “International” Master’s of Business Administration (IMBA) and looked to Mintzberg’s (2005) recent critique to see what may be necessary for a program to be called international.

Mintzberg (2005) argues that there are four aspects in which an MBA programme can be international; the students; the staff; the location and locus of control; and the context, philosophy and culture. He goes on to say that on the basis of using these aspects of internationalism as criteria, he knows of no international MBA programmes. (Beech, p. 41)

Of Mintzberg’s (2005) four components, one can be used to examine directly an institution’s commitment to an international education, the context, philosophy, and culture of the IMBA program as contained in brochures, catalogs, and other published materials encompassing vision and or mission statements. Keywords are used in content analysis of the institution’s program focus. The extent of this commitment is supported by the institutions inclusion or adherence to guidelines of necessary components of a complete international program as identified through current literature, international academic needs, and the needs of those businesses hiring the IMBAs.

Mintzberg’s (2005) foundation for his International Master’s in Practicing Management (IMPM) program is built upon his four components. Three of which are simply: use international students and staff, use global locations for different parts of the program, and require company support of the candidate. The third category actually addresses the difference in context, philosophy, and culture and illustrates the

Mintzberg's meaning of "international" management. The knowledge and experience gained through examining the differences in various cultures, societies and philosophies become the learned ability to influence and affect business dealings and decisions in international situations.

The qualitative portion of this dissertation addresses how many institutions include Mintzberg's third category's (international) key concepts in their literature and official program mission and vision positions and statements. Institutions use identified keywords, such as culture, philosophy, and context, to describe their IMBA educational programs, as well as meet most of the key IMBA program guideline requirements found in domestic and foreign schools literature. The keywords are defined as (adapted from the Encarta Dictionary)

*Culture.* A shared belief and values of a particular nation or people or as a group of people whose shared beliefs and practices identify the particular place, class or time to which they belong.

*Context.* Relates to the circumstances or events that form the environment within which something exists or takes place, surrounding conditions, or things taken from within an environment.

*Philosophy.* The beliefs, principles, or aims, underlying an international people's practice or conduct, also a set of basic principles or concepts underlying a particular sphere of knowledge.

## Introduction to the Problem

Today education recognizes that business as usual in the United States is not necessarily an applicable method of management in Europe, Asia, or anywhere else in the world. Once a unique focus of an MBA course of study, the emphasis on international or global problems and methods has now become a necessary component of the IMBA

skills set. Corporations that have not expanded internationally or have not been touched in their marketplaces by international competitors are rare.

In 1993, a PhD dissertation (Lyn) looked at the internationalization of both domestic MBA and internationally based MBA programs. That study found many programs lacking and in need of expansion, in both the areas of social context, and in common IMBA guideline requirements. Fourteen years later, some changes have been made and some have not. The present study reexamines the issues addressed in that research and develops a method of determining the degree to which institutions are addressing the internationalization of the traditional MBA program.

A great deal of criticism has been leveled at the traditional MBA programs especially when reviewing the expansion into the international or global arenas. The literature review (chapter 2) examines numerous journal articles that question whether IMBA programs provide real tools for international management. It is these academic authorities that this study draws upon to highlight the preferred components and shortcomings of various programs. Additionally some doubt that business programs that try to address the conducting of business across international boundaries can provide the tools for managers to deal with problems internationally. Even more problems arise when looking at the IMBA programs as a proper foundation for use in developing advanced managing skills. What is missing? Is it the experience of the students, the inclusion of diversity components, or is it just a philosophical difference in pedagogy?

Mintzberg's (2005) book, *Managers not MBAs, A Hard Look at the Soft Practice of Managing and Management Development*, addresses his solution to the educational program requirements for an international MBA program. He noted that

The words international and especially global have become mantras in today's business schools. Not a brochure must go out, it seems, or a press interview given without some mention of them. Domestic business is out, no matter how common it may remain; global business is in, whatever that means. (p. 170)

His program offers an International Master's in Practicing Management (IMPM) and takes four distinct views of how an MBA program can be considered as international rather than just an MBA. First, the student makeup needs to be diversified, from different cultures and countries. Second, the attitudes, experiences, and origins of the faculty must be international. Third and the most important of these factors is that "the context, philosophy, and culture (should) be international" (Mintzberg, 2005, p. 170). And finally, the program, its control and location needs to be varied and "not dominated by one country" (Mintzberg, p. 170).

How an institution addresses these components of IMBA programs provides us with a view of the institution's commitment to be an educator of international managers giving them the capabilities, tools, and experience to undertake the task of international managing. These four categories are what Mintzberg (2005) believed are missing in the traditional MBA program and combined with what he considers as the most primary of all requirements—experience—is what the MBA programs should be about. Mintzberg feels experience in managing and solving real problems in real time, rather than the ubiquitous Bachelor of Arts or Sciences entry-level management job, which usually has little or no managing, but has many learning challenges for the new hire, is what is needed in the realm of experience.

Mintzberg's (2005) four components, a primary IMBA guideline requirement, and the need to have students with serious managing experience offer emerges as a strong

thread throughout his book. This thread emphasizes the prior requirements and an international aspect of the educational process. Looking at the individual components, it is obvious that he has not moved away from traditional training but from how and where it is presented. The inclusion of the IMBA guideline requirements coupled with Mintzberg's four components provides a basis for both comparison and compliance reviews.

The first component is the students: "The students can be international (meaning rooted in various cultures, not drawn to one)" (p. 170). Diversity in the classroom is Mintzberg's (2005) objective as the students will interact and learn from each other's culture, opinions, and management style. This diversity is somewhat limited by the selection of participants which will tend to be from the five locations comprising the program's base.

The second component, "The faculty can be international (in their heads, not just their origins)" (Mintzberg, 2005, p. 170) has been a long time concern of critics and that is, are the professors able to think and present global concepts. Do they have the experiences in international trade to guide the students in their quests for global understanding adequately?

The third and main subject of this study is the only identifiable difference between skills taught in a university's MBA management course and that same university's international management course. It is the "context, philosophy, and culture" (Mintzberg, 2005, p. 171). This aspect needs to be included in every international or global graduate-level course. Most institutions address these as positive parts of their educational offerings. Key Words like society, culture, and diversity become part of the



mission statements, the program description, and the catalogue statement of purpose for the IMBA program. It is these key words that the study looks for in the institutions program descriptions, explanations, and mission statements. Qualitative interviews with the IMBA deans or IMBA program managers pose various questions designed to draw out more of the institutions and management's position on internationalization.

The final component is place or where delivered. Should it be totally in the hallowed halls of a Midwestern state campus or dispersed throughout various countries during the total program length? Mintzberg (2005) believed that the bulk of the program should be delivered in units across a broad spectrum concluding with a home-based major paper/report. Mintzberg's IMPM program uses the dispersed facilities of five locations worldwide, thus exposing the students to various countries, cultures, societies, and mores.

This globe is made up of all kinds of worlds. Should we not, therefore, be encouraging our managers to become more worldly, defined earlier as experienced in life, in both a sophisticated and practical way? Managers need to get into worlds beyond their own—other people's worlds, their habits and cultures—so that they can better know their own world. To paraphrase T. S. Eliot's famous words, they should be exploring ceaselessly in order to return home and know the place for the first time. That is the worldly mindset. (Mintzberg, p. 304)

The second feature of an internationalized program is a review of critical IMBA program guideline requirements obtained from international curriculum descriptions and requirements, corporate views on necessary international training and hiring requirements, and specific entrance requirements focused on prior (to the IMBA) education, experience, and abilities. Reviews such as these make up the components of

the IMBA program guideline requirements including language requirements, internships, course availability, and internationally qualified faculty.

These educational program components addressing international business needs create a guideline for the internationalized program components and requirements. These pieces of the educational requirements and training components, when identified and classified provide a strong basis for judging the completeness of an international MBA educational program. They must be describable, easily quantifiable, and fully attainable. Schools seeing a deficiency in one or more of the categories should be able to implement changes in order to increase their schools' rankings.

This study employed various methods to examine and measure these categories including review of documents, brochures, catalogs, information from AIB, The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), and CIBET reports, mission statements, and program descriptions. These data are divided into two groups, the first are interviews, with the deans and program managers responsible for the IMBA programs, focused on the support and direction of the institution regarding internationalization. Second is a list of actual requirements, program content, depth of program indicators, and descriptors that are unique to what most institutions include as a part of an IMBA program.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine whether an identifiable combination of elements would provide a complete international master's-level education and if the program's mission, vision, or objective statements support that commitment. The first

step was to conduct interviews with the program deans or managers designed to elicit information directed related to the institutions support for the IMBA program. Next there is the need to identify words and concepts (keywords) that are used to describe the program in the institution's literature, brochures, program descriptions, mission statements, objectives, and program focus:

1. Context
2. Culture
3. Philosophy

Combined with the interviews this data was analyzed. The second step reviewed the guidelines presented for such an IMBA program by both industry and educational institutions and determines the individual components or requirements unique to an international program.

The appearance of these words and descriptions in an institution's mission, vision, or program description was used in a content analysis. According to Chun and Davies (2001), "There are a number of approaches to content analysis. Many are qualitative in nature, relying upon the . . . opinion of one researcher" (p. 322). However, this study uses personal interviews so as not to rely solely upon the use of keywords analysis and academic guideline components for analysis.

Lyn's (1993) dissertation looked at the internationalization of various MBA programs around the world. The work examined in detail the curriculum offered, the focus on international issues, and information from both domestic and international programs. Since that study was completed, most colleges and university programs have undergone various curriculum changes. Ahlawat and Ahlawat (2006) examined what is

pushing the need to address globalization. They felt that “the ongoing shift toward economic globalization continues to raise questions about what intellectual capabilities, technical skills, and ethical sensibilities will best serve college graduates and enable them to best serve society” (p. 102). They concluded that “The structure of occupations confronting current college graduates is very different from the one faced by those born before 1980, as are the kinds of intellectual capabilities needed to do well or to do good” (p. 102).

Lyn’s (1993) study recommended the institutions produce IMBA programs that are responsive to the global business needs. The programs must have a diverse base of students; the curricula should address both functional and interdisciplinary relevance and include projects and programs on an international level (Lyn) This study, on the other hand, takes the next logical step and identifies the necessary components mentioned by educational institutions, researchers, businesses, and associations, and provides a proposed IMBA program guideline requirement list as a method of comparison. These academically oriented requirements and offerings make up the uniqueness of the international MBA and should be used to judge the completeness of one program verses another.

As Lyn (1993) reported, “MBA schools need to manage their programs as a global business and produce graduate students who meet the broader market needs” (p. 53). The schools need to have “the best multicultural faculty and students from all regions of the world . . . a curricula designed for both functional and interdisciplinary relevance . . . (and) facilitating and supporting multidisciplinary research projects and programs on an international basis” (Barrett, as cited in Lyn, p. 25).

The programs need to be reviewed and a determination made as to what, if any, additional changes or modifications should be made. Internationalization of academic texts, study guides, cases, and exercises must be kept current. Changes like these begin to connect the thread of internationalism throughout the academic offerings. The industries as commercial participants must be involved in that process and the field needs to be fully understood by the program administrators. Ahlawat and Ahlawat (2006) cited Cant's 2004 article on internationalizing the business curriculum that identified "five key global cultural competencies to be successful global managers: cultural self-awareness, cultural consciousness, ability to lead multicultural teams, ability to negotiate across cultures and a global mindset" (p. 104). They obviously believed that the knowledge of the appropriate cultural and its inherent differences were important.

Currently MBA programs are ranked based upon magazine rankings that use criteria such as number of applicants, starting salary for graduates, and hiring ratios. These rankings are published once a year and are looked at as a way of ranking or evaluating the various MBA programs available to prospective students. This study looks closer at the institution efforts in offering a curriculum that addresses the global environment, participation in the international business market place itself, and specific academic characteristics.

### Statement of the Problem

Simply put, does a proper master's-level program exist which offers training for international managers? Institutions face the need to update their curricula to meet the needs of the business society and their students. In some cultures, the education does not

lead to the job; it merely lays the foundation for the graduate to be expected to show the promise of future accomplishments. According to Ahlawat and Ahlawat (2006), “American businesses are increasingly operating outside the comfort of their own cultural environment” (p. 102). They stated that “students have to be engaged at a young age to develop a better understanding of differences in cultures and societies of the world” (p. 103). The major universities are becoming aware of the need to bring the study of culture from the anthropology classroom to the business case process (Ahlawat & Ahlawat).

This study is focused on identifying only international MBA programs which are considered in the top group. These institutions should offer to the students all the current methodology and pedagogy focused on the needs of the international field. Welch “comments that in the context of internationalization, institutions of higher education are looking to benefit from ‘new skills’ and different approaches brought by international scholars, better international research networks, or enhanced communications skills” (as cited in Richardson & McKernna, 2003, p. 775). The need exists to provide a balanced education that includes the identification of the differences in management and decision making from country to country.

Mellahi (2000) noted that educators need to address differences in decision making and management styles from culture to culture. Elkin, Devjee, and Farnsworth (2005) considered globalization of an institution’s IMBA program to be “a process of integrating an international dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of an institution of higher education, with the aim of strengthening international education” (p. 321). They felt that an international program is one “which involves and/or relates to the people and culture and systems of different nations” (Elkin et al., p. 321).

Conventional ranking by the business press such as *BusinessWeek* or *Forbes* focuses on academics, salaries, level of difficulty, GMATs and undergraduate GPA. What seems to be needed is a model or guideline to measure these programs against the components deemed important by the international hiring community. Hence, a need exists to have international components added to the IMBA curriculum. These components are discussed further in the literature review.

### Research Questions

No consistent or effective way to measure the value of the international portion of the MBA programs seems to exist. Most attempts produce magazine listings of the Top 100 MBA Schools based on applications, number of graduates, or Ranked by Starting Salary. To measure IMBA programs there is the need to determine what components make up an effective international MBA program. What identifiable parameters can be used to compare one IMBA program with another, what student prerequisites support IMBA programs requirements, and what program content specifics should make up most IMBAs curriculum?

The institutions position on internationalization was examined as it relates to the IMBA program. The study evaluates the institutions focus on internationalization of their MBA programs using content analysis with keywords from Mintzberg's book *Managers Not MBAs a hard look at the soft practice of managing and management development*. Interviews were conducted with the IMBA deans or program managers using questions related to the institutions support and efforts of internationalization.

A second focus is on the institution's entrance requirements of the prospective students, the depth of course offerings, and the richness of the hands-on opportunities. The study utilizes a methodology that examines the components of a program through the analysis of data obtained from catalogues and Web sites and conference and seminar schedules, such as the CIBER offerings and publications. This process produces IMBA program guideline requirements (IMBA-PGR) based on an internationalized program and provides a way to isolate the individual components.

### Significance of the Study

This study identifies requirements and program components of a school's offerings and analyzes the information as an accurate way to give the prospective student a way to compare programs focused on international education. This also allows institutions the opportunity to examine the steps needed to improve their offerings or enhance their programs of international business education. Finally it provides a way to translate global needs in business education for the international world into measurable program content.

One of the most obvious changes in direction is the IMBA programs requirements for language skills. For example, the United States is known as a place where most people speak only one language. In Europe, primarily because of proximity and similarities, many people involved in global business are comfortable in two or more languages. Larger companies in Europe usually extend beyond country borders both physically and through channels of distribution. Thus, being international or multinational is just part of doing business for the European manager, while the U.S.



counterparts may deal only with a handful of states or perhaps a regional territory. For this noninternational manager all that is needed in English.

The non-U.S. institutions readily expect a candidate to know more than one language, and some even expect knowledge of three languages. To meet those requirements students lacking in languages must take courses in addition to a regular business load to complete the requirement. Clearly any institution claiming an international MBA but having no second-language requirement would fall short of being ranked at all.

Another guideline category that provides a significant advantage to the IMBA candidate is an actual work abroad component to the program. With this, a student gains experiences that cannot be classroom taught. They must not only go to “work” every day in a foreign country, but they must be able to exist in the local culture after hours and become part of the neighborhood in another country and society.

Other categories include previous work experience, number of international courses offered and required, and expanded academic offerings in the forms of seminars and conferences. The use of the IMBA program guideline requirements differs significantly from the simple external view of most magazine lists that use outside values, such as starting salaries or position titles to establish a program’s value or rank.

### Definition of Terms

Keywords used to describe schools offerings along with the IMBA program guideline requirements need to be identified and defined. The primary term *international* must be understood as well as the unique situation in U.S. institutions where most

students are domestic and will be spending their entire careers within the confines of the United States. Students wishing to be involved with the global marketplace by earning international MBAs focus their aspirations on the opportunities in the international business world and will choose institutions that offer global education. The domestic students will be well-served with traditional MBA programs with an international course or two. The student working toward the IMBA, on the other hand, needs the additional exposure to having foreign students in the program, overseas involvement, as well as the international focus throughout the program.

European and Asian facilities have students from various countries and represent a diverse range of international students almost by default. These foreign students attending U.S.-based programs come from a global background already; it is the U.S.-born students who need the exposure to the diverse cultures. Therefore, internationalism of domestic programs or curricula must have international aspects and context in most of the courses. Case studies, examples, and global problems should be included in all core courses. On the other hand, for those programs offered in other countries, both the student make up and the general business climate, already international in nature, precludes the need for additional modification.

The terms *globalization* and *internationalization* are often used interchangeably. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) 1994 typology of internationalization defines internationalization of the curriculum such "that it draws on material from a range of different cultures and national and ethnic backgrounds, promotes cross-cultural awareness and multi-culturalism, and nurtures graduates to

develop the skills and knowledge to operate effectively in the global workplace environment” (as cited in Eades, 2006, p. 3).

“Moore and Lewis found evidence of multinational enterprises (MNEs) in the ancient world in the Assyrian, Phoenician, Greek, and Roman empires” (McAuley, 2004, p. 253). Allen and Raynor (2004) saw globalization as moving toward the “opening of national markets, more cross-border capital flows, and more international cooperation” (p. 18). Writing about globalization and the university, Altbach (2004) reported that “globalization is defined as the broad economic, technological, and scientific trends that directly affect higher education and are largely inevitable” (p. 5). According to O’Neill (2004)

For economists, globalization is, fundamentally, the increasing integration of the national economies of both advanced and developing countries. There may also be institutional and social manifestations of integration—particularly convergence of the regulatory and legislative structures governing commercial activity, of key components of social policy, of consumer “tastes,” and even of language and culture. (p. 16)

Marginson asserted a difference between global and internationalization at a higher level: “Globalization refers to the complex, multidimensional issues with world economies and systems. This is in contrast to ‘internationalization’ which refers to the growing relationship and interactions between national entities and cultures” (as cited in Schapper & Mayson, 2004, p. 190).

Additionally for the purposes of this study, it is necessary to define cultures or society.

Reynolds (2002) states that globalization refers to the growing commercial and social interrelationships made possible by the accessing and sharing of information across the globe. This affects the relationships between business and

finance, between producer and consumer, and between government and the public. (McAuley, 2004, p. 256)

This also includes the keywords used in the institution's literature and actual program offerings.

Schapper and Mayson (2004) claimed quite a few benefits from internationalization. It

Provides us with the benefits of cultural diversity for students and staff, the opportunities to foster research relationships across national boundaries, the increased knowledge base and the mere breaking down of national myopia are all worthwhile outcomes that are possible through internationalization. (p. 190)

McAuley (2004) astutely pointed out that

It can be concluded that, not surprisingly, there is no one agreed definition, but rather that there are perhaps three competing approaches. Thus, there is the narrow view of Rugman, which deals solely with the economic view driven by the MNEs; the more holistic view of Giddens, Tomlinson, Toffler and Toffler, which relates globalization to its social impact; or the macro processes view of technological innovation and liberalization of trade laws propounded by Giddens and Stewart. (p. 257)

McAuley (2004) favored the views of Giddens and Tomlinson and believed that globalization should be “defined as a multidimensional process of interrelationships between economy, politics, and culture, underpinned by often rapidly changing technology” (p. 258). The key word here is *culture*. Definitions without this are looking only at the results rather than the components of globalization or internationalization.

Pedagogical benefits also accrue to the institutions that recognize the need for internationalization such as “the opportunities and practice of what is variously called multicultural, cross-cultural, intercultural, or culturally inclusive education” (Schapper & Mayson, 2004, p. 190). Altbach (2004), on the other hand, favored a higher-level approach and stated, “Internationalization includes specific policies and programmes

undertaken by governments, academic systems and institutions and even individual departments or institutions to cope with or exploit globalization” (p. 6).

Critics have a problem with these efforts which include culture as a component of international business courses and consider them

Crude efforts at implementing an internationalization strategy within higher education. And they feel that we must look at the realities faced by academic staff engaged in implementing the internationalized curriculum (and who are) expected to deliver (the) university’s approach to internationalization. (Schapper & Mayson, 2004, p. 191)

No matter what the definition or keywords used, the faculty needs to embrace and understand the needs and components of “internationalizing” the curriculum by the inclusion of culture and society affects on the educational process.

It is the components of culture, within each society, that provide a challenge to international managers. The simple use of the keywords context, culture, and philosophy in the program’s mission statement or description shows the institution’s commitment to internationalization of its program. Moreover, it is what the educational institutions specifically need to address within their international business curricula to meet the real-world needs.

#### Assumptions and Limitations

Only full-time programs offering a full MBA with either an “international” designation or specific concentration in an “international” program are considered. “Executive” and less than full-time student programs will not be reviewed. Institutions were selected from the *U.S. News & World Report* ranking of the top 100 MBA programs in the U.S. institutions were chosen from the top down selecting only those offering a

full-time IMBA program. The deans or department managers were contacted for participation in the research.

Program guidelines or requirements are derived from current studies; literature and industry needs, and are focused on creating a more 'international' program and a better-prepared student to meet the unique international challenges.

Researcher biases that may influence the interpretation of the data: (a) The researcher received an MBA from participating institution 5. The program was a full MBA program of 10 graduate-level business courses and had as a significant requirement the completion of an undergraduate study of business administration. (b) The researcher believes that the interview process was a learning and broadening experience for both the interviewees and interviewer.

## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### History and Background

Greco (2001) cited Jeanne Wilt, assistant dean of admissions at University of Michigan's Business School as saying the following:

There are plenty of paths to success in business, so why do people want an MBA? It's because it's the single best way to get a solid knowledge of the basic business building blocks—accounting, finance, marketing, human resources, and organizational behavior—and it's the best way to round out your work experience. (p. 39)

This is a concise look at what institutions, scholars, and hiring companies feel must be offered to provide the solid foundation for the new IMBA manager.

Hancock (1998) defined the older MBA program as

Accrediting agencies, the governing bodies of prominent academics, formulated and policed the training regime, dictating the finest details of content and delivery. A separate course in each core business area—economics, accounting, marketing, finance, operations, and human resources, each taught by professors highly specialized in that discipline—was thought to provide the most comprehensive exposure—to managerial—thought and practice. (p. 41)

Hancock identified the major underlying problem—social interaction. As he suggested, “Survey after survey of alumni, recruiters, and executives found recurring criticism that graduate schools were not preparing MBAs for the real world of business. Particulars were abundant. MBAs were seen as technically brilliant but lacking in social skills” (p. 42).

What “we have built is weird, almost unimaginable design for MBA-level education” that distorts those subjected to it into “critters with lopsided brains, icy hearts, and shrunken souls” (Leavitt, as cited in Pfeffer & Fong, 2002, p. 82). Gosling and

Mintzberg (2004) noted that “contemporary business education focuses on the functions of business more than the practice of managing” (p. 19).

Hancock (1998) concluded that “The great weakness of the ‘Old MBA’ was its preoccupation with substance over style, with building models rather than relationships” (p. 44). He believed that the changes being made and the new focus on “communicative, interpersonal and team-building skills” (p. 44) will steer the programs more in the direction of today’s needs.

A new degree, IMPM, developed by Mintzberg (2005), focuses on “strengthen[ing] the bond between manager and organization by developing people in context. It is designed to help them do a better job, not get a better job” (p. 331).

The International Association for Management Education feels that “every student should be exposed to the international dimension through one or more elements of the curriculum . . . with strategies (that) can be broken down into four major categories” (as cited in Walton & Basciano, 2006, p. 2).

The first category is integration or the inclusion of international elements within the basic core curricula. Second is focus on including an international business course as a core course. The third looks at specialization or the inclusion of international business as a full major or at least as a concentration. Finally is hands-on where the student completes part of a required program as an intern or foreign exchange student at an overseas site (Walton & Basciano, 2006).



## Rankings

The United States is a society wishing to be scored or judged on everything it does. From ‘how was supper?’ to a performance review in the office, Americans see ourselves measured against a scale of some kind. Schools are no different and usually look to the association or accrediting body for some idea of their positions compared to others. However, this somewhat informal view became much more focused when *BusinessWeek* in 1988 published a ranking of full-time MBA programs. According to Policano (2005), “That article set in motion a rankings frenzy that has escalated every year. Today, few business school deans can ignore the impact that MBA rankings have had on their schools” (p. 26).

Much of the data used by the business magazines to determine the ranking of schools can be considered as subjective. One organization used the starting salary as an indicator of program ranking. This says nothing about the quality, where the new employee ends up in the organization, or if success is attained over time. Some studies suggest that a measure of accomplishment or success over a period of time should be seen. This would be an excellent follow up study to see if the highly ranked institutions produce managers with strength and longevity. Other data used to do rankings are enrollment rates and program popularity measured only by gross numbers of applicants, average GMAT scores, accepted candidates, and application volumes.

Schools find that ranking does make a difference, and they are all involved in various programs to improve or retain their rankings. According to Policano (2005), “To improve their rankings, many schools are admitting only students who fit the classic *U.S. News* profile—individuals with high GMAT scores, high GPAs, and extensive work

experience” (p. 29). Others use class size, PR agencies, or staff attempts at branding initiatives and the like.

Accrediting organizations and collage affinity groups have noted this ranking fury and “AACSB International . . . plans to work with the media to improve criteria, conduct research on the impact of rankings, and help members provide information to publications” (Policano, 2005, p. 31).

### Problems With IMBA Programs and Business Education

Problems and criticism of IMBA programs fall into various categories. Some are directly related to the course offerings others to the structure of the programs, and still others address the specific content of the management decision-making style. Rapert, Velliquette, Smith, and Garretson (2004) claimed “MBA programs are not preparing students to deal with global business environmental and ethical issues” (p. 17). Hahs (1999) concluded that the programs are not working mainly because he feels in the real world “employers criticized business schools and business graduates as generally unable to transfer content knowledge to real situations in a fast-paced global work place” (p. 197). Hancock (1998) stated that “business school graduates do not understand how the various business functions fit together” (p. 43). Tootoonchi, Lyons, and Hagen reported that “We are guided not only by our own understanding of what needs to be taught but also by research that suggests that MBA students overwhelmingly support the use of real-world examples in class” (as cited in Barker & Stowers, 2005, p. 482).

Another area of problems in the IMBA curriculum is the use of teams and the constraints of using a lock-step program. Lock-step fits the incoming student into a group

which will be classmates throughout most, if not all, of the program. This does “allow courses to build on one another. Lockstep course work ensures that students entering each class have a common foundation and allowed projects and team membership to span any number of semesters” (Hancock, 1998, p. 43). The only problem with this technique is that it does not allow “students to set their own pace and course load, (which) can accommodate different sorts of circumstances; ‘integrated’ MBAs cannot” (Hahs, 1999, p. 4). Students having to work while in a program or who have family commitments may not be able to schedule all the lock-step courses because of personal needs.

An MBA education is traditionally “compartmentalized by subject area and extremely successful people . . . approach their tasks with a distinctly more integrated decision-making process than their less successful peers” (Pfeffer & Fong, 2002, p. 85).

As a common method of instruction, most schools choose either the lecture or case method “but in relatively few instances in established business schools is there much clinical training or learning by doing—experiential learning where concrete experience is the basis for observation and reflection” (Pfeffer & Fong, 2002, p. 85). Programs offering on-site participation seem to be more in tune with providing the student with true international experience. Some institutions offer a consultancy or internship of 2 or more months with the student participating every day at the company’s location and having the unique experience of after-hours interaction providing a strong social foundation. As Pfeffer and Fong suggested

The importance of practice and experience is why studies of leadership development consistently find that the best way of developing leaders is to provide people with opportunities to lead. The importance of clinical experience is also one reason why on-the-job training is so effective—it avoids the transfer of training problem, or generalizing what is learned in the classroom to the work

setting, that to some extent bedevils other education modalities. Without a larger clinical or practice component it is not clear that business schools ever will impart much lasting knowledge that affects graduates' performance. (p. 86)

Mintzberg (2005) used McCall's two rules regarding hands-on training to counter managers being faced with "unfamiliar functions, businesses, products, or technologies" (p. 203). Some of these managers have been assigned to international postings where they were "unable to speak the language or communicate with people they manage" (Mintzberg, p. 203). The rules are first personal "development is something people do for themselves and second is that challenges can encourage this self development" (Mintzberg, p. 203). Diversity "has been marred by dreary associations with quotas and political correctness" (Pfeffer & Fong, 2002, p. 56). But utilizing people from various nations or regions provide the "global talent (that) has become an essential element of modern-day corporate success" (Pfeffer & Fong, p. 56).

The traditional MBA programs began in the United States, and offers "environmental and social sustainability, themes outside of elective in subjects commonly regarded as 'stand alone' units" (Bubna-Litic & Benn, 2003, p. 29). Societal aspects of a program needed to be reexamined. Thomas and Anthony showed that MBA degree holders have not been trained as managers who "engage social, political and conceptual abilities that are far beyond the reach of the currently (used) battery of analytical techniques" (as cited in Bubna-Litic & Benn, p. 30).

Baker and Phillips (1999) pointed out that the lack of real-world experience and more importantly work experience are the most significant problems with IMBA students today. Baker interviewed business executives that hire IMBAs and found that "graduates hired for entry-level finance positions lack real-world experience and work experience;

there is [also] a failure of business schools to provide adequate management, leadership, and interpersonal skills” (Baker & Phillips, p. 339).

While most programs require previous work experience usually between 2 and 4 years, an immediate problem arises as to has the candidate had enough, if any, management experiences in such a short time. Mintzberg (2005) pointed out that “effective managing happens where art, craft, and science meet. However, when you have a class of students who have hardly managed there is usually little connection between these aspects due to inexperience” (p. 10).

Greco (2001) interviewed Jim Beirne, a recruiter for General Mills. Greco asked if Beirne thought

Schools turn out theoreticians who then have to be tutored about the real world. “There’s no question that I’d like to see some improvement. The analysis MBAs are taught is outstanding, but it’s the practical applications of that analysis, coupled with an ability to lead, that we spend a lot of time on.” (Beirne, as cited in Greco, p. 42)

Renowned financial practitioner and author Michael C. Ehrhardt pointed to the “real world” and how it receives current MBAs: “Many contend that typical MBA graduates are not prepared to contribute value to the corporation; they do not write or speak effectively; do not work well in teams and do not understand the cross-functional processes necessary in an organization” (as cited in Kumara-Swamy, 2000, p. 66).

Robert Rubin, president of the Society for Information Management, added that

What’s missing in the relationship between businesses and business schools is dialogue between practitioners and professors that ensures course work gives students a good sense of what’s going on in the business environment. We have to strengthen the relationship between academia and the practical business world. (as cited in Hahs, 1999, p. 198)

In a 2000 study, Kumara-Swamy summed it up: “the practical hands on part of the problem solution is not covered in traditional textual training” (p. 67).

The Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER) feels that two specific areas need to be included in the IMBA programs. First they feel that the practical or applied area of business should be covered using a global context and second the context, local language, the social structures, including customs and native culture all need to be included. CIBER called for “a balanced training mix of this sort (which) will allow students to acquire analytical skills as well as cultural sensitivity. Real-world projects, especially involving another country, and international case studies would further enhance students preparedness” (as cited in Shetty & Rundell, 2002, p. 105).

The study also looks toward industry for some of the solutions of the real world applied to the academic problems. When institutions look toward the outside for guidance in their program development that guidance sometimes causes problems. According to Hancock (1998), “Tenured faculty are not quick to change. Lacking the resources and pressures of the business world, they are frequently behind the curve in their own discipline, much less expert in its integration” (p. 44). To counter this “many business schools have internship programs, guest lecturers, and executives in residence from the private sector, and faculty members are encouraged to get corporate training” (Dumas, Blodgett, Carlson, Pant, & Venketraman, 2000, p. 236).

Mintzberg (2005) believed that conventional MBA programs are not adequate in the area of faculty qualifications. According to Pfeffer and Fong (2002), “Few if any of the current business school faculty are particularly well equipped to staff new models of business education that link education to practice” (p. 90) Mintzberg’s program for

international management education stresses the involvement of instructors with field credentials. He likened the need in business schools to the current use of practicing physicians in medical schools and lawyers and architects in their respective graduate-level programs. In today's business programs, he feels that "many full-time faculty have not practiced the profession or craft of management" (as cited in Pfeffer & Fong, p. 90).

Cabrera and Brown (2005) emphasized that the faculty needs to expose themselves to "business contexts of an international nature" (p. 803). They included the writing of internationally oriented cases, participation in overseas consulting and working within industry training executives in real global situations as ways faculty can become more current with concrete management issues (Cabrera & Brown). Many institutions are using internship programs, executives from the private sector, and corporately trained faculty members to "bring the real business world into the classroom and the students into the business arena" (Dumas et al., 2000, p. 236).

A few years ago criticism like "most teachers of management in the developing world (just) pass on what has been found to work in the industrialized developed countries of the West" (Mintzberg, 2005, p. 177). Scholars like Mendoza (1990) questioned whether MBA-type education from the West offered anything useful for developing nations or if it was just warmed up Western management styles. A lot of businesses and industries have successfully developed in the emerging nations since Mendoza's observation.

Cabrera and Brown (2005) reported that

Business school faculty and administrators should continue to pursue innovation, to build stronger bridges between faculty and the practicing manager, to better incorporate integrative, multidisciplinary and experimental learning to the

curriculum, and to facilitate the exposure of students to global learning environment. (p. 804)

All of which seems to mean that the predominant Western IMBA programs are beginning to move from academic white tower postulates to integrated academics and practical business realities.

Various industry leaders have been encouraging American business schools to “train their students to think internationally,” according to John Young, Hewlett-Packard CEO (as cited in Hahs, 1999, p. 199). Michael Erbschloe, lecturer on information systems at the National University in San Diego, felt “industry can improve business school content by contacting universities and expressing its opinion” (as cited in Hahs, p. 198). In a very important article published in the *Harvard Business Review*, two professors from the University of Southern California, wrote that “some top schools focus too much on a ‘scientific’ model of business and on arcane research, and not enough on real-worked practices that would help graduates perform in the marketplace” (as cited in Cone, 2006, p. 58).

When appointed to a management position in a foreign subsidiary the employee “must be able to contribute effectively to the worldwide objectives of the company” (Pfeffer & Fong, 2002, p. 799). The IMBA graduates’ capabilities need to include the ability to function within a culturally diverse group as a team player. They must be able to “adapt global structures and plans to local realities,” and they need to influence the group to serve the companies strategies (Pfeffer & Fong, p. 799). New managers need to have a grasp of the both the corporate and national cultures. The corporate culture comes from within and usually emanates from the headquarters location and affects how one



deals within the company. While the national culture is a location driven influence and needs to be learned.

Kwok and Arpan (1994) identified four general approaches chosen by most institutions desiring to move into the international MBA arena. First, they looked at taking existing courses and adding an international dimension to them. Second, they looked at simply requiring all business majors, regardless of major, to include one general international business course in their programs of study. Third, they looked at requiring all students to take one international specialization course in their major fields. Finally, they looked at whether students looked outside of the business school for an internationally orientated course. The main drawback with this scheme is whether the institution has the depth or raw number of internationally oriented courses in any specialty to accomplish this.

Corporations are getting involved in both what they are looking for from the institutions and what they need to do to get the trained individuals. Some companies feel that the IMBA is the beginning for their executives and higher and more focused training is needed. Internal corporate training and special seminars hold the answer for some businesses. Wynne and Filante (2004) cited some early studies to support the need for international hands-on involvement in curriculum development. First, they agreed with Voris's 1998 conclusion that "employers view an international background as an important element in hiring" (as cited in Wynne & Filante, p. 354). Conversely, an earlier study (1988) by Reynolds and Rice found "that American companies did not have a high expectation that international business activities would be covered adequately in the traditional classroom setting" (as cited in Wynne & Filante, p. 354).

Hahs (1999) found three issues facing anyone who wants to develop higher education for management. Those issues include “(a) integration of theory and practice so that complex management issues can be handled effectively, (b) internationalization for ease in handling other cultures and countries, and (c) implementation of knowledge for practical and useful action” (Hahs, p. 201). At the annual Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Forum in May 2006, David Eades (2006) as moderator made the following opening remarks. Not only do companies need to be concerned with the affect of globalization but also countries need to be aware of how “migration and internationalization affect education, as students, teachers and researchers increasingly study and work abroad. Countries need to look at . . . higher education policy itself, to develop coherent responses to internationalization” (Eades, p. 20).

According to Kedia and Harveston (1998), “Faced with the problem of a lack of relevant skills-set they want, more companies are emphasizing in-house training programs” (p. 203). A. D. Little has an extensive internal executive education program as do many other major corporations. Many seek out MBA programs flexible enough to actually modify individual courses to suit their needs. Shell Oil teams with an MBA program to provide advanced training with courses modified to include the petroleum industry and those managerial problems inherent to the industry.

Another area of concern in the content of the international MBA programs is that of culture, not just cultural traditions and protocol but that of the management and decision-making attributes. Hofsted and the high- and low-context models are usually taught as an identification tool to determine how similar or dissimilar a global location is to the Western style of management and decision making (Mellahi, 2000). According to

Mellahi, “Not only (are) western inequities are found in the curriculum, but also how information is taught points to potential bias towards a western leadership style” (p. 303).

Institutions wishing to offer a truly international or global program must be aware of and integrate into most courses the ways and means of decision making in other cultures. Some programs have gone so far as to supplement traditional texts and curriculum with non-Western techniques and procedures for decision making and interpersonal negotiation methods. Kumara-Swamy (2000) mentioned a specific problem in current IMBA programs: “The academic programmes by themselves do not serve the needs and challenges posed by modern business, cooperative and public sector organizations” (p. 66).

#### New Programs and Internationalization

Neither AACSB nor European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD; the European counterpart), the two most recognized accrediting bodies for college-level business training, offer much in the way of standards or guidelines for international business programs. AACSB does require “some exposure to global economic environments in the business curriculum” (Cabrera & Brown, 2005, p. 799). The group responsible for EFMD’s standards, EQUIS, is “the closest we have to a professional definition of global management, although the focus of such standards has to do more with the ‘how’ than with the ‘what’” (Cabrera & Brown, p. 799).

Noted as the primary issue driving business school changes are changes in the real world. Hahs (1999) reported that, “business is experiencing the globalization of markets,

computer networking, and the dismantling of the management hierarchy” (p. 197). For example

The International MBA program at York University in Canada encourages students to focus on a specific country in an international trading region outside North America, acquire extensive knowledge of its history, politics, and business culture and learn at least two languages other than English. (Hahs, p. 199)

Another approach is that of the University of Ottawa whose international MBA program “includes a one-year internship abroad. This program focuses on the needs of businesses in the process of globalizing. Considering that 98% of the graduates are hired, they are apparently on the right track” (Hahs, p. 200).

Supporting most of the keywords used here, Cabrera and Brown (2005) took the position that “global managers need to be able to understand how different national cultures establish different sets of assumptions or interpretations of the world and behavior patterns” (p. 800). As professors at Thunderbird, The Garvin School of International Management, they state that a precondition for management effectiveness is an understanding of “how culture determines customer preferences” (Cabrera & Brown, p. 801). Thunderbird develops “this competence by creating a culturally diverse environment, engaging participants in explicit cross-cultural training and by requiring proficiency in a second language” (Cabrera & Brown, p. 801).

Commenting on the extent of globalization Roome (2005) stated that

Global business is not just seen as the province of multi- or trans-national companies but as an issue for any business that makes use of raw materials of industrial products and services that are from international sources and/or which sell products or services into other countries. (p. 163)

Program changes can and should be driven by factors other than the direct needs of industries. Bernardo Donoso, director of the MBA program at Universidad Catolica de Valparaiso, pointed out that

MBA programs can be implemented in anticipation of economic growth, when institutions of higher learning detect positive signals in the environment and identify both an academic opportunity and an opportunity to contribute to the acceleration of the economic development process. (as cited in Contreras & Ruff, 2002, p. 52)

Learning styles and cultural differences also can make a difference. As Thompson and Gui (2000) stated

The need to adapt teaching and learning approaches in management education to national and regional contexts has long been recognized. This applies particularly in Asia, where real differences in learning styles have been documented to go beyond the Confucianist-derived, learn-by-rote stereotypes. (p. 236)

Other things that are becoming prevalent in IMBA programs are the requirement of another language, studies about the culture of a target region, field assignments visiting and working with businesses. Another approach has been for institutions to include “corporate leaders as guest lecturers and students with years of business experience sharing their own real experiences” (Haight & Kwong, 1999, p. 34). Here the students’ prior work experience and the “real world” situations encountered by guest business leaders all contribute to expanding the knowledge of all the IMBA students.

### What Corporations Want

International managers’ responsibilities differ from those of domestic local managers in more than just prospective and language. They must

Understand the different systems, models and techniques of the modern business corporation from an international prospective. Specifically an international

manager needs to be aware of any country related risk when involved in global financial transactions; exchange rate trends and capital market variations; global market and brands and the cross-national market differences and organizational behavior influenced by different social and cultural traditions. (Cabrera & Brown, 2005, p. 801)

What do corporations really want in their new hires' IMBA programs? Most of all they want the candidate to have skills, experience, and the ability to deal with others internationally. Van Auken, Wells, and Chrysler (2005) identified five skills that were deemed as "very important" when reviewing a recruits background. Those skills were (a) communication and interpersonal skills, (b) the ability to work well within a team, (c) analytical and problem-solving ability, (d) strong leadership skills, and (e) strategic thinking skills. The first, third, and fifth are those that have to be adapted to the international culture or market in which the company is doing business.

Cabrera and Brown (2005) addressed some of the areas unique to international management that global managers must deal with. They

Face regulatory, social, political, and ethical dilemmas that traditional local managers seldom have to deal with. The international manager has to be trained to identify and develop a set of core values and higher level goal to guide them as professionals dealing with international dilemmas. (Cabrera & Brown, p. 803)

Perlmutter reported how a firm orientates themselves when making international strategic choices: "First is ethnocentric or a focus on the domestic market for strategic guidance. Second is polycentrism which considers the host country or region as the driving force and each cultural subsidiary is autonomous" (as cited in Walton & Basciano, 2006, p. 284). Finally, Perlmutter used "geocentric" to define a situation that allows both the home attitudes and strategies to be judged against local management

decisions and a combined strategy is adapted from those orientations (as cited in Walton & Basciano).

Employers are looking “beyond the degree itself—and they are not always happy with what they find” (Cone, 2006, p. 58). Baker and Phillips (1999) looked at

The gaps between what business schools teach and what companies need for entry-level finance positions. Most respondents (hiring MBAs in financial areas) said that the MBAs hired within the past five years by their organizations knew finance theory but did not have enough basic practice. (p. 338)

Universities have chosen various ways to address some of these short falls. Some meet “regularly with leaders in various organizations in our area, attending public business forums, and reading materials in contemporary business periodicals” (Barker & Stowers, 2005, p. 483). Cone (2006) noted that Illinois has changed curriculum to remain current with employer needs. Other business schools are addressing the problem of marketable skills by narrowing their core IMBA curricula and focusing on courses that have practical applications (Van Auken et al., 2005).

Lyn’s (1993) dissertation identified some problems with MBA training, teams, real-world focus, and so on. Lyn felt that there were parameters and methods could be identified that will allow business schools to internationalize the curricula to meet identifiable business challenges. Elkin et al. (2005) visualized the internationalization of universities and developed an 11-dimension model to plot and compare universities efforts in this area. They noted “a market for internationally orientated and qualified graduates who are able to understand different cultures and work in a multi-cultural globalized society” (p. 318) exist. Of 11 factors developed for their paper, only one is not

covered in IMBA program guideline requirements (it is concerned with undergraduate students).

### What the Literature Tells Us

Within programs offerings are various measurable components that can be indicators of a program's strengths. These components identified as important throughout the literature provide a way to quantify the value of the component. Haight and Kwong (1999) saw importance in work experience prior to enrolling in an IMBA program; Hahs (1999) felt the language advantage is very important; Hancock (1998) favored the team or group in lockstep as a strong builder of cohesive team participation. These and other scholars cited in this literature review are looking at specific components of an internationalized MBA program. The two pieces of this study, the Mintzberg keywords found in international programs and the IMBA requirements guideline list are important parts of a distinctive IMBA program as viewed by current literature.



## CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

Domestic universities offering international MBA programs were selected based upon previous data gathered and using specific published rankings based on academics and other qualifications. Detailed information was then collected from individual IMBA programs. This information falls into two categories: first are the specific statements in the program's mission statement and the use of the keywords (context, culture, and philosophy) in program literature and description of the program; second is how well the IMBA program's admissions, acceptance, and curriculum follows recommended guideline requirements (see Appendix B).

### Research Tasks

Select from *U.S. News and World Report* annual list of the top MBA programs those institutions which offered an international MBA program.

To measure or judge the institutions support certain keywords associated with internationalization, as described by Mintzberg, were examined. This was done by using a qualitative telephone interview survey of the deans or directors of individual IMBA programs and a quantitative review of the IMBA program requirements and components. The purpose of these tasks were to identify support for the top IMBA programs, the content of those programs, the commitment of the institutions, and their individual levels of internationalization.

The first task for the qualitative portion of this study was to develop a method of identifying an institution's position as to internationalization of the program. Mintzberg in his book *Managers not MBAs a hard look at a soft practice of managing and management development*, offers characteristics and descriptions of what he considers necessary for a program to be considered international. He separates them into four categories. It is the third piece (the institution has to be supportive of context, culture and philosophy as they indicate commitment to internationalization by the institution) and their keywords that are used to develop how international a program is academically.

Also for the qualitative portion of this study the researcher utilizes a telephone interview study design for multiple participants. Live interviews with IMBA deans or directors were held to bring out both current and source level data regarding the institutions focus via the mission and vision type statements and administration of direction of the IMBA program. The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed after the interview. The data was then reviewed and coded to reflect the institutions mission or vision statements, identify actions taken, and discover how they were supported. The questions focused on what the institution has done to internationalize the MBA program, its components and how it compares to other IMBA programs. The data was be analyzed in an interactive and simultaneous format. Through the coding process themes emerge from the data related to the institutions' mission and vision, the support of the IMBA programs and departments efforts to achieve them. These themes were examined individually to confirm the programs internationalization.

The second task was to quantitatively identify the academic components of an IMBA education and develop a standardized Program Guideline of those requirements

unique to an international MBA. The programs themselves were be dissected into prerequisites for admission and program offerings or curriculum directly related to the international education. The components were be further identified by the program description, CIBER recommendations, and current scholarly literature as guidelines of a complete IMBA program.

This study assembles a list of those required components unique to the participating IMBA degree programs and collect a list of the prerequisites commonly associated with the admission to the IMBA programs. These are then compiled into a comprehensive list of IMBA program guideline requirements (IMBA-PGR).

By looking at the individual academic requirements it was possible to compare one program to another, conclusions made as to desired program attributes, and a way to measure each program was produced. A matrix of the top IMBA programs and their individual components were being created for examination.

### Research Questions

Questions have been developed to determine the perceptions and adherence to the mission and vision statements as well as the promotion of the IMBA programs within the institution. Selected deans, assistant deans, or program managers were asked questions designed to draw out both opinions and actions. The first few questions focused on the key words directed toward how the program addresses the context, cultural and philosophical positions on international education. Section two ascertains the schools' support of the international program faculty. Section three of the questionnaire looks at

the internationalization of the individual courses. And finally the fourth section address unique IMBA courses or programs offered at other institutions.

### Pilot Study

A pilot study using the proposed interview questionnaire was completed to identify problems in the wording of the questions and the breath and directness of the response. Candidates for this study were chosen based upon their familiarity with the subject—MBA programs and international education. One is the chairman of the business department offering an MBA program; another is the former acting chairman of that department and professor of international business administration among other graduate-level business courses; and finally the chairman of an international studies department.

Interviews were conducted using the questionnaire in a one-to-one basis. The objective was to determine if the questions are clear, and elicit responses useful to the study. The questionnaire was adjusted based upon the data gathered in the pilot study and appropriate modifications will be made. In addition a validation of the suggested coding words and phrases was made and adjusted for ease in actual response recording and coding. The pilot session was not recorded nor shall the information gained be used in the study other than to fine-tune and validate the questionnaire.

The researcher has a background in business surveys and interviewing, including focus groups, face to face interviews, direct mail, and telephone interviews.

## Results of the Pilot Study

The invitation letter was slightly modified to emphasize that this is a study of international MBA programs rather than a generic MBA curriculum with international overtones. The concentration or major indicating international or global MBA was explained as a program which focuses on the multicultural nature of business studies, including taking into consideration the context of the international material, and the emphases on the viewpoints and values inherent in the philosophical aspect of the curriculum.

First, in Section 1 of the interview questions the keywords and their synonyms in order to better focus on the schools position. The term *context* is paired with perspective and course structure to provide a wider interpretation of the schools position. The *cultural* approach is extended to social and civilizing focus. Finally, the *philosophy* component is expanded to include viewpoints, values, and beliefs as parts of the philosophy.

Section 2 had no changes.

Section 3 had minor word changes and the addition of choices for the last two questions. These choices were used for response coding but the participants of the pilot study felt that detail choices should be offered to the interviewees.

In Section 4 the pilot study participants made a strong suggestion to change the approach to a more competitive and “business”-like analysis. The test deans look at other schools the same way that Ford views GMC as direct competitors and a harder approach was expected from the deans being interviewed. The changes did not alter the intent or direction of the questions but approached them from a more competitive position.

The overall view of the test deans was that the questions and choices of the survey were seen as a proper vehicle to elicit the needed information about the program and institution's focus on international. They felt that the information that the survey was designed to obtain should be sufficient to determine both the school's emphasis and commitment to offering a truly international MBA.

### Sample

The selection of business schools uses the latest *U.S. News & World Report*, top 100 MBA schools list. Schools that offer full-time IMBA programs were selected (to a maximum of the top 40 institutions).

Much of the data used by the business magazines to determine the ranking of schools can be considered as subjective. One organization uses the starting salary as an indicator of program ranking. This says nothing about quality or where the new employee actually ends up in the organization or whether they will attain success over time. This study uses the *U.S. News & World Report* annual ranking as a basis to select the top candidates for study. No endorsement is made of the criteria used by *U.S. News & World Report* to rank the schools; it is used only to provide a list of schools to approach and sample. Some studies suggest a measurement of accomplishment or success over a period should be established. This would be an excellent follow-up study to see if the highly ranked institutions produce managers with strength and longevity. Other data used to do rankings are enrollment rates and program popularity measured only by gross numbers of applicants, average GMAT scores of accepted candidates, and application requests. This study uses an IMBA guideline requirement list based upon criteria that relates directly to

internationalization of the programs. This list includes components such as language requirements, extent of study and work abroad, number of international courses offered, seminars, and conferences available.

The other area of analysis is the commitment and position the individual institutions have in regards the internationalization of their programs. This involves the examination of mission, vision, and program content statements for selected themes and keywords. This is generally referred to as content analysis and was combined with the live interviews with the deans to develop data to analyze. Keywords are drawn from Mintzberg's examination of what constitutes an international program, and include context, culture, and philosophy. Other programs such as Thunderbird's international offering stress the "fusion of three knowledge areas: (a) global business, (b) international studies; and (c) cross-cultural proficiency" (Cabrera & Brown, 2005, p. 800).

Schools can be judged on how well they are addressing the cultural and social differences in the business decision arena across multicultures. "So we train managers to understand different cultures . . . not to be the same . . . but to come from their differences and to understand one another's differences" (Rush, 2003, p. 9). Various surveys show the need for international components in MBA programs. Various industry leaders have been encouraging American business schools to "train their students to think internationally" (Hahs, 1999, p. 197).

The purpose of The IMBA Guideline Requirements List is to examine individual components of the programs that offer an international business concentration or major. Many scholars examining the IMBA education currently being offered mention the need for better-structured domestic programs and others press for Western schools to become

less formal and idiocratic. This study looks for a strong program that offers a far more international curriculum for business programs.

The study is limited to conventional full-time, on-campus programs offering an international master's of business or equivalent at domestic institutions. The institutions selected were limited to those institutions listed by *U.S. News & World Report* in the top IMBA programs, to those providing materials for research, and agreeing to a live interview.

Hancock (1998), commenting on universities' attempts at changing their IMBA programs, noted that they are "finding full promise hard to deliver. Some difficulties were obvious going in. Tenured faculty is not quick to embrace change" (p. 43). Faculty may have an obligation to publish but without the "pressures of the business world, they are frequently behind the curve in their own discipline, much less expert in its integration" (Hancock, p. 43). Other "financial executives from firms recently hiring MBAs think that business schools place too much emphasis on theory relative to practice" (Baker & Phillips, 1999, p. 345).

#### Schools Participating

Responses from deans and/or their office staffs and assistants were difficult to obtain. Of the 40 programs taken from *U.S. News & World Report* list most all schools were directly contacted (actual conversation between the dean's office and the researcher). The usual contacts were not the dean, program director, or department chairperson but were staff members in that office. Most called back with either a refusal or a not interested in participating message. Of those institutions that were cooperative,



five were interviewed and were surprisingly an excellent representation of the various programs being studied. Titles of those interviewed were dean, vice provost, director, and department chair.

These programs make up a strong cross section of the typical top IMBA programs being offered in the United States currently. First of all no study of international business education being offered in the United States would be complete without the inclusion of participating institution four. The staff and dean were very cooperative and provided a great deal of insight to the study. *U.S. News & World Report* lists this school as the top of the 23 institutions offering the international MBA specialty.

The next program that could be identified as a part of a major universities offering would have to be participating institution two School of Business program. Ranked in most every list of the top U.S. schools offering international MBA curriculum, this university has, by far, the most extensive and focused program dealing exclusively with international business education second only to Participant 4.

Participating institution three is arguably one of the top centers for academic excellence ranks at 3 on the *U.S. News & World Report* list. The inclusion of this institution in the study provides a program that can be branded as equal to the typical top business schools such as Harvard, MIT Sloan, and Stanford.

Balancing out the remainder of the ranked interview schools is participating institution one, ranked at 18 by *U.S. News & World Report*. This school stands out as an example of a classical university MBA program which has an international aspect.

The final institution is a nonranked but equally important example of international business education, is participating institution five. This school is a regional downtown

institution offering extensive day and evening programs. Their international program, while not academically listed with the top 50, is still considered one of the most internationally committed programs offered by a somewhat nontraditional institution. When compared using the program guideline requirements of an internationalized MBA list, used in this study, this university consistently ranks along with the top handful of *U.S. News & World Report* listed schools. The philosophical approach to hands-on training has been present in this university for many years and it is this approach that consistently draws local students to this extensive and intensive program incorporating all of the guidelines for a strong IMBA program. The researcher attended and received his MBA from this university.

#### Scoring System Purpose

The purpose of the following detailed components is to provide a way to examine and measure the international MBA programs against each other. Institutions offering international degrees demonstrate their commitments to the true components of a global education by how well they address these components. Requirements such as a second language and on-site internships place an institution higher on the list of valuable IMBA programs. As Greco (2001) reported, “The MBA is all about the ability to learn and practice team skills and to gain the experience of delivering measurable results while working with diverse cultures” (p. 40).

Programs that stress real-world learning experiences address the needs of internationally expanding firms. In the workplace, the successful business graduate will need to have strong knowledge of both Western and Eastern business practices. They will

have to have a thorough understanding of social, cultural, and political differences all to make effective decisions and negotiations with international business entities (Hahs, 1999). Thompson and Gui (2000), writing about Asian and Western management education, found a “need to adapt teaching and learning approaches in management to national and regional contexts” (p. 242).

Chun and Davies’s (2001) work on “the role of mission and vision statements in positioning strategy” (p. 320) provide both a model and methodology for the use of keywords in completing content analysis of components such as mission and vision statements. Chun and Davies cited 10 studies done between 1987 and 1997 that focused on the comparative study of institutions mission, vision, and program content statements. Keywords used for this study are drawn from Mintzberg’s book and include context, culture, and philosophy. This study methodology is also applied to the guideline components as included by the institutions.

#### Program Guideline Components of an Internationalized MBA Curriculum

All IMBA programs have a complex set of admission requirements, major requirements, core and elective course sets. Most of these are unique to an international-oriented program and provide a common set of values that can be compared from one institution to another. These values can be further broken down into prerequisites and program content. The values are either present or not as part of the institution’s stated program components. The basis of the research includes gleaning from each institution’s documentation how these values are (or are not) represented and supported throughout

the program materials, program descriptions, requirements, course offerings, etc.

Interviews with university officials further examine those commitments.

#### *Program Length (Program Content)*

Length of fulltime programs range from 12 months to over 24 months. Executive or weekend MBA programs are not included in this study. Guidelines tend to favor those programs over 15 months in length.

#### *Major or Concentration (Program Content)*

The offering of a major in international business is the preferred offering; however, many institutions offer a “concentration” requiring fewer courses, as low as three in the international specialty. Usually this is indicative of a program that has limited course resources.

#### *International Courses Available (Program Content)*

This includes the number of courses specifically titled “global” or “international” (full 3 or 4 credit courses or equivalent). Schools offering a concentration appear to have fewer courses whereas the offering of a major almost always requires at least five or six courses and many offer over 20.

#### *International Exposure—Time Abroad (Program Content)*

Purporting to offer international exposure, many institutions have 2-week excursions to a foreign capital with culture, arts, and business driving the local bus tours. Some institutions have exchange programs with other worldwide universities offering a conventional academic semester load. These programs offer a bit of time for culture and social experiences, but no extensive hands-on time in local businesses. Most of the student’s free time is involved with homework and college social life. The IMBA

programs at York University and University of Ottawa feel internships are very important. Ottawa even includes a 1-year abroad, while York feels that a 3-month internship is sufficient to offer “total immersion in a foreign culture, [so that] students learn more than just business; they also gain invaluable business connections” (Hahs, 1999, p. 197).

True global internships begin with orientation and planning activities at home. Then the project or assignment takes place on-site in the distant country. This may be in the form of a consulting project with day-to-day actions, meetings, and planning sessions as a consultant, or as a temporary employee. In both instances, the student is exposed to everyday activities, working shoulder to shoulder with other managers, making friends and building social relationships while gaining invaluable experience in a real-world situation. Completion takes place at the business with the final report or recommendations. Upon returning to campus, the student is required to produce a final report of the experience.

#### *Global Business Simulation Games (Program Content)*

Popular in most IMBA programs, they are sort of a computerized case study with activity and decisions required on a weekly or daily basis. The outcome and numbers usually vary because of each team’s decisions and actions contribute to the outcome. Participation in one or more of these training programs is designed to give the students a view of decision making and consequences.

#### *International Business Seminars and Conferences (Program Content)*

Specifically for the IMBA student offered in addition to the core course structure including Visiting Scholar or Industry leaders as scheduled events.

*Participation in CIBER Center Activities and Educational Opportunities (Program Content)*

The final component of program content is participation with a regional CIBER Center. The ideal situation is the institution is a CIBER Center itself; however, participation in the programs, seminars, reports, student and faculty involvement all contribute to the valuable use of the resources of the center itself as an educational tool.

CIBERs were created “to increase and promote the nation’s capacity for international understanding and economic enterprise” at universities across the United States (Centers for International Education and Research, 2007). These centers act as a clearing house for the academic world exchanging ideas, holding seminars, producing reports and offering support to other institutions, businesses and governmental agencies. The list of the current CIBER centers is provided as a reference of the facilities participating in the program. Schools included in this study are noted in the list.

1. BYU\*
2. Columbia\*
3. Duke\*
4. Florida Inter. U
5. George Washington U\*
6. Georgia Inst. Tech.
7. Indiana\*
8. Michigan\*
9. Purdue\*
10. San Diego U

11. Temple
12. Texas A&M
13. Ohio State\*
14. U of Texas, Austin\*
15. Thunderbird\*
16. UCLA\*
17. U of Colorado, Denver
18. U of Connecticut
19. U of Florida
20. Hawaii at Manoa
21. Illinois at Urbana\*
22. Kansas
23. Maryland\*
24. Memphis
25. Michigan State\*
26. U of Pennsylvania\*
27. Pittsburg
28. South Carolina
29. U of Southern Cal.\*
30. Washington\*
31. Wisconsin\*

\*Institutions included in the rankings for this study.

CIBER Centers operate somewhat as a research and consulting facility for the educational needs of the host university and those regionally located institutions that wish to avail themselves of the services. Surveys, reports, and various studies are conducted yearly to benefit all centers and participants.

#### *Language Level (Prerequisite)*

The requirement of proficiency in a second language is becoming common in the higher ranked institutions; however, some do not think it is necessary. Language skills are among the real needs of doing business in another country. Proficiency in a second common business language (e.g., French, Spanish, German, Russian, Japanese, and Chinese) should be required by all schools. One institution even requires a third language at government level 3 or better. Business language proficiency is derived from language training that focuses on business terms and concepts. Examples and readings are more oriented to business situations than traditional-language programs (e.g., hours of language instruction do not count toward degree hours required).

#### *Work Experience (Prerequisite)*

Unlike the academic progression taken by many students in other disciplines such as literature, physics, or medicine, business students usually go directly to work at the end of their undergraduate education. Then after a few years in the field they decide to go back for an IMBA either part- or full-time. Many of the higher ranked business schools are now requiring this work experience prior to admission to their IMBA programs. It is felt that a number of years are necessary to accumulate the managerial level where the experience becomes valuable.



### *Undergraduate Education (Prerequisite)*

A few schools require a BA or BS in business; however, most schools accept bachelor's of science or arts in other disciplines and only a few require additional courses to provide the full foundation in the basics of business education. Most schools will accept a bachelor's degree in any discipline and appear not to require basic undergrad business skills such as economics. These institutions take the academic position that the skills and knowledge acquired for a BSBA will be either redundant or of no need as a prerequisite for their IMBA programs.

### Other Data and Informational Sources

Two other educational associations are also instrumental in providing tools and materials addressing the internationalization of various courses and seminars: (a) The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB, 2007): "The mission of AACSB International is to advance quality management education worldwide through accreditation and thought leadership" (p. 2). The AACSB is basically an accreditation association; however, they offer seminars and conferences, research services, and *BizEd*, the magazine for business education; and. (b) the Academy of International Business (AIB, 2007):

The AIB is the leading global community of scholars for the creation and dissemination of knowledge about international business and policy issues. The AIB transcends the boundaries of single academic disciplines and managerial functions to enhance business education and practice. (p. 2)

Headquartered at the University of Michigan's CIBER program, this internationally focused association is concerned with

Facilitating the exchange of information and ideas among people in academic, business, and government professions who are concerned with education in international business

Encouraging and fostering research activities that advance knowledge in international business and increase the available body of teaching material

Cooperating, whenever possible, with government, business and academic organizations to further the internationalization objectives of the AIB. (AIB, p. 3)

Programs outside of the United States approach business education a little differently than our domestic programs. Since larger European businesses are international in nature and have been for many years, the educational institutions offering advanced programs such as an MBA naturally include global programs. It is just recently (in the past 2 decades) that a larger number of U.S. programs have included an international focus.

International institutions approach MBA-level education from a different point of view. For the most part these institutions focus on being able to function within the global community as well as detailed course offerings (Kedia & Harveston, 1998). For example

With an MBA program established since 1959, Institut Europeen d'Administration des Affaires (INSEAD) has attracted management students from all over the world who want to acquire a business education that is both global and multicultural with an emphasis on language and culture. (Kedia & Harveston, p. 208)

INSEAD emphasizes the “opportunity to work with people from other cultures is one of the keys to teaching students to think in different ways” (Kedia & Harveston, 1998, p. 209). INSEAD has some of the highest entry requirements such as 640 minimum GMAT scores, prior international work experience, and students must be proficient in three languages (French, English, and one other) by the end of the very short 10-and-a-half-month program. This program “epitomizes the global-village approach” (Kedia & Harveston, p. 209).

Many of the non-U.S. programs have very distinct offerings. London Business School presents itself as a truly international experience requiring second language fluency, a full 2-year program and 3 months abroad directly involved in a local business. On the TGE scale, London competes in the top third of the domestic institutions. The University of Maverva, Madrid, Spain, has a 19-month program that requires a 14-week internship, a second language at Level 4 proficiency, and at least 2 years of work experience.

HEC offers a similar program lasting 2 full years. INSEAD with the choice of France or Singapore offers an intense 1-year program; however, they offer no internship or international experience outside the respective campuses. They do require a third language (all must be suitable for general business use). Finally, IMD located in Switzerland, is the most exclusive of all programs only 90 students are admitted at a time; it is a 10-month program requiring over 700 on the GMAT and at least 3 years of work experience. Three cases a day must be prepared in addition to attending lectures and discussions, additional time must be spent daily on learning a language, if necessary.

Hahs (1999) wrote

The three vital issues that must be addressed in the development of management education include (a) integration of theory and practice so that complex management issues can be handled effectively, (b) internationalization for ease in handling other cultures and countries, and (c) implementation of knowledge for practical and useful action. (p. 199)

### Ethical Issues

Participants and institutional identification is considered confidential and is not available in this work. IRB requirements for activities which may be hazardous or would

cause any bias were covered in the informed consent process where each participant was assured of confidentiality and were required to return a signed consent form before the interviews were conducted. Participant and organizational names and records have been altered to note only Participant 1, Participant 2 and so on and to further mask any possible identification the participant numbering was randomly changed in the IMBA program guideline requirements matrix listing (see Appendix B).

## CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the foundations for different global or international MBA programs with semistructured and transcribed telephone interviews. Questionnaire data were analyzed using a content analysis method to extract the relevant themes. Moustakas (1994) argued, “Phenomena are the building blocks of human science and the basis for all knowledge” (p. 26). The participants of five universities offering global or international MBA programs were interviewed in an attempt to identify recurring themes and attributes in each university’s mission statement, vision, curricula, faculty, and support for international experience. Additional interview questions sought information regarding requirements within the program, funding, the level of international expertise required for faculty, and the methods by which schools were ranked within the international MBA category.

Phenomenological research design, illustrated by Groenewald (2004), provides the methodology as to how the research questions are presented; emergent themes from the interviews were identified and reported using illustrative quotes from the study participants. The program guideline requirements of an internationalized MBA curriculum were completed and analyzed. The chapter concludes with a summary and conclusions which were drawn and recommendations for further study are made in chapter 5.

## Research Questions

The participants were interviewed using an open-ended set of questions designed to extract the answers to the following research questions:

1. What identifiable parameters can be used to compare one IMBA program with another?
2. What student prerequisites support IMBA programs requirements?
3. What program content specifics should make up most IMBA's curriculum?

These questions were designed to identify the criteria that create a successful IMBA program, and if these criteria overlapped among the top U.S. institutions or if optional criteria might make a student or hiring manager prefer one IMBA program over another. Basically the aim was to discover the institutions focus of the program.

## Data Collection

Data collection during the study was achieved through two distinct phases. The first phase involved preparation and data collection. The second phase involved organizing, analyzing, and synthesizing the data into clusters and themes based invariant constituents emerging from the data collection. In preparation for data collection, a pilot study was conducted to identify both problems in the wording of the questions as well as the breath and directness of the response. The objective was to determine if the questions were clear, whether they elicited responses useful to the study, and if the questions were appropriate.

The questionnaire was adjusted based upon the data gathered in the pilot study and appropriate modifications were made. In addition a validation of the suggested

coding words and phrases was made and adjusted for ease in actual response recording and coding. The pilot sessions were not recorded and the information gained was not used in the study other than to fine-tune and validate the study questionnaire. Participants in the pilot study were a current dean of business and the interim dean at a local institution offering MBA and doctoral programs in business.

### Participants

Participants for this study were selected from *U.S. News & World Report* annual list of the top 100 MBA programs 40 institutions offering an IMBA program. deans or directors of the IMBA programs were contacted and an interview requested. Five responses were received apart from those used to conduct the pilot study. The participants included the deans or directors from the IMBA programs at five universities throughout the United States. During the interviews five themes emerged from the participants' answers. These are (a) identifiable parameters to compare IMBA programs, (b) student prerequisites that support IMBA programs vary with program requirements, and (c) specific criteria should be included in all IMBA programs.

Additionally, two themes that were not addressed in the original research questions were synthesized from the analysis of the questionnaire data. These are (d) IMBA faculty and administration are responsible for globalization, and (e) views of competitors vary greatly (the concept of "competitors" was identified from the pilot study results).

## Themes

### *Theme 1: Identifiable Parameters to Compare IMBA Programs*

When asked about the university's mission and vision statements and how the keywords "culture," "context," and "philosophy" were applied, many of the participants reflected a desire to improve business across cultures and societies. The goal of globally conducted business becoming the norm was indicated. Internationalization of business was collectively viewed as necessary to sustain a global economy and training new business leaders across the boundaries of culture and country was seen as critical to achieving this goal (see Table 1).

Table 1. *Initiatives to Improve Global Business*

Invariant constituents	No. participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
Goal of providing capable global leaders	5	100
Goal of improving global business	2	40
Goal of becoming number one school for internationalization	1	20

*School has the goal of educating international business leaders.* The participants indicated that their institutions had the goal of preparing global business leaders to drive international business to the level of a global society with an international focus on economy.



Participant 1 stated, “Our mission is to create global leaders who can manage sustainable prosperity worldwide.”

Participant 2 echoed similar beliefs, “I would say our mission and our vision are to prepare successful global business leaders.”

Participant 5 affirmed his school’s goal: “To become global leaders, education [must be] a whole program in international context.”

Participant 3 offered that in her university’s IMBA program, they “try not to be American western oriented,” and although they do not focus on globalization directly, the programs require completion of at least 6 program hours in international courses. She also stated that her program offers some courses that do have an intrinsic international focus, such as the global marketing course.

*School has the goal of sustaining or improving global economy.* The participants indicated the ideology that worldwide prosperity is good for all cultures and societies and that the best way to achieve it is to train IMBA students and expose them to the global economy from which they will gain the capabilities of leading global businesses and to focus the learning path for the students.

Participant 1 also affirmed, “Our vision is to be the world’s foremost learning community for global enterprises.”

Participant 3 spoke of a “world vision of society” in explaining the school’s mission statement.

Participant 1 stated that his school’s philosophy was “not just about being successful, sustainable businesses but [our philosophy] is about making the world a better place.”

Participant 2 commented, “Our strategic objective is to further global business leading to contemporary global business management.” He explained that the global MBA’s courses are taught from an international perspective from the core classes to the advanced and elective classes.

When asked if the institution had made a specific effort to include international culture as part of the IMBA programs, three of the five participants indicated that the programs had been structured around providing knowledge of multicultural business practices.

Participant 1 offered, “All students take three courses that have cultural emphasis. These are Components of the Global Community, Regional Business Environment, which includes Asia, Latin America, and Europe, and Cross Cultural Communications.” These classes are specifically designed to introduce and integrate different cultures into the IMBA curriculum.

Participant 4 similarly indicated that his IMBA program, “is designed to incorporate those things external as well as the courses” to raise the quality of the program on the whole.

Participant 2 was candid in explaining that some courses are easier to incorporate a cultural aspect within than others. He confided

With certain courses it is easy, marketing is classic. Some courses, like operations management outsource around the world. In our finance classes, there is no strict accounting, so we need to have some cultural aspects, but we do not always have them to offer.

He asserted that one of the ways his university attempts to address this need is to “hire faculty from other cultures and they bring it with them,” further stating, “we have to have faculty focus on the international differences.”

Participant 5 and Participant 3, however, indicated that the IMBA courses did not need to focus on cultural aspects because other facets of the program provided this benefit to students. This view does limit the control the administration has on the IMBA program.

Participant 3 indicated that the cultural aspect will be taught “6 to 7 weeks prior to an international trip, students will be educated on the culture of the region to which they are traveling.” She seemed to feel that this was sufficient preparation for the cultural and social aspects of business.

Participant 5 stated simply, “Local institutions and businesses provide the cultural impact,” indicating that students are first educated on social and cultural customs in the country to which they have traveled to conduct business. Participant 3 also indicated that students learn the cultural aspects of business during their required time working in other countries.

She said, “The business, cultural, and economics of region provide students a lot of things wrapped into a brief course.” She went on to say, “A lot is transmitted in a 2-week trip—enough to open a student’s eyes about those things a business professional need to know.” However, this limitation becomes a major obstacle when looking at immersion verses a 10- to 14-day exposure to cover cultural differences.

## *Theme 2: Specific Criteria Should Be Included in all IMBA Programs*

While some disagreement among the participants about which aspects of their IMBA programs provided the most educational value to students, most of the participants felt that the basic criteria for an IMBA program should be similar.

In terms of context, the participants interviewed felt that it was very important that students be educated outside of American or Western philosophies and promote business objectives from a global perspective. This outside exposure seems to be consistently used to provide a cultural view.

Participant 4 stated, “There is an international perspective to the IMBA course. It is an overall view of the program in a global world.”

*Schools support faculty in leading global initiatives.* Asked if different viewpoints were introduced into the curriculum in order to illustrate different philosophical standpoints, all the participants agreed that diverse viewpoints were an important part of their IMBA programs. Participant 4 stated, “Different viewpoints are introduced to explain the international aspects either in courses or as an overview.” He went on to illustrate, “Specific courses are integrated into the international program and they draw upon the instructors experiences. Time is spent both abroad and working in organizations in order to gain insight to the philosophies of an international or global view.”

Participant 2 indicated that some courses incorporated divergent viewpoints to different degrees. He stated, “in marketing 50% of the class is global.”

Accounting courses were another area he felt that varied viewpoints being introduced were important to gain different philosophical perspectives. He cited the need for this by saying, “Ninety percent of companies do global business. If these students are

going to audit these companies, they need to know what global business is about.” He confided that some difficulties incorporating different viewpoints because faculty members are sometimes resistant to changing their course structures to include other viewpoints, and occasionally differences arise between faculty members and courses.

Participant 5 similarly indicated that the faculty brings its own viewpoints to bear in the courses offered in the IMBA program. He also indicated that using a dual faculty for the MBA and MA programs provided additional benefit of having more faculty members available to teach these programs, and thus, greater cultural variance.

Participant 3 explained that the responsibility for providing different viewpoints also rests on her faculty, but that they are not expected to be experts in multiple cultures and philosophies. Rather, “faculty try to bring in different viewpoints by using case speakers and conducting guests seminars,” and through the study abroad programs. She expressed confidence that this was the best way to achieve the greatest number of viewpoints, philosophies, and the best way to keep the programs’ curriculum current with present business practices in other countries. Constant exposure both on campus and away on in-country learning programs provides a good foundation for the faculty’s enrichment.

Participant 1 made the broad statement, “[University] is totally global in philosophy and all aspects of the various programs include international or global emphasis.”

Creating a culturally savvy and diversity-oriented graduating class requires that faculty be knowledgeable about the business practices and customs of other countries. All of the participants indicated that the schools strongly supported the faculty in leading

global business initiatives by providing opportunity and funding. The faculty is encouraged, by most institutions, to develop their own programs both in the regular curricula and in the overseas programs.

Table 2. *Types of Support Provided to IMBA Faculty for International Research and Learning*

Invariant constituents	No. participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
Providing opportunities to travel to other countries	4	80
Providing funding to travel to other countries	3	60
Providing cyber-learning opportunities to faculty	1	20

Participant 4 stated that his university

Supports the faculty developing programs for 2- to 3-week seminars held in different parts of world. Faculty come up with the premise or problem; determine the area of world in which the seminar will be conducted, set up examples, site visits, and lead the project.

Participant 5 indicated that his school provides opportunities for faculty to gain experience abroad. He said, “First we have research initiatives for overseas programs, then faculty can spend a week in country where they (5–6 in a group) research and study the new country, and prepare learning activities. Finally the IMBA uses immersion philosophy.” He further explained that a network of schools cooperate to provide

international experience for their students, explaining, “Some involvement is also made by sister institutions in the selected countries.”

Participant 3 indicated being associated with CIBER provides additional “international opportunities for faculty through (CIBER) study.” She indicated that the faculty is needed to run the school and therefore have limited opportunity to travel. Programs offered by their respective CIBER Centers to study in other cultures, “gives faculty the chance to gain global exposure.”

Participant 2 revealed, “[We] encourage the faculty to do research global subjects and twice a year the school issues research grants for global study. The faculty’s trip has a higher probability of being funded if the project is international.” He also indicated that the school ensures that the institution hire approximately half of the faculty from other countries and ensure a solid international community blending with the domestic faculty.

Participant 1 stated, “there are funds available in terms of attending conferences, and faculty who are presenting a paper in another country have a better chance of being funded.” He also stated that the school does a lot of international seminars (2- to 3-week courses) in different regions and that the faculty teaching the seminars is well supported to develop faculty members’ course work. “The school offers support for faculty offering the course and includes a trip ahead of time to line up the program.”

The participants of all schools indicated that, while their faculty was encouraged and expected to initiate and participate in programs outside the United States, no specific international program development requirement for faculty members is necessary to gain tenure or be promoted. When asked if the development of international programs for the

IMBA was a requirement for promotion or tenure, Participant 5 stated, “No, but involvement is encouraged.”

Participant 1 answered, “Certainly we expect everything here is international or global—we occasionally have problems if we are using cases that apply only to the United States.”

This indicates that although the participants seemed to feel that international experience was important, all of the schools stopped short of requiring it for a faculty member to receive tenure or be promoted. When questioned about the evident disparity, the participants had the following to offer:

Participant 1 said, “We have some exchange faculties however in reality not too much is done at the other schools. We do have a good sabbatical program—and we welcome the development of the 2- to 3-week courses.”

Participant 4 posited, “Being a CIBER Center helps support faculty development and research abroad. Faculty is able to meld new topics and challenges using research and seminar training from the center into the 2- to 3-week offerings.”

Participant 5 revealed, “[It is] difficult to be in research in the United States [today]. Political incentives are at odds with internationalization and quality of data we receive [from other countries] is not as good.” He hypothesized that since, “It is much harder to get a paper published using foreign data, [and we] need to have an affirmative program for working internationally.”

It appears that although school administrators agree on the importance of having faculty with internationalization experience, they also must acknowledge the difficulties present in the state of the world that pose a challenge to faculty members achieving this



goal. They seem to feel that it would not be fair to require international experience for tenure when the ability to gain said experience may be out of a faculty member's control.

*Students are required to study abroad.* Participant 2 stated that for the global finance or global marketing degrees a 3-month internship requirement exists where students are expected to work in a country unfamiliar from their own. This was found to be the most comprehensive program as the student is not taking a course; they are actually working within the confines of a business in another country, integrated into the business community (daily work), the local culture (dwelling and local commerce), and regular day-to-day happenings within the country (influenced by the country's news).

Participant 2 revealed that students from Japan frequently request their internships be completed in China and that he does not allow this. He explained that while Japan and China are different countries, Japanese and Chinese cultures are similar enough that students will know what to expect. The objective is to help students become comfortable leading businesses outside of familiar cultures. Participant 2 offered that his goal is to have every MBA graduate knowing, "I think globally about business."

The participants generally agreed that the most important aspect of the internationalization was the immersion in another country's business acumen. Participant 1 stated, "It is important that students spend time outside of their country."

This sentiment was echoed most strongly by Participant 4 who stated, "Our internship is 20 weeks, total immersion." He clarified that this amount of time presented some problems:

Carving out such a big block of time takes away from the "semester concept," but you need professional staff who can work with students to search for internships. It is not hard finding local internships, but finding internships all over the world is

not a trivial task. We are obligated to help students find internships in places international businesses want them.

Table 3. *Internships and International Experience*

Invariant constituents	No. participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
Internships of < 15 weeks	1	20
Internships of one semester	1	20
International travel of > 10 weeks	3	60

Participant 4 concluded that the benefits of a 20-week immersion program required for graduation outweighed the inconvenience of having to dedicate faculty to locating specific internships. While this philosophy is echoed by all participants it is not clear what the ideal length of time abroad.

*Bachelor's degree required.* All of the participants agreed that a prospective student must hold a bachelor's degree or foreign equivalent; however disparities existed among the participants as to whether or not the BA should be in a business related field (see Table 4).

Only one participant, Participant 3, felt that a new student should not be required to have a bachelor's degree in business, but she did state that a BA or BS in some discipline was a requirement.

Table 4. *B.A. in Business Required*

Invariant constituents	No. participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
B.A. in business is not required	1	20
B.A. in business is required	4	80

*Theme 3: Student Prerequisites Vary With IMBA Program Requirements*

Although some similarities were identified as to those prerequisite accomplishments that would help a student achieve meet the IMBA program requirements, some disagreement among the participants regarding the length of time a student should spend studying abroad and the question of how many languages should be required.

*Length of time students are required to study abroad.* While all participants agreed that students are required to spend time studying abroad in an international business context, the length of time the participants felt satisfied the requirements varied between 2 and 20 weeks (see Table 3).

*Languages required.* Another point of contention was the necessity of including a foreign language requirement in an IMBA program or as a graduation requirement separate from the IMBA program requirements (see Table 5).

Three of the five participants interviewed also felt that a language component should be a graduation requirement, Participant 3 recommended, “Every student getting internationalization should get business language tutoring.”

Table 5. *Language Requirement*

Invariant constituents	No. participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
Languages required < 1	5	100
Languages required < 2	2	40

Participant 1 similarly felt, “Language is important.”

Two of the participants interviewed felt the language requirement was unnecessary, and could be acquired outside the IMBA program when necessary.

Participant 2 commented, “A full business language commitment should be available, but not required.” All did agree that if language training is offered it should be business oriented rather than the conventional Spanish 101.

While these themes most closely corresponded to the research questions posed by the initial research. The researcher also discovered some thematic categories that were unrelated to the initial research questions. These are presented:

*Theme 4: IMBA Faculty and Administration are Responsible for Globalization*

The participants were asked who, at their university, was responsible for ensuring the integrity of the international programs offered in the IMBA. Most participants felt they were involved in overseeing and supporting their faculty in these initiatives and took responsibility for providing guidance and incentive for faculty to drive initiatives, but that the ultimate success of the initiatives is credited to the faculty (see Table 6). They are

encouraged to take the initiative and develop programs that address current issues either in the country or globally.

Table 6. *Who is Responsible for the Internationalization of Curricula?*

Invariant constituents	No. participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
Faculty is responsible	5	100
Dean/director is responsible	4	80
A task force is responsible	1	20
Everyone is responsible	1	20

Participant 4 explained, “I oversee the development and internationalization of the program the faculty and the committee oversees the courses.”

Participant 1 added, “I play a supporting role, [but I] don’t have to be as involved because everything is already international.”

Participant 5 commented, “[I] contribute to it and try to work with faculty [regarding] what happens in the class.” He also offered that, “Forty percent of the faculty is foreign born but use methods mostly developed in the United States.” He indicated that having a faculty that is versed in U.S. practices is a disadvantage because the United States base is shrinking relative to the global economy. This provides another area in which having the internationally experienced faculty (most of which are foreign nationals) provides a different view of the business issues.

Participant 3 disclosed that she is involved in developing the international curriculum, “To the extent of determining the destinations of visits,” but a task force of faculty dedicated to evaluating the merits of the entire program from a holistic perspective make formal recommendations.

When asked who is charged with internationalization of curricula in his school, Participant 1 said simply, “Everybody.”

The participants were then asked to share their thoughts regarding the participation of faculty in the curricula internationalization and how current they believed their faculty to be in their fields of knowledge.

Participant 1 credited his faculty with, “Very current [knowledge].” He indicated that this was because of the frequent 2- to 3-week courses where the faculty member is involved in company operations in different regions.

Participant 4 stated that his faculty participate, “by being on the committees and task forces.” He revealed that the faculty executive committee at the university of is made up of 8 people and they are all involved in internationalization of the core curriculum. Participant 5 and Participant 3 also indicated that their faculties participate by taking on global initiatives in classrooms within the United States.

All of the participants participating in this study indicated that they rely on their regular MBA faculty to teach IMBA courses and explained that these instructors are chosen because they are well-qualified to instruct on international issues within their fields of knowledge.

Participant 4 explained in detail

The faculty is made up of regular MBA instructors who teach international courses. Some have their degrees in finance, some in international finance; many are from outside of the U.S. educational system, and provide real time cultural context to the courses they teach.

Participant 1 echoed similar strategies, saying, “Faculty is made up of 50% or more people from another part of the world. Most faculty members have a PhD in their discipline.”

Participant 3 revealed that “most of the faculty members teaching in the IMBA program do not have formal training in their fields on an international level.” This appears to be changing as more foreign national complete U.S. MBA programs and reenter their home countries’ workforces or become visiting professors.

Summarily, while it appears that the participants recognize that the opportunity for their faculty to gain more international exposure would be beneficial; they do not feel that the IMBA programs they offer suffer as a result of not having those opportunities formally available.

#### *Theme 5: Views of the Competition Vary Greatly*

The participants acknowledged a great variety in the courses offered through competing institutions and that some are more qualified to offer IMBA courses than others. The participants expanded on these views by offering their opinions on work-study requirements in other countries and the institutions language requirements for graduation. Participant 1 and Participant 4 acknowledge each other’s institutions as the greatest domestic competitor for each within the United States.

Table 7. *Participants' Views of Competing Universities*

Invariant constituents	No. participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
Competition does not offer the same quality of education	3	60
Direct competition exists in the same regional area	2	40
Competition exists in different regions	1	20
No competition	1	20

With regard to competition, Participant 1 stated, “In the United States it is just [Participant 4’s university].”

Participant 4 acknowledged this as well, stating

[Participant 1’s university], which has a very similar program, is the only IMBA direct competitor; but for the graduate school [the competition] would be [large universities in the same geographical region]. Our program is totally global / international. [Participant 1’s university] is the only major institution that is similar, but many others claim to be international and are clearly not.

Participant 2 felt that the location of his school gave him a regional advantage. He claimed, “Participant 1 and Participant 4’s university has been hiring people from [his university] for the past 10 years. We are not competitive [with them]; we are a regional school.” He went on to note the rapid changes in their IMBA programs, “No one [competed with us] when we started 7 years ago, now they all have it in their mission, but are they actually doing it?” He further explained, “[A noted local business school] is not really doing



it, {most of their internationalized faculty was] hired away. [Another local business school] is not doing it as well as we are.”

Participant 3 mentioned several schools that she felt were direct competitors of her university, “After a review of programs offered at other schools.”

Participant 5 offered particular insight saying that the biggest competitor for his school is “student choice.” He explained it is a very hard program to get into with stringent requirements; they lose students to universities with higher brand recognition. He also lamented that some students simply want to take the easy route to an IMBA by enrolling in a program with fewer graduation requirements. He said, “[Our] program is a real international program”; schools that add a 10-day trip to their programs in order to call it ‘international’ are just not providing enough international education. The amount of time necessary to provide IMBA students with sufficient time abroad is a contentious issue and while the range is 10 days to 3 months it is abundantly clear that the more exposure the better.

All of the participants acknowledged that due to the nature of IMBA programs, every U.S. school is competing with IMBA programs offered in other countries.

Participant 1 added to his statement about competing schools, “in many ways we compete with major institutions outside the United States.”

The participants similarly agreed that of the top schools offering IMBA programs, only four or five truly offered the breadth and depth of education required for an IMBA program. Participant 1 put it bluntly: “the big difference in many of the top 50 MBA schools is that they *say* [italics added] they are doing international but that is not what is happening.”

Participant 4 felt that schools focused on different areas, noting that while his university requires student fluency in at least two languages, the his direct competing university “does not have the full block of time overseas we do. We believe that getting immersed in another culture and business environment gains a broader understanding for a manager in other parts of the world.”

Participant 2 felt that his university’s long standing reputation for its IMBA program put them outside of the realm of competition with other schools, and noted that he had not spent time examining other IMBA curriculums. Participant 3 stated that she looked at IMBA programs similar to hers that offered “study tours” and concluded the programs were, “Definitely not meeting the needs of students on a higher level.” The recurring time abroad is also complicated by the use of that time—should it be academic or practical.

### Conclusion

The participants indicated that most of them judge other IMBA programs based on the internationalization of faculty, internship and travel requirements for students. Some participants also used the requirements for languages and undergraduate coursework, but this was inconsistent among the participants. Because the participants’ views about the amount of time required for students and faculty to spend in internships varied greatly, the ideal amount cannot be quantified with the findings of this research, the conclusion can only be drawn that these are consistent criteria used to evaluate an IMBA program.

All of the participants in the study agreed that students should enter an IMBA with a minimum of a bachelor's degree. Whether the degree should be in a business related field or not was a point of contention, as was the matter of how many languages should be required. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that a prospective IMBA student should possess a bachelor's degree and because 80% of the participants indicated so, that a major in a business-related field may be of benefit.

The participants were consistent in recommending that the faculty of an IMBA program should have the ability to introduce diverse viewpoints either through their own internationalization or that of guest speakers, and that students should be required to spend time in an internship or travel-study to gain their own international experience. The amount of time appropriate for students and faculty to spend abroad varied among the institutions, which means that it can be concluded that time abroad is critical to the internationalization process, but not the ideal amount of time.

### Summary

Although the participants' answers showed that curriculum and methodologies can vary widely, five themes were identified that can be used to judge the quality of education provided in an IMBA program. This chapter presented the results of the telephone interviews with the participants of five of the top IMBA schools in the United States. Their thoughts and feelings were transcribed in their own words and sorted thematically. The emergent themes were (a) IMBA programs have some identifiable parameters that can be used to compare programs, (b) some prerequisites that students will find useful in achieving their IMBA program requirements, (c) specific criteria that

are expected to be included in all IMBA programs, (d) IMBA faculty and administration take collective responsibility for the internationalization of IMBA programs, and (e) the participants criteria for evaluating their competition varied greatly.

In chapter 5, the identified themes were be related to concepts introduced in the literature review, the completion of the chart IMBA program guideline requirements (IMBA-PGR) Matrix, conclusions will be drawn, and recommendations for further courses of study will be made.

## CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

### How the Study Could be Improved

The initial improvement of increasing the institutions surveyed will probably result in additional points of administration but no major change in themes or approach. The international portion of the MBA degree will remain as a variable in most programs. This reflects the inflexibility of an institutional framework versus that of a marketplace driven program. Schools like Thunderbird and Suffolk, where the internationalism of the circular is neither developed nor overlaid but is the product of the psychological, contextual and cultural aspects of the program. They will continue to address the needs of the international marketplace and provide both the academics and atmosphere conducive to international studies.

### Basis of Study

The original purpose of this study was to determine whether an identifiable combination of elements would provide a complete international master's-level education and if the program's mission, vision, or objective statements support that commitment. Included in these parameters are interviews with program deans, examination of official documents (catalogues, brochures, and specific IMBA program promotional materials), a review of other efforts and positions found in the literature, and finally a IMBA program guideline requirements (PGR) matrix combining the prerequisites, program requirements, and international learning opportunities.

This study did not include Canadian, European or Asian institutions offering master's-level educational programs. They are by physical presence international in scope, student origins, and faculty orientation. Since one of the criticisms of domestic business education is that it is too domestic, having a truly Western influence on operations and decision making. The successful and well ranked IMBA programs strive to offer truly internationalized education not just a typical business course with a few international chapters. A completely separate study should be done on those programs which are offered by the non-U.S. institutions.

The problems that predicated this study are three fold. Specific parameters had to be established with which to allow for a comparison among programs. Included in these are course criteria that need to be in all international programs and standard prerequisites that will qualify students for entrance to the programs. First, to develop these, the individual programs were examined. The institution's offerings that address these needs and programs that offer the educational opportunities deemed necessary to be considered international in scope were recognized. These make up the IMBA PGR curricula components (see appendix B). They are obtained from course descriptions and requirements, how and what corporate hiring and training programs are looking for, and what the typical applicant offers as to prior education, experience and support of employer. These characteristics must be easily measured and understandable and should be established as a guide for the proper foundation for entrance to the IMBA program. They are detailed in this study and are provided on a comparison chart. Schools should examine this chart to identify those areas deficient in requirements as compared to their competitors.

The second step was to obtain the level of previous education of the students accepted into the individual programs. This included undergraduate degree and/or concentration such that the entering student either has a bachelor's degree in business or other general discipline. Those candidates with just a bachelor's degree in a non business area are at a disadvantage when matched with a BA/BS in business trained student. Having had the typical business core courses, such as accounting, business management, advertising/marketing, human resources and the production and operations areas of business these students begin their graduate level of education with an undergraduate foundation in business terms and concepts that provide those students with a significant advantage.

The third piece to these requirements is work experience after earning the bachelor's degree. Two schools of thought focus on this area of the requirements, 2–5 years is within the range of most schools guidelines with some requiring the sponsorship of students by their employers into full-time master's-level programs. This second requirement is found in only a few programs that emphasize a tie in with the employers and their goals.

### Lyn's Previous Study in 1993

Lyn, in the 1993 dissertation on this subject, found many programs for international business studies were lacking in both the social context (similar to Mintzberg's position) and the common requirements found in this studies IMBA program guideline requirements (PGR). This study refocuses on the issues of what emphasizes' institutions place the program's descriptions and examines if the actual programs

illustrate this emphasis? This study looks at the institution efforts in offering a curriculum that addresses the global environment, offers participation in the international business market place itself, and has specific academic characteristics.

### Mintzberg's International Curricular

This study uses Mintzberg's International Master's in Practicing Management (IMPM) and the four distinct views of how international programs should be organized. First the program is structured with diversification of students from different cultures and countries. Second the institution places emphasis on the faculty's origins, attitudes, and international experiences. Third is the esoteric components of international context and culture and the philosophy of international concepts rather than those of a single country. As a final point, Mintzberg's focuses on the need to use various international venues for the actual educational program thus providing diversification of approach and regional context and culture.

The qualitative portion of this dissertation addresses how proper international programs should focus on culture context and philosophy. The key concepts are found in their literature, mission and visions statements and through live interviews with the senior administration officials (deans) for the international programs.

### Discovered Themes of Note

Four identifiable themes relating to the aforementioned study needs were discovered through the live interviews with the deans of the international programs. First was the need to have parameters to compare the IMBA programs. Second are specific



criteria that should be included in all IMBA programs. Third student prerequisites vary greatly among programs and in some instances seem be contrary to stated objectives. Not requiring either an undergraduate degree in business or completion of the common undergraduate core of business courses positions candidates without that foundation at a distinct disadvantage when BA or BS business degreed students are included. The final theme found through the interviews was the dean's and institutions view of other institutions offering similar programs as their competition in a true business sense.

These themes overlaid importance of Mintzberg's context, culture, and psychological parameters by deferring to measurable hard components of an international program as opposed to the subjective nature of Mintzberg's parameters. While deans agree with the cultural and contextual needs and nature of an internationalized program they all psychologically point to their overall program as being appropriately international in scope and content.

#### International Association for Management Education's Position

A look at the International Association for Management Educations view of the subject finds agreement with these studies findings. The Association emphasizes the inclusion of international elements directly into the core courses. They specify including an international business course as a core requirement. The IMBA program should be a full major or at least, for those institutions that offer concentrations, be considered as a terminal program of study. As the last category the Association stresses the requirement of an internship or foreign exchange program (in country) to complete the educational program.

## Recommendations

### *Research That the Study's Results Suggest*

This study has two major components, first the PGR which could be populated for the remaining top institution programs, which would provide a wider knowledge base for comparison of programs. Second, the actual program content and requirements which differ significantly among programs need to be explained or resolved. The effect or impact of a true foreign internship verses a short time tour or exchange semester is the first of these variants. Language requirement or not is the next area of difference with the choice to or not to require being a key issue to judge if the program is truly international. The final area is that of an educational foundation gained by having a bachelor's degree in business as opposed to entrance to the master's level without significant undergraduate training.

Populating the PGR begins with the literature and catalog and will also require primary research in specific areas. Those areas include the prerequisites, curriculum components, and educational offerings. Program length is usually identified in the catalogue and may have more than one length depending upon study choices. The offering of a major or concentration in international business is sufficient to be considered an IMBA program. Those institutions which do not offer the typical major or concentration with a required set of courses and electives are not considered for this study.

International courses available as based upon the term *international* or *global* being part of the course title and/or in states where common course numbering systems have been adopted and assigned to international descriptions the catalog usually lists all

courses. International exposure varies from a 2-week tour bus ride through France to an actual internship with the student reporting to work daily and participating within the sponsoring business as a regular employee.

The use of global or international business simulation games, seminars, and conferences provide additional educational opportunities. In addition being a CIBER Center or a participating institution provides both the faculty and students with an additional wealth of knowledge and learning opportunities.

The parameter of language is simple the requirement of a student to be business-fluent in at least two languages. Some institutions recommend this but do not require it. Work experience after the baccalaureate varies from 0 to over 6 years and most programs stress that the successful candidate has field experience in a managerial area. And finally what is required as an appropriate undergraduate education. Most programs want to see heavy emphasis on business courses but some stop short when setting it as a requirement.

#### *Additional Related Studies Topics*

Students who have completed foreign internships could be surveyed as to the effectiveness and value of their months abroad. Special effort should be made to identify what, if any, activities and personal actions both commercially (while at work) and socially (evenings and weekends) provide the experiences gained from this effort. The shorter tour and visit programs should also be examined to judge if the two types of programs can even be compared or contrasted.

The ability to speak a second language seems as a de-facto requirement in what is being called an international degree but some administrators are reluctant to include the requirement in their programs. Those not requiring the second language point at

enrolment statistics which indicate a significant number of international students already are bilingual. They also take the position that the additional load of learning a language would be counterproductive to the intense program of international studies. One can argue that the need to be able to speak the language of a chosen country is part of the international studies needed by the student to be properly considered internationally educated. Students who had to learn a second language and those in programs that do not require it (and do not know a second language) should be interviewed using survey parameters of how knowing a second language or not knowing one has affected their international activities.

The prerequisite of having an undergraduate degree in the same field of the master's program appears to be the rule in fields such as the sciences (such as chemistry, physics, and biology). One would not be considered for admission to an advanced degree program in any of these fields without having the proper undergraduate degree – then why should the field of business be any different? Both the lexicon of business and the principles within the disciplines of accounting, finance, Production, Marketing, and General Administration are no different than the laws of physics or advanced chemistry learned in the undergraduate program. Students admitted into the master's-level program can be studied as to the remedial work required to build a basis of study which is already held by those with an undergraduate business degree.

#### *Directions for Future Studies*

The basic foundations of this study can be easily duplicated in a couple of years with a direct purpose of determining if any changes in the programs were made to

address the issues or findings of this study. Whether the administration changed position to improve the program or not the change should be noted and explained.

An additional study might be valuable looking from the international business back to the skills gained or not provided through an international program. This would require some additional searching for graduates working in the global office away from their home countries.

### General Conclusions

A simple and general conclusion can be made as to the overall needs and components of a successful IMBA program—they vary by institution. This study identified both the actual pieces of the curriculum and the desired effect of the pieces in the overall educational process. It also discovered themes of higher education, desired directions of programs emphasis, and key items that show noncompliance with the program's intended purpose.

All institutions offering an IMBA program offered rationale as to the inclusion or exclusion of key elements of a typical IMBA program. Most notable was the lack of prior business education (undergraduate business core courses) as an entrance requirement. Schools not having a requirement place those students without an undergraduate degree at a disadvantage in graduate-level business courses verses those with a Bachelor degree in business or at least having take most of the 5–8 typical business course foundation. Other areas of graduate study such as engineering, finance or the hard sciences are only undertaken by those with a strong undergraduate program in the subject.

The next curricula item that showed differing levels of concern was the second language requirement to be truly international. Programs either require some form of proficiency in a second language or take the position that most students in an international program already have a second language and do not need the additional work load. Institutions that accept the need for business-level communication skills in a major second language usually have the work load and scheduling under control and the students meet the requirement.

The third area of disagreement similar to the language paradox is that of actual working experience in the country of choice as a management-level employee. Most programs have some type of in-country cultural introduction given at home with either an off-the-bus on-the-bus travel log for a short period, or an actual internship with a daily job routine over an extended period (2–3 months). Institutions opting for the internship program have a significant task of obtaining what is usually on a global basis, a number of companies willing to host student interns. This takes a fully committed and well staffed program but offers the student the ultimate experience of actual immersion in the culture and commerce of another country. No 2-week bus tour of manufactures, sales offices and cultural venues can provide the internship experience.

These significant variations in the programs suggest that the basis for such inclusion is not academic but administrative. To offer an actual in-country internship requires an extensive development and support systems. The simpler approach of a 2- to 3-week cultural and business visit tour provides international exposure, a social aspect and a cultural component.

### *Conclusions Based Upon the Survey Results*

The survey and interviews with the deans of the respective IMBA programs provided the study with what the administrators felt were significant themes relating to the internationalization of an MBA degree. All agreed upon the basic core of the IMBA program, various requirements, and offerings. However, three areas of contention exist in the area of requirements, offerings, and achievements. First is the requirement of an undergraduate degree in the discipline, second is the extent and need for actual foreign work experience either through a requirement or internship, and finally the importance of a second language, as a requirement versus a convince.

### *Conclusion Based Upon the IMBA–PGR Matrix Comparisons*

The matrix is a simple way to graphically display and allow for comparison the various components of an IMBA program. From the inclusion of the prerequisites to the offering of outside lectures and seminars all major parts of the respective institutions offering are shown in basic table format. Prospective students and employers can judge one program against another and find the program offering the aspects desired.

### *Conclusions Drawn From the Mintzberg's Position*

The need for training within various countries coupled with the inclusion of a diverse student population remains the only unique portion of Mintzberg's position. This program provides an extensive exposure to global cultures and business philosophies and emphasizes the commitment and participation of the student's sponsoring business. Most all of the remaining attributes of the IMPM program are addressed by the leading domestic institution's IMBA circular.

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## APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW SCRIPT

The questions we will be covering in the telephone interview:

### *Section 1*

Mission and Vision statements as well as academic direction statements for an IMBA program may include the key words, culture, context, and philosophy in reference to the internationalization of the IMBA program. Keeping in mind the IMBA's mission or vision statements indicate how well you think the University describes itself in terms of these key words.

Is there specific attention paid to the international context within the curriculum developed for the IMBA courses? In other words is there an international perspective to the course structure.

Has there been a specific effort to include a cultural aspect to individual IMBA courses? Is there some sort of social or civilizing focus in the individual courses?

Is the curriculum focused on addressing the differences in philosophy on an international basis for the IMBA courses? Are different viewpoints introduced to stimulate an examination of values and beliefs?

### *Section 2*

Q. What is (are) the level of support of your school in the following programs?

International opportunities for faculty?

Are funds and grants available faculty's international activities?

Are Professors required to participate in international experiences for promotion and/or tenure?

Does the University arrange and develop international opportunities for faculty?

### *Section 3*

As Business School Dean, Associate or Assistant Dean how involved are you in the curricula internationalization in your program?

How often do the IMBA Department professors participate in the curricula internationalization of their courses? How current is their field knowledge?

Who teaches the International Business courses in your IMBA program? And could you comment on the qualifications required (PhD in Finance as opposed to a PhD in International Finance)

(Section for Coding only)

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Regular MBA/IMBA faculty
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Faculty from other departments or schools at your university
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Adjunct faculty
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. a combination of the above

\_\_\_\_\_ e. International guest professors

Who is charged with curricula internationalization in your school?

(Section for Coding only)

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Business school dean  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Business school associate/asst. dean  
\_\_\_\_\_ c. International business center director  
\_\_\_\_\_ d. MBA/IMBA program director  
\_\_\_\_\_ e. Business faculty  
\_\_\_\_\_ f. other, please specify

#### *Section 4*

In your review of the programs offered at other institutions do you see as your biggest competitor?

Looking at other institutions in your top ranking group, do you feel that they meet the needs of the International portion of their IMBA programs? Are there some with not too complete a program?

What dimensions of a program are important to providing a quality International foundation? International experience (semester working abroad), international instructors, depth of course offerings, full major in International Business, and language requirements among others.

APPENDIX B. IMBA PROGRAM GUIDELINE REQUIREMENTS MATRIX

Institution	Language requirement		Work experience			Undergrad education	Program length				Degree		International courses available			International exposure				Global Business Simulations	International Seminars & Conferences	CIBER Center Participation
	Second language	Third language	None required	Up to 2 years	3 or more years		BS or BA any discipline	BS or BA in business	Less than 13 months	14-18 months	19 or more months	Concentration	Major	5-8 courses	9-12 courses	Over 12 int'l. courses	2-3 weeks	30 days	One full semester			
1	X				X	X			X		X			X	X					X	X	X
2					X	X			X	X				X			X			X	X	X
3	X				X	X			X		X			X		X						X
4	X				X	X			X		X			X			X			X	X	X
5					X		X	X			X			X			X			X	X	

## APPENDIX C. NON-U.S. MASTER'S LEVEL PROGRAM INSTITUTIONS

Top 20 European	Top 14 Asia-Pacific	Top 8 Canadian
London Bus School	CEIBS	York
INSEAD	Hong Kong U of Sci & Tech	Toronto
Instituto Empresa	Chinese U of HK	Western Ontario
IESE	Aus Grad School of Mgt	Hult
IMD	Hong Kong U of Sci & Tech	British Columbia
York Schulich	Nat Univ of Singapore	Queen's
Oxford	Monash	McGill
HEC Paris	Melbourne	Concordia
Manchester	MacQuarie	
Rotterdam Erasmus	IIM Ahmedabad	
ESADE	Nanyang Tech U	
Lancaster	Otago	
Bocconi	Curtin	
Cambridge	Int. U of Japan	
City		
Imperial		
Warwick		
Bradford/Nimbus		
Edinburgh		
Leeds		